

Transpersonal Coaching for Spiritual Emergence and Emergencies

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1

Many Names

SPIRITUAL EMERGENCE AND EMERGENCY EXPERIENCES INCLUDE OR MAY
BE CALLED:

- ALTERED STATES
- NUMINOUS
- NOETIC
- TRANSCENDENT
- TRANSPERSONAL
- MYSTICAL
- ANOMALOUS
- RELIGIOUS
- PARANORMAL
- PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL
- ECSTATIC EXPERIENCES
- SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES (STE'S)

(JAMES, 1902; LYNN, KRIPPNER, & CARDEÑA, 2000; MYERS, 1903; SMITH,
2009; TART, 1990).

2

Exactly What is an SE/E Experience?

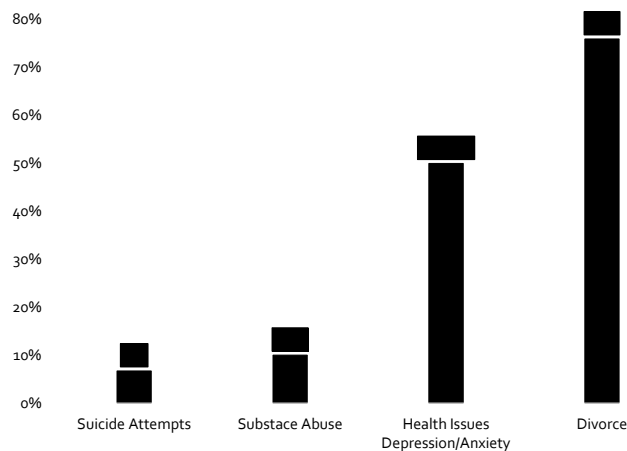
BREAKDOWNS OF MEANING THAT LEAD TO TRANSFORMATIVE GROWTH AND GREATER PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL HEALTH ON THE PART OF THE INDIVIDUAL. IT IS, "THE MOVEMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL TO A MORE EXPANDED WAY OF BEING THAT INVOLVES ENHANCED EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOSOMATIC HEALTH, GREATER FREEDOM OF PERSONAL CHOICES, AND A SENSE OF DEEPER CONNECTION WITH OTHER PEOPLE, NATURE, AND THE COSMOS" (GROF & GROF, 1990: 34)

THEY ARE NOT RESPECTERS OF RELIGION, AGE, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, EDUCATION, OR PREVIOUS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE. THEY CAN AND DO OCCUR TO PEOPLE EVERYWHERE AT ANYTIME WITHOUT ANY PRECIPITATING FACTORS.

3

Potential Critical Consequences of STE's

ACISTE, 2011b – The American Center for the Integration of Spiritually Transformative Experiences



4

How Do Potential STE's Present?

While it is possible to identify up to 50 types of emergence experiences for the coaching process, we will look at the work of Dr. Stansilov Grof and his wife Christina who have identified ten states of spiritual emergency (Grof, S., & Grof, C. (1989). From these basic ten types we can develop an understanding of the essence of most experiences:

Ego-Death/Dark Night of the Soul

There is a dissolution of the self and a consequent loss of reference points. Symptoms may involve feelings of pressure, claustrophobia, oppression, tightness, restlessness, or struggle, or an unbearable endless repetition of "dying" experiences.

The Awakening of the Kundalini Energy

Some symptoms are tremors of energy rising up the spine, sensations of extreme hot and cold, the experience of flashing lights, and experiencing powerful waves of emotions. The body can move into strange yogic postures or become contorted and twisted if the energy becomes blocked.

5

How Do Potential STE's Present?

Crisis of Psychic Opening

The psychic opening may involve channeling, telepathy, clairvoyance, out-of-body experiences and meaningful coincidences.

Shamanic Crisis

This typically involves a quest or journey to the underworld where demons or animal spirits are often encountered, culminating usually in experiences of death, dismemberment, and annihilation.

