Disciplined Inquiry for Transpersonal Studies:
Old and New Approaches to Research

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Abstract

This paper includes three interrelated sections. The first section on "integral inquiry" was prepared by William Braud. The second section on "intuitive inquiry" was prepared by Rosemarie Anderson. The third section on "phenomenological inquiry" was prepared by Ron Valle. The paper describes the essential nature of each of these three new approaches to research and disciplined inquiry—methods that are especially congenial to the study of exceptional human experiences and transpersonal experiences. These sections were the seeds of what later became chapters devoted to these methods in the book, *Transpersonal Research Methods for the Social Sciences: Honoring Human Experience*, by William Braud and Rosemarie Anderson (Sage, 1998).

Article

Two complementary parables from India set the stage for this paper. The first is the well-known tale of the blind men and the elephant (see Davids, 1911; Meier, 1982). Each person reaches a different conclusion about the nature of the beast as a result of exploring what is only a part of the whole. The other is a more modern saying: "If you wish to find water, it is better to dig one 60-foot well than to dig six 10-foot wells." These parables point to the importance of breadth and plurality of approaches, as well as depth and intensity of approach, if one is to appreciate the fullness of reality or access its rich, yet sometimes hidden, treasures.

These guidelines have obvious applicability in our clinical practices, as well as in our research endeavors in psychology and in the other human sciences. The wisdom of these complementary approaches of breadth and depth, however, goes strangely unheeded in many of our clinical and research projects. Too often, we cling to a single method or a small number of methods with which we and our clinical or research sub-cultures have become familiar but which may not be the most appropriate for addressing the issues at hand. Our aim, in this paper, is to suggest ways in which we might expand and extend our research and clinical practices, so that we might learn more about ordinary human experiences and begin to develop new means of disciplined inquiry for exploring some of the more exceptional human experiences that we have heretofore ignored.

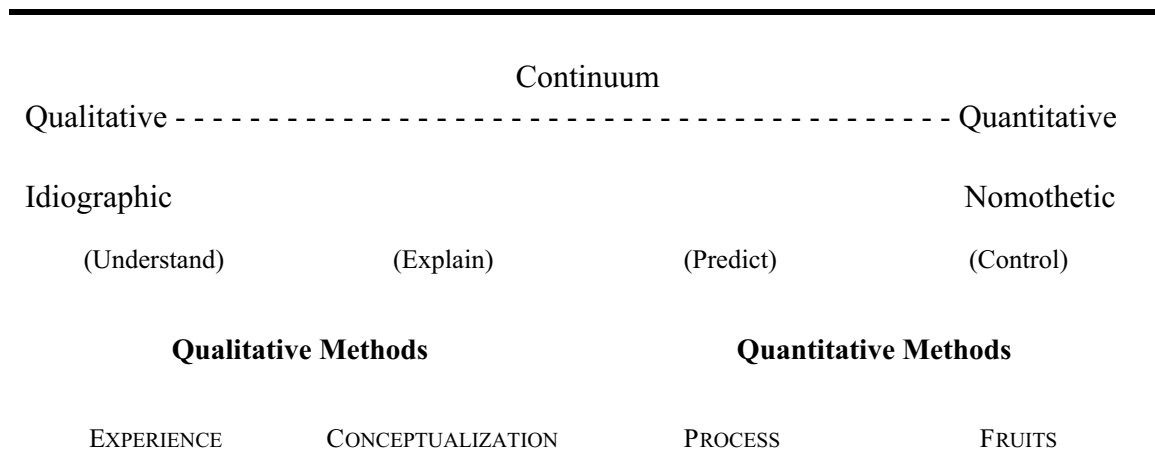Integral Inquiry: Expanding Research Through Complementary

Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

As a first step in this endeavor, we can expand the range of questions we might ask about our subject matter and recognize that there exist many research methods that vary greatly in their appropriateness for addressing different types of questions. In doing this, we can be mindful of Carl Jung's statement: "Ultimate truth, if there be such a thing, demands the concert of many voices" (Jung, 1993, p. xiv), while also remembering the caveat of one of our British colleagues, John Beloff (1990, p. 128): "If we are barking up the wrong tree then we shall not find what we are looking for no matter what kind of ladders we use."

Table 1 indicates four major types of questions we can ask about the subject matter we are researching. Interestingly, these are the same types of questions for which we would be seeking answers in our clinical work—in the contexts of both particular clients or larger classes of clients. These four types of questions, and the research methods that best serve them, are arrayed along a continuum from the more *qualitative* to the more *quantitative* and from the more *idiographic* to the more *nomothetic*. The four clusters of questions and methods also correspond nicely to the familiar research objectives of understanding, explanation, prediction, and control. Of course, many of the methods can be used in multiple ways and can be tailored to suit more than one type of question or concern. Table 1 is subject to flexible re-arrangements and modifications; by no means is it intended to represent a rigid classification of approaches.

Table 1

Conventional Disciplined Inquiry Methods That Closely Match Four Major Types of Research Questions

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Continuum

Qualitative - Quantitative

Idiographic   Nomothetic

(Understand)   (Explain)   (Predict)   (Control)

Qualitative Methods   **Quantitative Methods**

EXPERIENCE   CONCEPTUALIZATION   PROCESS   FRUITS

What is the experience of x? How is x perceived by the participant?	*How can we conceptualize x? What are useful explanations or interpretations of x?*	*How does x unfold as a process? What are the concomitants of x? What sets the stage for the occurrence of x? What facilitates x? What inhibits x?*	*What are the outcomes, consequences, "fruits" of x?*
Phenomenological	**Theoretical**	**Correlational**	**Experimental**
Heuristic	**Historical**	**Causal-comparative**	**Quasi-experimental**
Narrative	**Grounded theory**	**Field studies**	**Single-subject**
Life stories	**Textual analysis**		**Action research**
Case studies	**Discourse analysis**		
Feminist approaches	**Hermeneutic**		
Organic approach			
Interview			
Questionnaires			
Surveys			

The four clusters of methods can be understood as complementary sets of tools useful for addressing different aspects of a particular research issue or human experience—four ways of "feeling the elephant" that is the issue being explored. It is possible to adapt these methods for use in exploring exceptional human experiences and topics that are appropriate to the developing field of transpersonal studies. Transpersonal psychology studies experiences and processes that extend or go beyond the personal or individual, that go beyond the usual limits of ego and personality. It concerns itself with consciousness and unusual states of consciousness, with exceptional experiences, with trans-egoic development, with individuation, and with spiritual experiences, growth, and transformation. It is concerned with "the study of humanity's highest potential, and with the recognition, understanding, and realization of unitive, spiritual, and transcendent states of consciousness" (Lajoie & Shapiro, 1992, p. 91). It seeks to learn how people can become more whole through integrating the somatic, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, creative expressive, and relationship and community aspects of their lives.

Causes and Outcomes

The cluster of experiment-like methods at the extreme right of Table 1 is well-known to researchers. These methods are well-suited for exploring "causal" questions and for assessing the effectiveness of various treatments or interventions. Of all the methods, these provide the greatest feelings of confidence in our conclusions, and they yield the least ambiguous findings. For this payoff, however, they sacrifice depth of understanding and lose knowledge of the contexts, complexities, and richness of what is being studied. Their use can encourage superficial appreciations of artificial or incomplete forms of what we are seeking to study. Devotees of these methods mimic the approaches of the natural sciences in seeking to learn the universal laws that govern simple systems in isolated contexts, knowing and controlling relevant variables, and attempting to keep "everything else equal or constant." Most laboratory work in

areas of neuroscience, cognitive science, clinical and medical outcome research, and experimental parapsychology makes use of these approaches.

In transpersonal studies, these methods could be used to assess the outcomes, consequences, side effects, and other "fruits" of particular experiences (e.g., meditative conditions, altered states of consciousness) or deliberate practices or training exercises (e.g., certain spiritual disciplines, special breathwork, particular ways of working with one's dreams). The experiment-like methods could be used to assess possible effects of engaging in specific forms of creative expression (e.g., work with self-produced mandalas) or of participating in rituals developed to ease passage through liminal conditions (e.g., when one dis-identifies with an older way of being in order to re-identify with a newer one).

In our own work, we (W.B. and colleagues) have made extensive use of experimental methods in exploring alternative, non-local modes of knowing and influence. In extensive series of experiments we have learned how persons are able to access information, hidden at remote locations, through direct knowing for which they are prepared through psychological and psychophysiological procedures (Braud, 1975, 1978, 1982). We also have found that persons are able to directly influence random or labile inanimate or animate systems (e.g., radioactive decay-based random event generators, small animals, human red blood cells in test tubes, the sympathetic nervous system activity of distant persons), mentally and at a distance, through processes of attention, intention, and visualization (Braud, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994a, 1994b; Braud & Schlitz, 1989, 1991; Braud, Shafer, & Andrews, 1993a, 1993b; Braud, Shafer, McNeill, & Guerra, 1995). These latter studies provide reliable empirical evidence for human potentials or abilities beyond those that are mediated by conventional sensorimotor processes or conventional energetic and informational exchanges. Interestingly, variations of these same abilities are frequently described within many, if not all, of the various spiritual and wisdom traditions.

