

Textbook of Transpersonal Psychiatry and Psychology

edited by Bruce W. Scotton, M.D., Allan B. Chinen, M.D., and John R. Battista, M.D.; New York City, BasicBooks, 1996, 443 pages, \$55

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The field of psychiatry has exploded with exponentially growing knowledge of the neurophysiology of the brain and the associated organic pathology, which has revolutionized our understanding of the biology of many mental illnesses. Biological treatment modalities are expanding concomitantly. Amidst the excitement of these significant advances, it becomes easy to lose sight of the multidimensional facets of the human condition and of how many diverse factors contribute to psychiatric disorder and order.

The spiritual and transpersonal dimension of humanity has largely been avoided and neglected by the psychiatric community, partly due to a paucity of psychiatric literature addressing this important dimension. However, a distant voice can now be heard inquiring into the role of spirituality and trans-egoic experiences

in our formulation of an individual's presenting story. That distant voice found its way into *DSM-IV* in 1994 with the addition of the V-code diagnosis of "religious or spiritual problem." Filling part of the void in the psychiatric literature is the *Textbook of Transpersonal Psychiatry and Psychology*, the first comprehensive textbook that maps out this previously forbidden territory.

In 40 chapters, editors Scotton, Chinen, and Battista draw on the experience of 29 seasoned transpersonal clinicians, many who have made major contributions to the field of transpersonal studies. Guiding the reader through the diverse maze of transpersonal topics, the book begins by defining transpersonal psychiatry and psychology and explaining how it has developed as a respected field of study. Following is a historical review of the work of early clinicians who set the stage for transpersonal studies, namely William James, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Abraham Maslow, and Roberto Assagioli.

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