Episodes of Unitive Consciousness

An experience of transcending the ordinary distinction between object and subject and experiencing ecstatic union with humanity, nature, the cosmos and God.

6

How Do Potential STE's Present?

Past Life Experiences

People can behave irrationally because they are experiencing something from the past as part of their current life, or else a person can be haunted by physical feelings and emotions that are not seemingly connected to anything.

Near Death Experiences

These experiences often involve an unusual and profound shift in the experience of reality. This usually includes an out-of-body experience can include profound lessons about life and universal laws.

Possession States

This is characterized by an uncanny sense that one's body and psyche have been invaded and are being controlled by an alien energy or entity that has personal characteristics. It can be another type of Crisis of Psychic Opening.

7

How Do Potential STE's Present?

Psychological Renewal through the Central Archetype

Some distinguishing features are themes of death and rebirth, battles of opposing cosmic forces (e.g. good and evil) and conviction that the outcomes are critical to the future of the world.

Alien Contact/UFO Abduction

Experiences of personally communicating with an alien life form or being abducted by an alien.

8

Integration and Benefits Defined

ACISTE's 2011 survey reveals these markers of integration:

- **At peace:** Feeling at peace, having no fears or anxieties, feeling safe or comfortable in most situations.
- **Respectful:** Respects, forgives, listens, accepts, understands and does not judge others who hold different views. Several indicated that this would include the lack of a need to impress their views or values on others.
- **Balanced:** Being emotionally and mentally balanced, whole, grounded, centered or able to live effectively with a foot in both worlds.
- **Aware:** Being aware, enlightened, evolved, awakened, realized, or being fully conscious.
- **Connected:** Able to appreciate connections, feel oneness with God, their spiritual nature, and others. They had seen the divine in others and all situations or things. Spirituality would be present in all aspects of one's life.
- **Living with Purpose:** Doing work that is creative, meaningful and serves humanity or the greater good. Involved in activities that are valuable, enjoyable, fulfilling or inspirational for others.

9

Integration and Benefits Defined

- **Financially Stable:** Able to comfortably maintain one's home life, has a secure financial base, is successful or has the resources to pursue one's inspiration.
- **Present:** Able to focus on the here and now, be present in meditation, accept, learn or live well within each moment or is present when needed or when events arise.
- **Loving and Compassionate:** Loves, cares or is compassionate for all.
- **Accepting:** Has accepted the experience, one's self, being here, trusts that the spiritual realm is always available, has no fear of death, accepts not everyone is ready to hear about their experience, and trusts that one is always being guided.
- **Joyful:** Is happy, content, blissful, ecstatic or able to enjoy life.
- **Healthy relationships:** Has loving, supportive, like-minded or fulfilling relationships.
- **Authentic:** Truthful, walks the talk, genuine.
- **Open:** Able to share freely, hearts are open.
- **Respectful of Body:** Loves one's body, respects one's body as a divine tool.

10

The Six Stages of Emergence - Awakening

- The life challenge or state of mind that creates the opportunity for the experience of emergence to manifest. This may be marked by dreams, visions, or a general stirring of discontent. It may also be characterized by an existential crisis or grief. There are many instances of spiritual experiences where none of these markers were present, and it happened spontaneously.

Stage 1
Pre-
Emergence/Awakening

Stage 2
Emergence/Awakening

- The occurrence of the experience itself, initial processing, impact on experiencer and people around them.

- The period marked by a search for understanding of and reconciliation with a person's previous paradigm and identity.

Stage 3 Search for
Understanding

11

The Six Stages of Emergence- Awakening

- Stage marked by reviewing previous belief systems both in religion and science. The stage where the conflict between new and old beliefs are resolved.