An important concept within transpersonal psychology is interconnectedness. In fact, the *trans* in transpersonal conveys two aspects of that connectedness. One meaning of trans is *beyond*; it implies the existence of, and connectedness with and relationship to, something beyond the individual. Another meaning of trans is *through*; this implies a connectedness among the various aspects of oneself, as well as a connectedness of oneself with others and with all of Nature. It is difficult to understand how direct knowing of events remote in time or space, or direct mental influence of remote animate and inanimate systems, can occur without presupposing a profound and extensive interconnectedness among people and also between people and all of animate and inanimate Nature. This interconnectedness has important implications for our understanding of who we really are, of our individuality, of our true selves; from these implications flow other, ethical implications for appropriately interacting with others and with our environment.

The visible parts of trees in a dense forest seem to be separate, isolated entities until one looks beneath the surface of the earth and finds the extensive, interconnected root systems that bind the trees together. The peaks of mountains shrouded in mist seem isolated and unconnected until the mist melts away, revealing the common lower continuities that previously had been obscured. These two metaphors help us appreciate aspects of the interconnectedness that is emphasized and studied by transpersonal psychologists. The concept is beautifully expressed by

the 13th century Persian mystical poet Jalaluddin Rumi: "I've heard it said there's a window that opens / from one mind to another, / but if there's no wall, there's no need / for fitting the window, or the latch" (Rumi, 1984, p. 10).

Process , Concomitants, Modulating Factors

Leaving the laboratory in order to explore everyday life occurrences, one can move to the familiar methods described in the second cluster from the right in Table 1. Here, we observe inter-relationships among naturally occurring events (a correlational approach) and look for additional but as yet unknown, and possibly causal, differences between individuals or groups that are already known to differ in some other way (a "causal-comparative" approach; see Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 535-571). In making this move, one gains advantages through including a far greater number of events to study as well as naturally occurring events that cannot be duplicated readily in the laboratory. The price one pays for this gain is a loss in certainty about one's findings. Causal conclusions become risky, and hosts of extraneous and possibly confounding variables arise.

In transpersonal contexts, correlational and causal-comparative strategies could be used to explore research questions such as the following. Which pre-existing characteristics might discriminate persons who have or do not have near death experiences under comparable circumstances? Is there a relationship between the "density" of deliberate transpersonal practices and spontaneously occurring transpersonal experiences and the nature of one's recovery from childhood sexual abuse (Schellenberg, 1997)? How do sense of humor and spirituality relate to freedom from stress and presence of positive life satisfaction and well-being in HIV-positive males (Maas, 1996)? What are the concomitants—in terms of physical and psychological health and well-being, meaning in life, and personal and spiritual growth and transformation—of disclosure-facilitated assimilation of exceptional human experiences such as mystical, unitive, "psychic," and death-related experiences (Palmer, 1998)?

Conceptualization

One uses the approaches of the next cluster in Table 1 to conceptualize and theorize about one's findings or about the particular issue being investigated. Historical considerations can help contextualize the issue and provide additional kinds of explanations. Hermeneutic methods can be used to explore latent, hidden meanings and can yield more complete interpretations. The risks of such methods are uncertainties about the validity of one's interpretations and possibilities of empirically empty generalizations or self-consistent and seemingly valid theories or models that can be tested and possibly falsified only with great difficulty or not at all. The needed reality tests in this cluster of methods are not always available or sought.

Some of the methods within this cluster (e.g., theory- and model-building, the historical method) are familiar to psychologists. Other methods (e.g., grounded theory, textual readings, discourse analysis, hermeneutics) originated in disciplines other than psychology, have been imported into psychology only recently, and are still relatively unknown to conventional psychological researchers. (See Harré & Stearns, 1995 and Smith, Harré & Van Langenhove,

1995a, 1995b for information about these and related new methodological approaches within psychology.)

A conceptual, theoretical approach would be appropriate for developing and testing models or theories of human psychospiritual growth and development, such as those proposed by Underhill (1911/1969), Maslow (1968, 1970), Wilber (1990), Washburn (1990), and Ruumet (1997). Historical methods could explore the nature of mystical experiences through the ages, whether or not there have been temporal changes in the character of the "perennial wisdom," factors that may have been involved in the many migrations of Eastern spiritual teachers to the United States at the turn of this century, etc.

Experiences Themselves

One moves to the cluster at the extreme left of Table 1 to gain the greatest appreciation of experiences themselves and of the ways in which the actual experients perceive and interpret their experiences and the events in their lives. Here, one can explore in great depth and intensity; here, one can dig a 60-foot well. Here, one gains richness and completeness of description, a view from the inside, an understanding of the contexts in which experiences and events occur, and an appreciation of the complex, dynamic, and often subtle, ways in which events and experiences come together and play themselves out in the lives of particular individuals. In return for these gains, one pays the price of reduced certainty about the actual referents and sources of experiences and events and becomes uncertain about the contributions or importance of particular perceived interrelationships or connections among the experiences and events. Unless contrasts or comparisons are introduced or considered, how can one know whether one is really describing what one thinks one is describing? But notice that these very questions and concerns reveal the importing of particular ontological and epistemological approaches, assumptions, biases, and values into this realm. These types of questions are natural, useful, and answerable when one is working in the right-most parts of Table 1; however, are they appropriate in the left-most reaches of Table 1? In gaining a description (a very rich, thorough, and deep "snapshot," if you will) of a complex system, one seems to give up certainty about specific subcomponents and their causal interplay. Indeed, one may ask whether concepts such as "component" or "cause" are even appropriate in this new context. There appears to be an interesting dance between richness and fullness of description, and certainty as to source, referent, and process. Rich description and certainty seem to be contraries or complements—neither can be reduced to the other, and both are necessary to a complete understanding of the whole. This dance of the complements reminds us of similar dances between various complements in physics, such as light-as-particle and light-as-wave. Our physicist friends tell us that they use the term *complementary conjugates* to describe these yin-yang processes. The root of *conjugates* implies *playing together*. Complements play or dance together. This dance too often is seen as a conflict or battle in which the two fight with or oppose one another, and this interpretation or judgment encourages either/or thinking in which one feels compelled to favor one or the other. How strange to favor one partner in a dance or to think that the dance could happen with only one dancer. Again, we can turn to Rumi: "Never in

truth does the lover seek / without being sought by his beloved / No sound of clapping comes from one hand / without the other hand."

We have come full circle. The richness, synthesis, and subjectivity of Table 1's left-most cluster needs the discrimination, analysis, and objectivity of the right-most cluster to make the dance complete. Each of the four clusters provides a set of questions and approaches useful for appreciating a particular aspect of an entire issue or experience that one is seeking to investigate. For the outcome of one's research to be faithful to the whole of what one is studying, one would combine methods and questions from all parts of Table 1 and combine the different views to form a more complete picture. This approach is true to the etymology of the word *research* which has to do with *circling around again*. Table 1 helps us recognize and remember what is included with great density and what is excluded in each method or cluster of methods. It can provide leads for enriching what we already are doing in order to make accounts of our investigations more complete and more balanced.

Story-Telling and Story-Listening: Experiences Revisited

In exploring Cluster 1 (the left-most cluster of Table 1) more thoroughly, we find that something most interesting and magical may begin to happen for those engaged in these forms of research. The conventional boundaries between research, clinical practice, and personal growth and transformation can melt away. As we provide our research participants (or *co-researchers*, as they are more appropriately called) opportunities to describe their experiences and life stories—typically in the form of in-depth, semi-structured or unstructured interviews—three things begin to happen at once. This session is a research session, in that it provides new information and knowledge that can contribute to the development of the discipline. However, it also becomes a clinical session in that it provides the participant/co-researcher an opportunity to learn more about herself or himself and more fully integrate and assimilate materials and to work through important issues more thoroughly than before. This is especially likely if meaningful, relevant, and important topics have been chosen for the research project. Stated somewhat differently, the opportunity to tell one's story and to speak one's own voice has *healing power*. Additionally, hearing the stories of one's participants/co-researchers and working together with them on the issues addressed in the research project can result in change and transformation on the part of the investigator. One can do one's own work and progress in one's personal and spiritual growth and development in the context of conducting research. All three processes occur simultaneously, and each feeds the others in synergetic ways.

There is undeniable evidence that recognizing, owning, honoring, and sharing one's experiences, especially one's more unusual or previously unvoiced experiences, is beneficial to one's physical health and psychological well-being. All counseling, psychotherapeutic, and spiritual guidance traditions are based upon this truism. We call your attention, however, to five particular sets of findings to concretize this concept.

James Pennebaker and his co-workers have been studying the psychological and physiological correlates of confession, self-disclosure, and confiding of significant experiences. They have found that even relatively brief disclosures of personal and traumatic experiences (especially those that have been kept secret from others) are associated with improvements in

health and well-being as measured by various psychophysiological indices, symptoms, physician visits, and immunological reactions (Pennebaker, Hughes, & O'Heeron, 1987; Pennebaker, Kiecolt-Glaser, & Glaser, 1988; Pennebaker & Susman, 1988). Although processes of catharsis, extinction, and disinhibition undoubtedly play important roles in Pennebaker's results, perhaps the most important health-facilitating aspect of disclosure is that the process allows reconceptualizations or cognitive changes as the experiences are shared and explored from new and different points of view. Certain experiences no longer are shut off and isolated from the rest of one's experiences. The previously ostracized experiences can return to the fold, and the increased wholeness resulting from these new integrations favors greater well-being.

