

**CHTP at IONS, May 7, 2005**  
**Afternoon session 1: Research**  
**Rosemarie Anderson (ITP Global Programs)**

This panel presentation overviews some trends in transpersonal research, especially highlighting the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Rosemarie and co-author William Braud have completed the book proposal on transpersonal research methods to update *Transpersonal Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (SAGE Pubs, 1998). As in the first book the research methods and practices are designed to bring mindfulness, intuition, and compassion to research, both qualitative and quantitative. She teaches these skills in her classes and in the book, which is directed to graduate and advanced undergraduate students. The goal is to introduce these skills to mainstream universities in a user-friendly style.

Decided to drop Transpersonal from the title, wouldn't sell well to people in Minnesota.

Structure: Information in the book is offered in a way that is as mainstream and student-friendly as possible.

One of the directions Transpersonal Psychology is going in terms of research: assessment and scaling of TP concepts. Drawn into qualitative research.

Embodied writing is a high sensate style of writing. After listening to dozens of students read embodied writings about transformative experiences aloud in class over years, Rosemarie has garnered knowledge of how awareness takes place in the body.

Realized had enough experience about how awareness takes place in the body to write hundreds of scale items with the help of Focus Groups composed of body-centered therapists and body practitioners.

The first version of the Somatic Intelligence Scale (SIS) is now ready for reliability and validity testing. The SIS includes three subscales measuring Energy Body Awareness (EAS), Comfort Body Awareness (CAS), and Wellness Body Awareness (WAS) based on a successful factor analysis.

The EAS measures awareness of the body as a field of energy. Individuals scoring high on this subscale are aware of energetic changes as signs of balance, or imbalance, in relationship to health, well-being and safety. The energetic field of the body functions as the site of awareness for a self-regulating system that provides information in a manner rather like a drum or tympanic membrane.

The CAS measures somatic sensitivity. Individuals scoring high on this subscale feel comfortable in the world, centered in their bodies, and like their physical bodies. Individuals scoring low on this subscale feel that their bodies are numb and wish they had

a different body. Subject to validity studies, this subscale may be renamed the Trauma Sensitivity Subscale.

The WAS measures awareness of physical sensations inside the body and changes in these sensations over time. Individuals scoring high on this subscale notice changes in physical and emotional well-being and the relationship of these changes to external circumstances. Individuals scoring low on this subscale report being less aware of their level of sexual desire, fatigue, or relaxation.

Overall, the field of transpersonal psychology has reached an evolutionary stage capable of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods. Mathematics have an elegance, an artistic quality.

Many other directions are happening as well. Can now move beyond the descriptive level in the field.

Math doesn't have to be reductionistic, but depends on the attitude you bring to it.

None of this work is possible without collaboration. Fundamental to the nature of creating something beyond what one person can do alone.

### **Jenny Wade's Talk**

Faculty at ITP: Does Organizational Development consultancy out of Transpersonal Psychology background and deals with the realities confronting researchers. Doing teaching and consulting work allows her to be immersed in research all the time, but not in the type of research she really wants to do, like spontaneous altered states of mind during sex.

One of the challenges that we face at the student level, instructor level, etc, is the market, the real politic. In the climate of today there are very little grant monies for the kinds of things we are most interested in doing. A problem for many is if the research is altered states: it is hard to get funded unless it is about marijuana or alcohol and it bolsters the governmental stance on these issues.

Even in the body-mind area, more interest but direction is to take a fairly reductionistic stance, like isolating brain functions.

Pre- and perinatal, and gerontological issues research is controversial due to common medical practices.

Women who interacted with their children in-utero produced kids with higher level of development through first grade (10 IQ points above the average). Unanticipated advantage of the study, the fathers stayed with the mothers longer because the child was

treated as a person, not as an “event” before it was born. Most of the women were unmarried in this South American study.

Many students are not interested in research as a career. The field is experiencing a “graying faculty.” Where are the successors that are generating excitement, press, projects that are exciting in our field? What are some things that we can do to create the kind of environment to support developments in our field? We want to make a difference in a different way. How can we move politically to support that?

One important way that Transpersonal Psychology can be very useful (and is gravely understudied) is the impact of its group effects on people, working with people intensely in small groups or in larger ones, we can see a paranormal transfer of ideas, dreams, imagery, different kinds of information. This holds enormous value in terms of looking at human potential in these kinds of environments.

Study and isolate the trait and motive level qualities that have predictive validity for any field. Some are specific to specific fields. Challenge for us as institutions is to create atmospheres in the classroom and collaborate as sustaining institutions. Create the structures and kinds of outcomes that we need to make a difference at a social level, rather than remaining marginalized.

Story: the near death phenomenon had a lot of press in the 1970s, has now gone all over the world. Lots of research has been conducted on the topic. See it in mainstream culture, even though the idea is still controversial. Now the Journal of Near Death Studies is about to fold (printed by the University of Virginia). The entire department there is about to become a materialistic mainstream science department. Debate in that circle: journal has been out for 25 years in the culture; should it just disappear? Is it time?