Ian Wickramasekera (1989) has found that the majority of his patients who present somatic complaints are either very high or very low on hypnotic susceptibility. Those who are highly hypnotically susceptible tend to report parapsychological and other unusual experiences. As the patients discuss these experiences and assimilate them more thoroughly into their lives, they experience remission of their somatic symptoms.

Thomas Driver (1991) has discussed the important and transformational concomitants of confessional performance and self-revelation. Rhea White (1993a, b) has pointed out the relevance of Driver's ideas to exceptional human experiences and has indicated that through acknowledging and confessing our own experiences, we may grow in understanding them. Not only that, but disclosure may somehow increase the very reality of our experiences to ourselves, to others, and perhaps to the physical world as well. The second author has made similar points about the benefits of confession and profession of one's unusual experiences in a prior paper (Braud, 1994c).

An obvious place in which to observe the power of disclosure is in the area of dreamwork. As one moves along the continuum of being aware of one's own dreams, paying increased attention to them, recalling them, recording them, sharing them with significant others, sharing them with groups of people, associating to them, elaborating them, amplifying them, dramatizing them in the form of drawings and other creative expressions, and acting them out, their reality and impact increase. Montague Ullman's work with small dreamwork groups indicates some of the benefits that can occur through the more public sharing of previously private experiences (Ullman & Zimmerman, 1979).

Contributing to the appeal and power of the various feminist research approaches (e.g., Nielsen, 1990) are their emphases upon the voices of The Others, providing opportunities for unassimilated *others* (other persons and other experiences that have not been valued or privileged within the dominant culture) to speak their own stories with their own voices and opportunities for these voices to be listened to and honored. Unassimilated "others" result in separation and fragmentation, dis-ease of the individual and of the greater group, and an incompleteness of worldview. Assimilating others, through story-telling and story-listening, facilitates integration and wholeness, health and well-being of the individual and of the greater group, and the framing of a more adequate and more complete worldview. Encouraging and attending to a pluralism of voices within feminist research approaches is emancipating, empowering, and health-facilitating.

Interestingly, the sorts of impacts mentioned above are most likely to occur when one uses the methods to the left of Table 1, but the methods to the right of Table 1 can be used to

assess and document the impacts and confirm that they actually occur. This provides still another illustration of how the different methods can cooperatively support one another.

Feminist research approaches emphasize characteristics of the research enterprise that typically are neglected in more conventional treatments of the nature of scientific research. Accessible treatments of these complementary qualities of inquiry may be found in Shepherd (1993) and in Ullman (1995). An appreciation of the flavor of these qualities can be gained from the chapter titles and subtitles of Shepherd's book, *Lifting the Veil: The Feminine Face of Science*. In these chapters, she deals with topics of feeling (research motivated by love), receptivity (listening to nature), subjectivity (discovering ourselves through the experiment), multiplicity (webs of interaction), nurturing (a long-term approach), cooperation (working in harmony), intuition (another way of knowing), relatedness (a vision of wholeness), and social responsibility of science (research that has meaningful impacts).

A closely related research approach is being developed by a team of investigators at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (Clements, 1994/95). The approach has been called "organic research." It emphasizes the following eight characteristics: sacredness, inclusivity, subjectivity, experiential and contextual, transformative, transpersonal, individual, and understandable. This organic research approach, usually in combination with compatible feminist, phenomenological, and case study approaches, has already been employed in several doctoral dissertation projects at the Institute, and it has yielded interesting findings (Ettling, 1994; Newton, 1996; Safken, 1997; Shields, 1995; Spencer, 1995; Taylor, 1996). The organic approach has been used to explore topics such as the creative arts, embodiment, and transformation; experiences of the interstices or "spaces between" in the body disciplines of Aikido and fencing; Sufi stories as vehicles for self-development; beauty, body image, and the deep feminine; transpersonal aspects of painting; women's experience of the "descent into the underworld" and the path of Inanna.

Alternative Ways of Knowing

Within the feminist, organic, and narrative approaches to research, we find a common emphasis on hearing and honoring the voices of the other person, particularly the previously unempowered person or the member of a previously unempowered group. The heuristic research approach, as developed by Clark Moustakas and his colleagues (Moustakas, 1990), also emphasizes a plurality of voices. Some of the voices are those of different persons whose varied inputs are valued in the research effort; these are the voices of interviewed participants, of the investigator herself or himself, and of others who have researched or written their own views of the experience being studied. Still other voices, however, represent different modes of knowing and of expressing one's knowing. Thus, the heuristic researcher is not limited only to data generated within the discipline of psychology, but explores, as well, findings from the other human sciences, from the humanities, from the arts, and from the various spiritual and wisdom traditions—anything that bears on the experience being researched and that promises to contribute to a full and rich depiction of the studied topic. The heuristic researcher also values his or her own tacit knowledge—intuitive and body-based knowings that are difficult to put into words. The heuristic method has much in common with the creative process. Indeed, a creative

synthesis, to which many attributes of the researcher can contribute, is part of the final outcome of the research project.

Heuristic research yields what is perhaps the richest and most satisfying description of an important human experience to which the researcher has devoted both extensive and deep attention over a long time period. A prototypical example of the heuristic approach is Moustakas' (1961) classic study of the experience of loneliness, in which he deeply immersed himself in as many aspects of the experience as possible over a long time period.

Two additions to the heuristic method would make the picture even more complete. Within the approach, places are not provided for direct social action or for conceptualizing and theorizing about the experiences being studied. The final presentation of a heuristic research project can be sufficiently complete, accurate, moving, and impelling to lead to subsequent social actions on the part of those who read and resonate to the findings of the report. Such follow-up responses themselves could be studied—either by an addition to the method itself or by other, complementary, methods. Aspects of action research, in which one studies and evaluates what one does as one provides an actual service to a community (typically in the form of a new or already existing service program), could be added to a heuristic project to study after-effects or consequences. Certain aspects of the feminist research approach also could be added to provide an additional dimension of social change.

Although theorization and conceptualization are played down by heuristic (and phenomenological) researchers—in favor of heeding Husserl's imperative, "Back to the things themselves" (cited in Valle, King, & Halling, 1989, p. 9) or, in this case, to the experiences themselves—there is no reason to avoid thinking about one's findings and experiences as well as simply providing rich and deep descriptions of them. Thinking and interpretation may indeed interfere with experiencing per se, and it may be necessary to bracket the former so they do not interfere with or distort the latter. At some point, however, thinking, interpreting, conceptualizing, modeling, and theorizing can be unbracketed and brought back into the fold in order to yield a more complete account of what one is studying. In Jungian terms, one need not leave one's thinking function forever at the door while inviting the sensing, feeling, and intuiting functions inside for the feast. After all, thinking is an experience, too, and thoughts, interpretations, and meanings are parts of the contexts in which other experiences take place.

Some Bolder Additions and Extensions

There are many ways of knowing and of working with and expressing that knowing; yet, our research enterprises typically have attempted to explore only narrow ranges of a wide spectrum of possibilities. Clues that may help us expand our research practices, and hence enlarge our store of public knowledge, are found in diverse traditions.

For example, Origen (185-254 C.E.) recognized three approaches to scriptural meanings and interpretations: seeking literal, concrete meanings (*somatikos*); developing meanings through intellectual, logical, and associational means (*psychikos*); and seeking spiritual, allegorical, symbolic, and metaphorical meanings (*pneumatikos*); see Latourette (1975), Nigg (1962) and Temple (1990). If we heed the suggestion of recent researchers that a vast variety of subject matters (not only literal documents, but life stories, lives, and experiences, also) can be

considered as texts to be interpreted and understood, then perhaps we can apply analogs of Origin's three methods to this endeavor.

Ibn Al Arabi (1164-1240 C.E.) recognized three forms of knowledge: through information, through experience, and through being. He likened to first form to knowing a fruit through reading about it, the second form to knowing a fruit through direct experience of its qualities (its weight, texture, odor, taste), and the third form to consuming and assimilating the fruit into one's very being (Ibn Al Arabi, 1981; Schneck, 1980). Analogs of these three forms of knowing could be incorporated into our present-day research.

Bonaventure (1217-1274 C.E.) and Hugh of St. Victor (1096-1141 C.E.) recognized at least three realms of being and three ways of accessing these realms. They used the metaphor of three eyes to describe three modes of knowing. There is a physical, sensory realm that is accessed by the *eye of the flesh*; a mental realm of ideas, thoughts, and images perceived by the *eye of the mind*; and a transcendental or spiritual realm known through the *eye of the spirit* (see Bonaventura, 1953) Perhaps analogs of those three eyes could be used in our research.

More recently, Reason and Heron (1995) have suggested four forms of knowledge: *propositional* knowledge (knowing about something, expressed in statements and theories), *practical* knowledge (knowing how to do something, expressed in a skill or competence), *experiential* knowledge (gained through direct face-to-face encounters with persons, places, or things), and *presentational* knowledge (through which tacit knowing is translated into imagery and then symbolically expressed through movement, sound, color, shape, line, poetry, story, and drama). We can provide formal places for each of these knowings in our research designs and reports.

To extend Bonaventure's metaphor, we can view our typical research efforts as observing the world through one eye, processing and interpreting what we perceive with one brain, and expressing what we have learned through one mouth. The one eye is the sensory eye of perception of external, sensory information; typically, we restrict even this information to visual and auditory information. The one brain is the left-hemispheric, verbal, linear, analytical processing of information. The one mouth is the mouth of verbal expression through linear prose. In working with questionnaires or with depth interviews (even within alternative approaches such as phenomenological, feminist, or heuristic procedures), we collect vast quantities of words from articulate participants. As investigators, we then process, filter, organize, cook, and distill those words while in an alert, active state of consciousness, using primarily our word-serving left hemisphere. We express what we have learned by outputting still other words and delivering these in learned treatises to our readers who receive these words and add them to their own stores of words and verbal concepts. It is possible to expand each of these phases of research and, in doing so, enlarge both what we can learn about our topic and the research enterprise itself.

The heuristic approach has already opened up all three of these channels. It welcomes the addition of bodily-based knowing (obtained through a technique known as *focusing*; see Gendlin, 1978), intuition, and tacit knowing. It includes incubation periods in which materials allowed to "process" themselves in different ways, leading to "aha" or illumination experiences in which the pieces come together in new ways and in which novelty may arise. It encourages augmenting one's linear prose report with other forms of expression such as poetry and artistic productions.

It is possible to go even further than this, however, in expanding our research procedures and in developing a more complete, integral methodology for transpersonal and other studies. Here are some of the steps in this direction that have been taken recently by students at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in their doctoral dissertation work.

Dorothy Ettling (1994a) conducted a study of the creative arts as a pathway to embodiment in the personal transformation process of women. Her methodology, which involved aspects of both phenomenological and feminist approaches, included in-depth interviews with nine women. Of interest here is that, in addition to the usual intellectual inductive analysis in which themes were extracted from the written interview transcripts, Ettling added two nonverbal treatments of her data: emotional and intuitive appreciations of the material. Before reading the transcripts in an intellectual mode, she listened twice to the tape recorded interviews. First, she listened while in a meditative state, attending to the emotions that the tapes elicited within herself. She listened again, this time attending to the emotions expressed by the participants. She allowed her intuitive faculty to identify additional meanings in the material. Finally, she allowed nonverbal productions to arise, creatively expressing the women's stories in the forms of dance, drawings, sculptures, crying, and singing. She later described her process in these words:

> Combining processes of analysis that honored both intuitional and rational knowledge fostered the complementarity of the creative and the intellectual gifts in the participants and in myself. Merging phenomenology with a feminist analysis gave birth within me to a methodology that was both intellectually rigorous and creatively freeing. (Ettling, 1994b, p. 7)

In his dissertation work on the processes, challenges, changes, and transformations that occur in persons as they progress in phases from a typical Western meat-based diet to ovo-lactate to vegan to vegetarian live food diets, Alzak Amlani (1995) included a novel, nonverbal treatment of his data. In addition to the usual rational thematic analysis, he listened to each taped interview while in a meditative state, attending to the imagery (visual, auditory, proprioceptive) that arose within him, and he described that imagery along with its emotional and intuitive meanings. After incubating those impressions for several weeks, he recognized key archetypes associated with particular images and sensations. Connecting them with each participant's life story, Amlani found certain myths, stories, gods, and goddesses that mirrored the participants and their inner processes. He went on to develop and write a cross-cultural, mythic personification of each participant. Returning these mythic descriptions to the participants, Amlani reports that the participants found that the augmented descriptions rang true to them and that they often had added new, accurate information beyond the information contained in the original transcripts, before they had been elaborated through meditative, intuitive, imaginal, and mythic/archetypal procedures.

In her dissertation research on the experience, accompaniments, and self-perceived impacts of a program involving nonverbal dreamwork, Nancy Fagen (1995) used an unusually well-balanced methodology in which standardized assessments, unstructured interviews, and

specially designed questionnaires were augmented by a novel method of data collection and presentation. Since she was interested in studying what happens when participants engage in uninterpreted, nonverbal dream work, she asked each of her participants to incubate a special dream, during the last week of her study, asking the dream itself to comment upon the intervention process using its own voice. In a final section of her dissertation, she presented a selection of such dreams, without any interpretations on her part, so that they might speak more directly to the reader, conveying an aspect of the process other than that conveyed by rational discourse.

An additional extension of research "reporting" through inclusion of the nonverbal has not yet, to my knowledge, been formally tried or proposed. This would involve the deliberate employment of intention in order to invest one's research report with a capability of directly communicating additional content to the reader—nonverbally and "psychically." In principle, this should be possible. I am aware of a number of consistent anecdotes that indicate that this is already taking place, albeit, probably, in an informal, unconscious manner, rather than as a result of a deliberate aim or procedure.

Additional Research Directions

In addition to those already mentioned, we can consider the following directions in which we can extend and expand our research endeavors:

- Everyone involved in a research project (the researcher, the participant, and both acting together) can set special intentions (and perhaps even ritualize these at the beginning of the research project) for the "right" persons to appear in one's sample, for them to be able to know and to express the most useful material relevant to the topic being studied, and for the researcher to be able to receive, understand, and express new learnings in the most useful ways—ways useful to the participants, to the researcher, to the future readers of the research report, and to the field as a whole.

- We can use expressive modes other than linear prose in presenting our findings—e.g., we can make use of poetic expression, analogy, metaphor, and tropes.

- We can add nonverbal modes of knowing and expression to our research projects and to the communication of our findings.

- We can add creative expression modes to the productions of the participants and of the report writers.

- We can add additional emotional and intuitive objects, processes, and expressions to our research.

- We can add considerations of imagery, symbology, metaphor, and mythic and archetypal content to our research.

▪ In our exploration of research topics, we can introduce alternative states of consciousness in the participants and in the researcher.

▪ We can deliberately attempt to "break set" in various ways, so that we may see our subject matter with fresh eyes.

▪ We can allow for, encourage, and study the transformative possibilities of a research project for both participants and researcher.

Developing, testing, extending, and publicizing these and other new aspects of a more complete methodology can help in building an integral approach that can serve transpersonal studies more appropriately and also serve as a template or model for fostering the developing "new science."

An Even Bolder Step: Knowing Through Becoming

Emotional, intuitive, and nonverbal expressive aspects can be added in greater density to ongoing research projects to make them more complete, more balanced, and more likely to tap all dimensions of what is being studied. But one can take an even bolder step, as well, in the direction of a truly transpersonal methodology. Such a step would involve paying full attention to *what is known directly by the eye of the spirit*; and this type of knowing would seem to require a change or transformation in the investigator's very *being*. It would require that the investigator *become* what is being studied, and to know it as *subject* rather than as object.

Evelyn Underhill, a dedicated student of the mystical experience, expressed this same idea:

> We know a thing only by uniting with it; by assimilating it; by an interpenetration of it and ourselves . . . . Wisdom is the fruit of communion; ignorance the inevitable portion of those who "keep themselves to themselves," and stand apart, judging, analyzing the things which they have never truly known. (Underhill, 1915, p. 4)

We find similar expressions in the writings of scientists such as cytogeneticist Barbara McClintock, biologists Jonas Salk and June Goodfield, and physicist Albert Einstein:

> I've often marveled that you can look at a cell under the microscope and can see so much! Well, you know, when I look at a cell, I get down in that cell and look around. . . . I found that the more I worked with them the bigger and bigger [they] got, and when I was really working with them I wasn't outside, I was down there. I was part of the system. I was right down there with them, and everything got big. I even was able to see the internal parts of the chromosomes—actually everything was there. It surprised me because I actually felt as if I were right down there and these were my friends. . . .As you look at these things, they

become part of you. And you forget yourself. The main thing about it is you forget yourself. (Barbara McClintock, quoted in Keller, 1983, p. 69, 117)

Very early in my life I would imagine myself in the position of the object in which I was interested. Later, when I became a scientist, I would picture myself as a virus, or as a cancer cell, for example, and try to sense what it would be like to be either. I would also imagine myself as the immune system, and I would try to reconstruct what I would do as an immune system engaged in combating a virus or cancer cell. (Salk, 1983, p. 7)

If you want to really understand about a tumor, you've got to *be* a tumor. (Goodfield, 1981, p. 213)

Only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding, can lead to [these laws]; . . . the daily effort comes from no deliberate intention or program, but straight from the heart. (Albert Einstein, quoted in Hoffman and Dukas, 1973, p. 222)

In much earlier times, we find similar ideas expressed in Patanjali's expositions of the *Yoga Sutras*, in descriptions of uniting with the object of inquiry in the form of complete absorption or *samyama* (see Taimni, 1961). Here, we find promises that different types of *direct knowing* can be achieved through the concentration, contemplation, and absorption of attention, consciousness, and awareness upon different "objects"—that one can know directly by merging or becoming one with the object of one's intentionality. Similar ideas are part of the epistemologies of many indigenous peoples and of many spiritual, mystical, esoteric, and wisdom traditions. Certain meditative and contemplative practices may facilitate this type of direct knowing. Shear (1981) and Powell (1982) report the tantalizing findings of preliminary attempts to explore *samyama* in modern investigative settings. It also would be useful to consider the various forms of direct knowing studied in parapsychology and psychical research as possible instances of this same principle of "becoming" what one wishes to know.