What kind of mutation do we need to do so that the things we are interested in will remain and not be lost? Will it go underground on our watch? Nothing is hopeless, but what do we need to do to make a difference and have an impact? Are there ways and means that our institutions can create in order to do this?

Comments from the group (facilitated by Rosemarie): Please suggest models about how we can work collaboratively and synergistically.

Victor: In my Gestalt classes at end of semester I assign a paper in which the students answer questions about what they’ve learned in the class, compared with other experiences of therapy and/or other classes. I’m interested in moving along ideas of the connections of personal to the social field: social field analysis. That is taking and dividing human and social interaction (15 fields), such as grace & beauty, citizen participation. These are important issues of human condition. They form a series of layers or templates to look at individually—levels of analysis (about 8). Some areas have subjective measurements. Surface subject for rating scale items—very quick subjective response on a rating scale. I have thought a lot about the model, then about how to gather data. Started with a 7-point rating scales—I’m in the process of creating the scales now.

Matthew (Director of Academic Development at CIIS): Challenge of interpreting or translating the transpersonal. Language of power is actually the language of assessment. Prioritize being systematic in the way that knowledge is presented.

Initiative: how can we collaborate in legitimizing these TP/Integral experiences by being clear about what we mean and how we assess it?

Spiritual transformative integral education: struggling with what that looks like. Students are compelled by assessment. What does it look like in terms of student writing product? This is an opportunity to invoke that nexus.

What are you doing? How are you doing it? Is it being effective? Outcome based. There is a current assessment mania. Rather than fleeing from the assessment movement, get act together and get ahead of it. (WASC)

What sorts of common rubrics would we be invited to share?

13 programs that do PhD work at CIIS came together and identified common elements of dissertations. What is good transpersonal work? Make explicit what good work looks like.

Assessment is mindfulness practice. Student learning outcome. Assessment plan.

Candice: Head Start, all about outcomes and assessments, is a children's program in Marin that's been going on for 3 years. Struggling with a new piece that involves working with children experiencing homelessness. Have an extremely transient population coming through now. Don't have opportunity to get to know them, screenings are not representative of the child's learning or abilities. Not working. Would like to see some changes happen with this population. Government review didn't know what to do with that aspect of the program. Testing is required. Feels like it is not geared toward this population. How to create transpersonal assessments that serve that population in a better way?

(Mark?): Protocols exist as far as validating holistic approaches to therapy, just lying around waiting for someone to pick it up and do something with it.

Rosemarie: I have done the internal consistency reliability scale. I have another scale to complete before publishing. Correlations with (?), trauma, and noticing the changes over the course of one day.

Mike Arons: with a historical eye: talked about the power of the idea (assessment). Ideas tend to be received and recognized by people as valid for them, they don't need any assessment to sell. Also have a degenerative history, soaked into populus, popularized, deformed, distorted.

Maslow, Rogers, May, et al tried quite consciously not to fit it into the model of the time, warned everybody to stay away from the APA. Wanted the movement to burgeon on its own time. History of ideas: if something valid, even as the idea is swooped into the cultural frame of reference, influences the culture to change, idea is rediscovered in the new context, new frame of reference.

Humanistic isn't new, it was rediscovered, updated for the times. Find what there is a need for in these times, for the same sort of idea to be reintroduced in a new form that speaks to the changed times and culture. Even in a model in a socio cultural frame (rather than psychology), can see at how terms and notions have been picked up by (pundits, politicians, etc.) In that field of politics, look at how those ideas came and really stuck. Maslow's work was recognized first in the field of business—organizational development stuff, etc.

Many different entrees in society. Look at ranges. See where the context is now, 50 years later. Look within that context to various cultural frames of reference.

Victor: Head Start—it always makes sense to step back and ask what else is going on that we aren't measuring when measuring something. To what degree can you not do this or that thing because of homelessness? Can't get there from here? Have to address homelessness first? To what degree can this or that be done with this population?

Candice: I need to figure out how to put it on paper—what I'm doing in the interviews.

Zeno: Are we skirting the issue? Collaboration in research. Are there any statisticians in the room? (Show of hands) A couple. Have to address this if we're going to play ball with the people in power. Can we talk the talk?

Stu: Why keep privileging statisticians? Other methods are better tailored to the work.

Rosemarie: How are we to keep qualitative stuff going well and have the other also?

Zeno: They inform each other. If this field is going to remain vital, need to show it to APA, the business world, etc.

(Kim?): Different kind of validity depending upon the outcome. Result at first may not look positive, but over time may look like their mental health improved, for example after a near death experience. Interiority verifiable in a numeric way by the people you interact with?

Redefine what research is. "Research" is to look again. Documentation. Validity in the largest scope—does it matter? Is it helpful? Validity is a much larger issue.