Intuitive Inquiry Within Psychological Investigations:
Singing to the Inmost Self

The fields of humanistic and transpersonal psychology—the third and fourth expressions of twentieth-century psychology—follow, build upon, and extend the hallmark eras of psychoanalytic and behavioral psychology. Much psychological knowledge and know-how has been acquired in a little over a hundred years of scientific psychological investigation. Much of this knowledge is expected, even taken for granted, in contemporary life. Yet, at the same time, ordinary human concerns such as the nature of love and trust or extraordinary human concerns such as the nature of pure and altered states of awareness and mystical experiences seem outside the province of respectable psychological investigation and are left for the poets, novelists, and playwrights to explore through metaphor and story. As we turn from the end of the twentieth century, a century of enormous change, and toward the beginning of the twenty-first century with

its potential for newness, it seems fitting and timely to bring imagination and intuition back into scientific inquiry. Psychology is, after all, the study of human behaviors and experiences, including their fullest and richest manifestations and expressions. Methods falling short of using the fullness of human capacities will fail to explore the fullness of being alive day to day in this extraordinary experience called daily life.

Today's epistemologies and methods must explore the expansive and complex nature of the human experience with the full capacities of being human and being aware of it. The field of transpersonal psychology has been exploring these domains for over twenty years. In some ways, however, the development of the field has been impeded by its reliance on the experimental methods it inherited from the dominant psychologies of the 1950s and 1960s. In this section (prepared by R.A.), we consider new ways (or perhaps nuanced but very old ways) of exploring the nature of the human experience. The guiding principles proposed here place qualities such as compassion, intuition, immediate apprehension of meaning, and service to society's disenfranchised as central to scientific or empirical inquiry in psychology.

The Heart of Compassion as Value and Principle of Validation and Consensus

Bringing the compassionate heart to scientific inquiry—to the way we ask our questions, set our hypotheses, construct our instruments, conduct our investigations, analyze our data, construct our theories, and speak to our readers, our audience—brings a renewed intentionality to our sciences. Our values and intentions frame the manner of our thinking and actions. Our compassion allows us to ask the most meaningful questions and guides our hypotheses and speculations toward rich and expansive theories regarding the nature of the human experience. Our compassion allows our research participants to speak to us freely and honestly about the depth and value of their human experiences. It takes skill to learn to analyze data; yet, it is our compassion that allows us to see the value and meaningfulness of the data as it shapes itself before us. And, finally, as we write up our findings, our compassion is the vessel for others to hear ideas and theories already formed of compassionate listening, analysis, and synthesis of findings.

Examples abound. My students' and colleagues' research in topics such as reclaiming identify after abuse, the inward movement of beauty, the qualities of serenity and contentment in everyday life, the experience of addiction and its impact on long-term relationships, and mutuality in relationships have all emerged from personal experience and a desire to share and amplify the experience through study of the experiences of others. My own research on transformative weeping (Anderson, 1996) was born of a personal experience and desire to give voice to a life experience unexplored by contemporary science or by investigations into the nature of the mystical experience. My search for relevant descriptions that resonated with my own experiences was heart-felt; it was a yearning to seek external validation and amplification of a commonly unarticulated experience, an experience therefore unknown to consensual reality and consequent scientific discourse. My compassion and resonance with the experience allowed me to lean gently into the experiences of others for deeper understanding. This process was essentially introspective, heuristic, and enormously demanding in terms of documentation and repeated cycles of reviewing the data again and again. I doubt that I would have been able to

see, far less apprehend, the experience in others if I hadn't had the experience myself. Passion and compassion for the subject of inquiry has likely guided researchers throughout history. The principle of compassion as value and validation makes this inherent process in scientific inquiry more explicit.

From the point of view of everyday consensual discourse, validity and truthfulness concern our capacity to accurately relate the fullness and richness of a given human experience however grand or small, linear or cyclic, significant or insignificant in nature. Those that seem sufficiently important to relate to others are often vivid, personal, and particular. Poetry, prose, and lyrics often speak artfully of these rich human experiences.   The concept of true-to-life validity in conventional psychological empiricism, which is primarily attained through tests, measurements, and experimental instrumentation of various sorts, often confuses and trivializes our common sense understanding of validity—of just telling the whole truth of what occurred in our lived experience. Marshaled into operational definitions comprised of Likert-scaling and Q-sorts and so on, descriptions of romantic love, grief and pain, or learning to trust again seem confused and constrained. The rich human experience is lost. Too often the richness and fullness of common—not to mention unique and transcendent—human experiences has disappeared from our experimental investigations.

As scientists and psychologists, we value rigor, precision, and clarity. Yet a new science of research psychology must also give hope and an expanding awareness of human life lived fully and richly. If compassion guides each step of the research process of asking, analyzing, and telling, the final research findings may be less honed to focused precision. Yet they will be fuller and richer and, from my point of view, more valid and replicable, as well.

Intuitive inquiry relies on the principle of sympathetic resonance for validation, replication, and social-context consensus, as articulated below.

Sympathetic Resonance as a Validation Procedure

The principle of sympathetic resonance in the scientific endeavor is best introduced with an analogy. If one plucks a string on a cello on one side a room, a string of a cello on the opposite side will begin to vibrate, too. Striking a tuning fork will vibrate another some distance away. The resonance communicates and connects directly and immediately without intermediaries except for air and spaciousness. The principle of sympathetic resonance introduces resonance as a validation procedure for the researcher's particular intuitive insights and syntheses. The principle suggests that research can function more like poetry in its capacity for immediate apprehension and recognition of an experience spoken by another and yet (surprisingly and refreshingly, perhaps) be true for oneself as well. The procedures, insights, data analysis, and synthesis of transpersonal research may begin to approach the borders of understanding and communication which seem more like poetry than like conventional empirical science, as we have known it in the twentieth century. Describing the richness and fullness of human experience may require the use of metaphors, similes, and symbols. The poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi, Ranier Maria Rilke, and the unsweet poems of Emily Dickinson are notable examples of poetry which speaks directly to the inmost Self. In describing the poetry of Rilke,

Robert Hass, who is also a poet, describes the poet's unique ability to "whisper or croon into our inmost ear":

> The *Divine Elegies* are an argument against our lived, ordinary lives. And it is
> not surprising that they are. Rilke's special gift as a poet is that he does not seem
> to speak from the middle of life, that he is always calling us away from it. His
> poems have the feeling of being written from a great depth in himself. What
> makes them so seductive is that they also speak to the reader so intimately. They
> seem whispered or crooned into our inmost ear, insinuating us toward the same
> depth in ourselves. The effect can be hypnotic. . . . The voice of Rilke's poems,
> calling us out of ourselves, or calling us into the deeper places in ourselves, is
> very near to what people mean by poetry. It is also what makes him difficult to
> read thoughtfully. He induces a kind of trance, as soon as the whispering begins:

> > Yes—the spring times needed you. Often a star
> > was waiting for you to notice it. A wave rolled toward you
> > out of the distant past, or as you walked
> > under an open window, a violin
> > yielded itself to your hearing. All this was mission.
> > But could you accomplish it? Weren't you always
> > distracted by expectation, as if every event
> > announced a beloved? (Where can you find a place
> > to keep her, with all the huge strange thoughts inside you
> > going and coming and often staying all the night.)

> Look at how be bores into us. That caressing voice seems to be speaking
> to the solitary walker in each of us who is moved by springtime, stars, oceans, the
> sound of music. And then he reminds us that those things touch off in us a deeper
> longing. First, there is the surprising statement that the world is a mission, and
> the more surprising question about our fitness for it. Then, with another question,
> he brings us to his intimacy with our deeper hunger. And then he goes below that,
> to the still more solitary self with its huge strange thoughts. It is as if he were
> peeling off layers of the apparent richness of the self, arguing us back to the
> poverty of a great raw, objectless longing. (Mitchell, 1989, pp. xiv-xv)

So often the poetry of Rumi, Rilke, and Dickinson point us in the direction of immediate knowing. Meaning somehow passes directly from the writer to the reader or listener, seemingly by pointing to perhaps inchoate experiences already shared by both of us. From a psychological researcher's point of view, the research findings may present a pattern of descriptions rather like a pattern of harmonics. While the reader or listener may not have the exact arrangement of harmonics, the basic pattern is nonetheless immediately apprehended and recognized.

In terms of routine scientific validation, the immediate apprehension or recognition of a researcher's insight analyses could be verified using conventional experimental-quantitative

procedures. Validity of findings is thus formed through consensus building, noting consonance, dissonance, or neutrality subgroup by subgroup within a culture and across cultures. (A discussion of the validation procedures of consonance, dissonance, and neutrality will be explored at another time.)

Constructing the Social Context of Knowledge: Building Validity Through Circles of Sympathetic Resonance

The importance of defining the social and political context of research findings has been emphasized repeatedly by feminist researchers and epistemologists (e.g., Fonow and Cook, 1991; Nielsen, 1990; Reinhardt, 1992; Riger, 1992; and Shepherd, 1993). Through the validation procedures of consonant, dissonant, and neutral sympathetic resonance subgroup by subgroup, a kind of mapping of the validity of a research finding could be done. A modified sociogram might be constructed with concentric circles of resonance designating subgroups wherein the research findings are immediately apprehended and recognized or reacted to with dissonance or neutrality (e.g., an arising yawn).

The Personal is Universal (The Heuristic Contribution)

Intuitive empirical inquiry assumes that the unique and personal voice of the researcher gives the final expression of the research a universal voice. Like heuristic methods, intuitive empirical inquiry values and depends on the experiences and insights of the individual researcher at every phase of the research process. Since the unique experience and voice of the researcher is essential to enlivening the research with depth and richness of inquiry and expression, this unique voice gives intuitive and heuristic research its fundamental character. Jonas Salk (1983) describes his scientific endeavors as having an "inverted perspective" of imagining himself a virus, a cancer cell, or the immune system. Barbara McClintock, a well-known corn geneticist, describes her insights as originating in having "a feeling for the organism" that created "the openness to let it come to you" (Barbara McClintock, quoted in Keller, 1983, p. 198). For the field of psychology, the researcher's personal and permeating analyses of the phenomenon allow experiences such as romantic love, loneliness, solitude, resistance, and chronic pain to speak to others individually and universally at the same time. It is if we are being individually spoken to—from one person's individual knowing to someone else's knowing of the experience; therein, those aspects of the phenomenon universally shared seem brightly obvious.

To the intuitive and heuristic researcher, speaking and revealing the inmost truth of experience seeks to speak directly to the inmost self of another. It is as if speaking one's personal truth—however unique and passionate it may feel—transcends our sense of separateness and brings us suddenly, even joyfully together—at least for an instant. We are at the same threshold: a threshold of knowing, beholding, apprehending, and acknowledging an aspect of life we all may share. In this process, it also happens that we see more clearly how we are different, as described above. Some of the synthesized, particular experiences of others will seem vaguely familiar and understandable yet remote and unknown as well. Again, the unique and personal expression of the experience or phenomenon allows us to see another's expression

as understandable and valuable, yet sometimes unfamiliar and unknown in a personal and experiential sense.

From the individual researcher's point of view, the researcher intuitively "leans into" an experience that is clearly present, although perhaps not well articulated, in human experience. In describing heuristic methods, Clark Moustakas puts it this way:

> In heuristics, an unshakable connection exists between what is out there, in its appearance and reality, and what is within me in reflective thought, feeling, and awareness. It is I the person living in a world with others, alone yet inseparable from the community of others. I who see and understand something, freshly, as if for the first time. I who come to know essential meanings inherent in my experience. I stand out within my experiences and in the entire domain of my interest and concern. Moffitt (1971, p. 149) captures this kind of seeing and knowing in his poem "To Look At Any Thing":
>
>> To look at any thing
>> If you would know that thing,
>> You must look at it long:
>> To look at this green and say
>> "I have seen spring in these:
>> Woods," will not do—you must
>> Be the thing you see:
>> You must be the dark snakes of
>> Stems and ferny plumes of leaves,
>> You must enter in
>> To the small silences between
>> The leaves,
>> You must take your time
>> And touch the very place
>> They issue from.
>
> In Moffitt's sense, as a researcher I am the person who is challenged to apprehend the meaning of things and to give these meanings ongoing life. I provide the light that guides the explication of something and knowledge of it. When I illuminate a question, it comes to life. When I understand its constituents, it emerges as something solid and real. (Clark Moustakas, 1990, p. 12)

The Personal is Political (The Feminist Contribution)

From the feminist critique of research (e.g., Fonow and Cook, 1991; Nielsen, 1990; Reinhardt, 1992; Riger, 1992; and Shepherd, 1993) and from other liberation social movements (e.g., Boff, 1993; Gutierrez, 1990; and Gutierrez, 1994), we have gained valuable insight into the intricate interconnectedness of the personal and political aspects of everyday life. At minimum,

it would be intellectually embarrassing, at the end of the twentieth century, to disconnect what we *do* in the research laboratory from the implications of our methods and findings, to engage in *any* investigation of human behavior which does not analyze the socio-political context in which the behaviors and phenomena take place, or to contend that *how we do what we do*—with research participants, our analyses, and communications to the wider public—in the name of research is separate from our behaviors and beliefs in all other aspects of our lives, including our families, friends, communities, and world politics at large. Adrienne Rich, a contemporary American poet, eloquently presents this insight:

> When the Civil Right movement came along in the late fifties, early sixties, I began to hear Black voices describing and analyzing what were the concrete issues for Black people, like segregation, like racism, it came to me as a great relief. It was like finding language for something that I'd needed a language for all along. That was the first place where I heard a language of name oppression. And it was an enormous relief, even as it threw up a lot of questions for me as to where I stood with all this . . . I think that all of that early splitting and fragmentation has made me hungry for connections to be made. Where connections are being made always feels to me like the point of intensest life. . . . At the same time, I was thinking a lot about something that wasn't being talked about at the time very much. I was thinking about where sexuality belonged in all of this. What is the connection between Vietnam and the lover's bed? If this insane violence is being waged against a very small country by this large and powerful country in which I live, what does that have to do with sexuality and with what's going on between men and women, which I felt also as a struggle even then? (Adrienne Rich, quoted in Gelpi & Gelpi, 1993, p. 263)

For the feminist researcher, all actions are political and at their best—and I'll add *most conscious best*—have the power to emancipate, liberate, enliven, and energize human life and possibilities for all people, especially the socially and politically disadvantaged. What is truly personal and inner is manifested in some way by us in our world—and, if commonly shared, perhaps by others. Deep and personal and enlightened intuitive (or heuristic) inquiry into the nature of commonly-held experiences such as loneliness, oppression by ideologies, reclaiming the self after abuse and rape, the anger of cancer, and so on, is important in understanding the inmost dimensions of human experiences as well as their social and political consequences. What is inside is outside.

Central to the feminist and liberationist critique of political and scientific discourse is the absence of the actual voice of the poor and disenfranchised from research studies and social analysis in general. In writing about Emily Dickinson's life and poetry, Adrenne Rich expresses the liberating power of giving voice to the voiceless in contemporary poetry:

> The poet's relationship to her poetry has, it seems to me—and I am not speaking only of Emily Dickinson—a twofold nature. Poetic language—the poem on paper—is a concretization of poetry of the world at large, the self, and the forces

within the self; and those forces are rescued from formlessness, lucidified, and integrated in the act of writing poems. But there is a more ancient concept of the poet, which is that she is endowed to speak for those who do not have the gift of [poetic] language, or to see for those who—for whatever reasons—are less conscious of what they are living through. It is as though the risks of the poet's existence can be put to some use beyond her own survival. (Gellpi & Gelpi, 1993, p. 194)

What happens between lovers cannot be separated from what happens between countries in the worldwide political arena. If common and saturated throughout the culture, patterns of actions between people (e.g., lovers) become analogues, rather holograms, of a people's actions in national and international affairs (e.g., Vietnam) as well.

The Interconnectedness of Scientific Insight

Bringing together the principle of *the personal is universal* from heuristic methods and *the personal is political*, we come full circle. The interconnectedness of what is personal to what is political to what is universal draws a complete circle. At a risk of sounding theological, it sounds rather trinitarian, in the original meaning. What is particularly sacred in human life is also manifested in the social and community aspects our lives and the universality and unity which brings us together. Engaging in research which delves into the depths of human experience demands compassion and understanding for richness of human expression and possibilities and the interconnectedness of the personal-political-universal circle of our endeavors, especially our research endeavors. From another point of view, *the personal is universal* contribution of heuristic methods and *the personal is political* contribution of feminist and liberation analyses are two sides of one coin—or, rather, the extraverted and introspective aspects of personality types in general.

Trust the Ritual: Keeping the Discipline of Procedures and Protocols

It seems appropriate to think of research procedures and protocols as a kind of ritual, that is, a carefully-prescribed form intended to reveal more than the overt procedures and protocols themselves. Having set procedures and protocols in place, we follow the form with care and precision. Modifications are made with reservation and with an increased sense of urgency to document any deviations along the way. Inherently, or over time, good methodologies, like good road maps, generate trust. The methods will guide the process of revealing the essential nature of an experience which seems to come to life through gentle and intuitive inquiry.

In using heuristic and intuitive methods, my colleague doctoral students and I have been delighted and surprised at how the procedures have allowed us to move more profoundly into the nature of the experience studied—often with quite unexpected results. Using the introspective and intuitive perspective of heuristic methods is demanding and rigorous. Nonetheless, this perspective sustains a process which helps to thoroughly permeate the nature of an experience. Seemingly, the sheer intent and concentration converge to create a unified momentum. There is

even the sense that following the procedures, especially in times of confusion and discouragement, allows the researcher to relax even more completely into the sustaining process of the investigation.

The Element of Delight and Surprise in Scientific Inquiry

Most research, in my experience, entails delight and surprise. Hunches lead to new insights. Thoughts in the night and intuitions, while not particularly thinking about anything, lead to new ways of looking at old problems. The very nature of heuristic and intuitive methods sets the *methodological stage* for new ideas to happen. They often do.

The Function of Compassionate Knowing (Soft Wisdoms of the Heart) in Scientific Inquiry

For Barbara McClintock, knowing a thing requires loving it. While looking through her microscope during research on corn fungus, she found that her perspective altered dramatically:

> I found that the more I worked with them the bigger and bigger [they] got, and when I was really working with them I wasn't outside, I was down there. I was part of the system. I was right down there with them, and everything got big. I even was able to see the internal parts of the chromosomes—actually, everything was there. It surprised me because I actually felt as if I were right down there and these were my friends. (Barbara McClintock, quoted in Keller, p. 117)

In spiritual traditions throughout the centuries, true and encompassing intelligence is reported to have these same qualities. To know someone, we must love them first and look at the world from their perspective. To know any thing, we must love it and become its friend.

Compassionate knowing has a softness. It is as if what is observed yields itself to our knowing. There is no intrusion, no object, and no subject. Aspects of the experience studied, which don't belong to the depth of the experience, fall away. Those aspects which give amplitude and fullness to the experience studied begin to cohere in their complexity and inter-relatedness (inter-beingness). By loving, and through living thoroughly the experience studied, the researcher looks around from inside the experience and notes what is there. The researcher then searches from inside the experience until the essential qualities of the experience, itself, come to life as the researcher's own experience. Gradually, the entire panorama of the experience comes more and more clearly into view.

The Irreducibility of Individual Human Behavior

For the purposes of research inquiry in psychology, language explicating human behavior functions in two significant ways:

1. When spoken clearly in words, heretofore unclaimed aspects of our experiences suddenly seem more solid and real. Claiming our memories and experiences gives our spoken words their emancipating qualities. Energy and tension are released.   Subliminal memories and

experiences tip above the threshold of our awareness challenging assimilation and integration in the present.

        2. Conversely, as Abraham Maslow (1966, p. 45) put it, "There is no substitute for experience, none at all." Eloquent metaphors and brilliant psychological conceptualization also can serve to obscure, minimize, and trivialize the very experience being examined. There is an inherent quality to human experience that is irreducible to words, descriptions, symbols, metaphors, and so on. Although symbols and metaphors, for example, may come closer in aiding one to understand the experience, they still are not the experience, itself. As Maslow emphasized, descriptions, symbols, and metaphors are useful only if you have had the experience (or one akin to it), already. A particularly apt example of the irreducibility of human experience is that of extreme pain: Though some descriptions may come close, none are the pain, nor do they reproduce it. This particular point has been emphasized, repeatedly, by Liberation Theologians who have noted that pain has a shrill honesty that few of us can ignore.

        What are we to do? We are suggesting that we can stay as close as possible to the voice of the person(s) describing the pain, joy, grief, sadness, sorrow, and all other especially-rich human experiences. We can be accurate. We can stay close to the behaviors, or to the phenomenon, itself, and avoid collapsing categories which reduce complexity and meaningfulness. We can use poetic tropes, such as metaphors and symbols, to point to the experience which eludes words while never forgetting that the words, metaphors, and symbols are *not* the experience. We can keep a beginner's mind, stay humble, and always remember that the inmost capacities of the Self are enormous.

Phenomenological Inquiry: Existential and Transpersonal Dimensions

        Phenomenological psychology invites us not just to an awareness of another perspective with a previously unrecognized body of knowledge but to a radically different way of being-in-the-world. In addition, this different way of being leads naturally to a different mode or practice of inquiry (i.e., the methods of phenomenological research). In this section, I (R.V.) will compare phenomenological psychology to the more mainstream behavioral and psychoanalytic approaches (Valle, 1989), present the essence of the existential-phenomenological perspective (Valle, King, & Halling, 1989), and then describe the nature of an emerging transpersonal-phenomenological psychology (Valle, 1995).

Philosophy and Approaches in Psychology

        Existentialism as the philosophy of being became intimately paired with phenomenology as the philosophy of experience, since it is our experience, alone, that serves as a means or way to inquire about the nature of existence (i.e., what it means to be). Existential-phenomenology as a specific branch or system of philosophy was, therefore, the natural result, with what we have come to know as phenomenological methods being the manifest, practical form of this inquiry. Existential-phenomenology, when applied to experiences of psychological interest, became existential-phenomenological psychology, and has taken its place within the general context of

humanistic or "3rd Force" psychology, since it is humanistic psychology which offers an openness to human experience as it presents itself in awareness.

From a historical perspective, the humanistic approach has been both a reaction to and progression of the world-views which constitute more mainstream psychology, namely behavioral-experimental and psychoanalytic psychology. It is in this way that the philosophical bases which underlie both existential-phenomenological and transpersonal ("4th Force") psychology have taken root and grown in this field.

In classic behaviorism, the human individual is regarded as a passive entity whose experience cannot be accurately verified or measured by natural scientific method. This entity, seen as implicitly separate from its surrounding environment, simply responds/reacts to stimuli which impinge upon it from the external physical and social world. Since only that which can be observed with the senses, quantified, and whose qualities and dimensions can be agreed to by more than one observer is recognized as acceptable evidence, human behavior (including verbal behavior) became the focus of psychology.

In a partial response to this situation, the radical behaviorism of Skinner (e.g., 1974) claims to have collapsed this classic behavior-experience split by regarding thoughts and emotions as subject to the same laws that govern operant conditioning and the roles that stimuli, responses, and reinforcement schedules play within this paradigm. Thoughts and feelings are, simply, behaviors.

In the psychoanalytic world, an important difference with behavioral psychology stands out. Experience is not only recognized as an important part of being human but as essential in understanding the adult personality. It is within this context that Freud's personal unconscious and Jung's collective unconscious each take their place. The human being is, thereby, more whole, yet is still treated as a basically passive entity who responds to "stimuli" from within (e.g., childhood experiences, current emotions, unconscious motives) rather than the pushes and pulls from without. Whether the analyst speaks of one's unresolved oral stage issues or the subtle effects of the shadow archetype, the implicit separation of person and world remains unexamined, as does the underlying causal interpretation of all behavior and experience. Both behavioral and analytic psychology are grounded in an uncritically accepted linear temporal perspective which seeks to explain human nature via the identification of prior causes and subsequent effects.

Existential-Phenomenological Psychology

It is only when we reach the existential-phenomenological approach in psychology that the implicitly accepted causal way of being is seen as only one of many ways human beings can experience themselves and the world. More specifically, our being presents itself to awareness as a being-in-the-world where the human individual and his or her surrounding environment are regarded as inextricably intertwined. The person and world are said to co-constitute one another. One has no meaning when regarded independently of the other. Although the world is still regarded as essentially different from the person in kind, the human being, with its full experiential depth, is seen as an active agent who makes choices within a given external situation (i.e., human freedom always presents itself as a situated freedom). A number of other concepts

come from existential-phenomenological psychology including the prereflective, lived structure, the life world, and intentionality. All of these represent aspects or facets of the deeper dimensions of human being and human capacity.

The prereflective level of awareness is central to understanding the nature of phenomenological research methodology. Reflective, conceptual experience is regarded as literally a "reflection" of a preconceptual, and, therefore, prelanguaged, foundational, bodily knowing that exists "as lived" before or prior to any cognitive manifestation of this purely felt-sense. Consider, for example, the way a sonata exists or lives in the hands of a performing concert pianist. In fact, if he or she begins to think about which note to play next, the style and power of the performance is very likely to noticeably suffer.

This prereflective knowing is present as the ground of any meaningful (meaning-full) human experience, and exists in this way, not as a random, chaotic inner stream of subtle senses or impressions, but as a prereflective structure. This embodied structure or essence exists as an aspect or dimension of each individual's *Lebenswelt* or life-world, and emerges at the level of reflective awareness *as* meaning. Meaning, then, is regarded by the phenomenological psychologist as the manifestation in conscious, reflective awareness of the underlying prereflective structure of the particular experience being addressed. In this sense, the purpose of any empirical phenomenological research project is to articulate the underlying lived-structure of any meaningful experience on the level of conceptual awareness. In this way, understanding for its own sake is the purpose of phenomenological research. The "results" of such an investigation usually take the form of basic themes or constituents which collectively represent the structure of the experience for that study. They are the notes, if you will, that comprise the melody of the experience being investigated.

Possible topics for a phenomenological study include, therefore, any meaningful human experience that can be articulated in our everyday language such that a reasonable number of individuals would recognize and acknowledge the experience being described (e.g., "being anxious," "really feeling understood," "forgiving another," "learning"). These many different experiences comprise, in a very real sense, the fabric of our existence as experienced. In this way, phenomenological psychology with its attendant research methods has been, to date, a primarily existential-phenomenological psychology. From this perspective, reflective and prereflective awareness are essential elements or dimensions of human being as a being-in-the-world. They co-constitute one another. One cannot be fully understood without reference to the other. They are truly two sides of the same coin.

Transcendent Awareness

There are experiences or certain kinds of awareness, however, that do not seem to be captured or illuminated by phenomenological reflections on descriptions of our conceptually recognized experiences and/or our prereflective felt-sense of things. Often referred to as transpersonal, transcendent, sacred, or spiritual experience, these types of awareness are not really "experience" in the way we normally use the word nor are they the same as our prereflective sensibilities. The existential-phenomenological notion of intentionality is helpful in understanding this distinction.

To the existential-phenomenological psychologist, intentionality refers to the very nature or essence of consciousness as it presents itself. Consciousness is said to be intentional, meaning that consciousness always has an object, whether that intended object be a physical object, another person, or an idea or feeling. Consciousness is always a "consciousness of" something that is not consciousness itself. This particular way of defining/describing intentionality directly implies the deep, implicit interrelatedness between the perceiver and that which is perceived that characterizes consciousness in this approach. It is this very inseparability that enables us, through disciplined reflection, to illumine the meaning that was previously implicit and unlanguaged for us in the situation as it was lived.

Transcendent awareness, on the other hand, seems somehow "prior to" this reflective-prereflective realm, presenting itself as more of a space or ground from which our more common experience and felt-sense emerge. This space or context does, however, present itself in awareness, and is, thereby, known to the one who is experiencing. Moreover, implicit in this awareness is the direct and undeniable realization that this foundational space is not of the phenomenal realm of perceiver and the perceived. Rather, it is a noumenal, unitive space within/from which intentional consciousness and phenomenal experience both manifest. I refer the listener-reader to Valle (1989) for his "Beginning Phenomenology of Transpersonal Experience." In this article, six qualities are described that I have come to recognize in moments of transpersonal-transcendent awareness (usually during the practice of meditation): (a) stillness/peace, (b) love/contentment, (c) absence of "I-ness," (d) transformed sense of space, (e) the ever present, and (f) intuitive "seeing."

As I came to recognize these qualities or dimensions over the years, I found myself recontextualizing the existential-phenomenological concept of intentionality by acknowledging a field of awareness which appears to be inclusive of the intentional nature of mind but, at the same time, not of it. It seemed, therefore, necessary to posit a "transintentionality" which addresses this consciousness *without* an object (Merrell-Wolff, 1973). I soon came to realize, as my colleague Steen Halling (personal communication) rightfully pointed out, that consciousness without an object is also consciousness without a subject, and that transintentional awareness represents a way of being where the separateness of a perceiver and that which is perceived has dissolved, a reality not of (or in some way beyond) time, space, and causation as we normally know them.

This, for me, is the bridge between existential/humanistic and transpersonal/transcendent approaches in psychology, for it is here that one is called to recognize the radical distinction between the reflective/prereflective realm and pure consciousness, between rational/emotive processes and transcendent/spiritual awareness, between intentional knowing of the finite and being the infinite. It is, therefore, mind, not consciousness *per se*, that is characterized by intentionality, and it is our recognition of the transintentional nature of Being that calls us to investigate those experiences which clearly reflect or present these transpersonal dimensions in the explicit context of phenomenological research methods.

Further Reflections and Recent Research on Transpersonal Experience

What follows are some personal reflections on these dimensions (from Valle, 1995) as well as a brief description of recently completed and ongoing phenomenological research in this area. My purpose and hope in offering these reflections and information is to deepen our understanding of transcendent experience through the application of phenomenological research methodology, and to facilitate the emergence of a new approach: transpersonal-phenomenological psychology.

It has been written and taught for millennia in the spiritual circles of many different cultures that sacred experience presents itself directly in one's awareness (i.e., without any mediating sensory or reflective processes) and, as such, is self-validating. The direct personal experience of God is, therefore, the "end" of all spiritual philosophy and practice. Transcendent/sacred/Divine experience has been recognized and often discussed, both directly and metaphorically, in terms of either intense passion or the absolute stillness of mind. It is in this sense of radical transcendent experience, experience which by its very nature or essence is independent of any referent in the world of forms (i.e., transintentional), that I use the word "transpersonal."

In our day-to-day experience, a harmonious union of passion and stillness or peace of mind is rarely experienced. In fact, passion and stillness are regarded as somehow antagonistic to each other. For example, who one is passionately involved with some project or person, the mind is quite active and intensely involved. On the other hand, the calm, serene, and profoundly peaceful quality of mind that often accompanies deep meditation is fully disengaged from and, thereby, disinterested in things and events of the world.

I suggest that what presents itself as quite paradoxical on one level, offers us a very real way to approach the direct personal experience of the transcendent, that is, to first recognize and then deepen any experience where passion and peace of mind are simultaneously fully present in one's awareness. If, in fact, Divine presence manifests in human awareness in these two ways, and sacred experience is what one truly seeks, it becomes important to approach and understand those experiences wherever these two dimensions exist in an integrated and harmonious way. In this way, one comes to understand the underlying essence which they share rather than simply being satisfied with the seeming opposites they first appear to be.

The relationship between passion and peacefulness is addressed in many of the world's scriptures and other spiritual writings. These two threads, for example, run through the *Psalms* (May & Metzger, 1977) of the Judeo-Christian tradition. At one point, we read: "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46, p. 691) and "For God alone my soul waits in silence" (Psalm 62, p. 701), and at another point, "For zeal for thy house has consumed me" (Psalm 69, p. 707) and "My soul is consumed with longing for thy ordinances" (Psalm 119, p. 749). Stillness, silence, zeal, and longing all seem to play an essential part in this process.

In his teachings on attaining the direct experience of God through the principles and practices of Yoga, Paramahansa Yogananda (1956) affirms: "I am calmly active. I am actively calm. I am a Prince of Peace sitting on the throne of poise, directing the kingdom of activity." And, more recently, Treya Wilber (Wilber, 1991) offers an eloquent exposition of this integration:

I was thinking about the Carmelites' emphasis on passion and the Buddhists' parallel emphasis on equanimity. It suddenly occurred to me that our normal understanding of what passion means is loaded with the idea of clinging, of wanting something or someone, of fearing losing them, of possessiveness. But what if you had passion without all that stuff, passion without attachment, passion clean and pure? What would that be like, what would that mean? I thought of those moments in meditation when I've felt my heart open, a painfully wonderful sensation, a passionate feeling but without clinging to any content or person or thing. And the two words suddenly coupled in my mind and made a whole. Passionate equanimity—to be fully passionate about all aspects of life, about one's relationship with spirit, to care to the depth of one's being but with no trace of clinging or holding, that's what the phrase has come to mean to me. It feels full, rounded, complete, and challenging. (pp. 338-339)

It is here that existential-phenomenological psychology with its attendant descriptive research methodologies comes into play. For if, indeed, we each identify with the contents of our reflective awareness and speak to and/or share with one another from this perspective in order to better understand the depths and richness of our meaningful experience, then phenomenological philosophy and method offer us the perfect, perhaps only, mirror to approach transcendent experience.

Experiences which present themselves as passionate, peaceful, or as an integrated awareness of these two become the focus for exploring in a direct, empirical, and human scientific way the nature of transcendent experience as we live it. Here is the "flesh" and promise of a transpersonal-phenomenological psychology.

At this point in time, I am pleased to note that a more formal emergence of transpersonal-phenomenological psychology has already begun. Several recent research studies employing an empirical phenomenological approach have investigated experiences with transpersonal qualities or dimensions: "Being voluntarily silent" (O. Elite; California Institute of Integral Studies); "Being with a dying person" (Tom West; C.I.I.S.); "Feeling grace in being of service to the terminally ill" (P. Gowack; C.I.I.S.); "Being with suffering as it emerges in the process of being with orphaned children" (P. Qualls; C.I.I.S.); "Encountering a Divine presence during a near-death experience" (Tim West; C.I.I.S.); "Experiencing unconditional love from a spiritual teacher" (C. Matsu-Pissot; C.I.I.S.); "Being carried along by a series or flow of unforeseen circumstances or events" (D. Hanson and J. Klimo; Rosebridge Graduate School of Integrative Psychology); and "Feeling able to move toward and accomplish a meaningful and challenging goal" (T. Shertock; Institute of Transpersonal Psychology). Reports of the research investigating these experiences appear as chapters in the forthcoming book *Phenomenological Inquiry: Existential and Transpersonal Dimensions*, R. Valle (Editor), New York: Plenum Press, 1996.

To date, phenomenological and transpersonal psychology have remained relatively separate in both their theoretical and research endeavors. This presentation is intended to offer a perspective that is both new and appealing, and will, thereby, contribute to the systematic

inclusion of transpersonal issues within the philosophical and research projects of phenomenological psychology.

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