Stage 4 Search
for Meaning

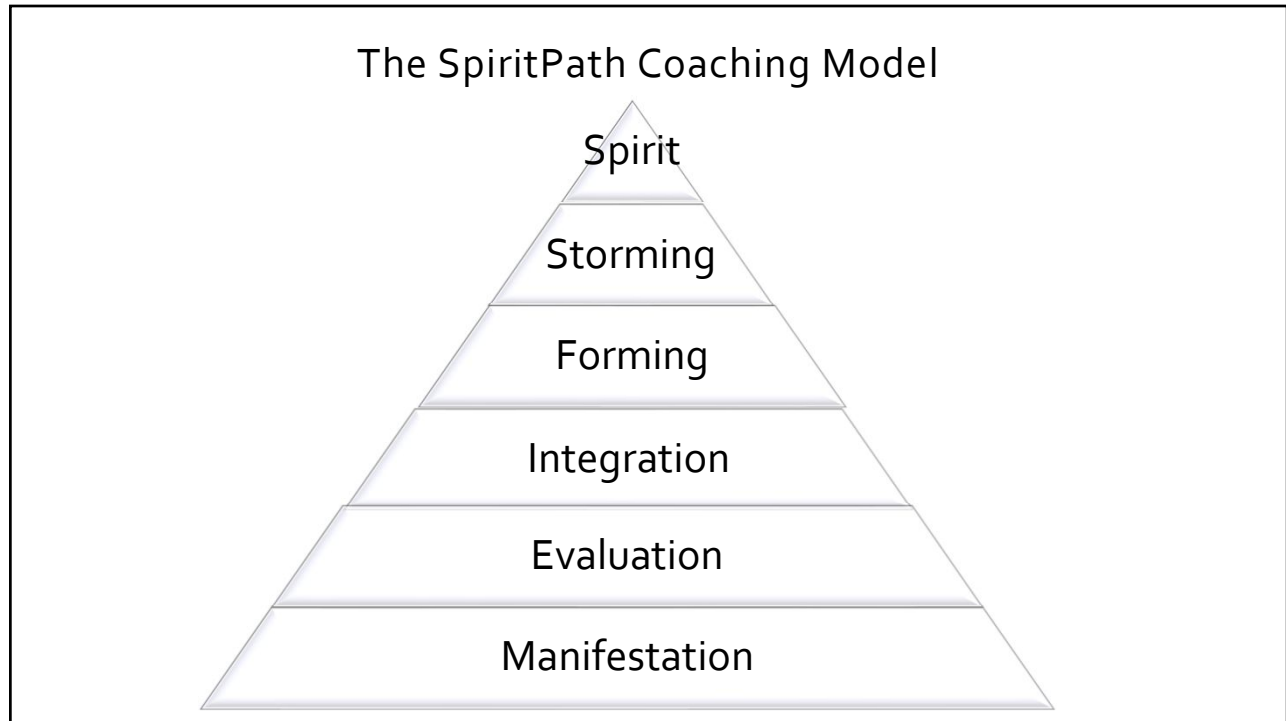
Stage 5 Dark
Night of the Soul

- The period where the "death" of the ego is usually experienced and is marked by introspection, and possibly new layers of conflict are revealed.

- Stage in which the experiencer begins to make life changes based on the new meaning and understanding developed in the earlier processes.

Stage 6
Integration

12



13

Intake Questions

You may want a separate intake form for Spiritual Emergence/Awakening Clients

- Do you consider yourself a religious person?
- If so, what religion do you affiliate with?
- Do you attend services regularly? How often?
- Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?

14

Intake Questions

- On a scale of 1-10 how important is your religion/spirituality to you?
- Are there any religious and/or spiritual issues that you would like to be addressed in coaching?
 - Add a list of topics

15

Intake Questions

- If you have had changes or questions regarding religious/spiritual beliefs or practices, how have they affected you socially, emotionally, occupationally, relationally?

16

Step One - Spirit

At the beginning of the coaching process, we move into discovery and identification designed to create new awareness for the client. We also want to discover what the client's spirit is asking to be developed in a client, or what the client's spirit is wanting to create or bring forth into the world.

This beginning line of questioning can also discover if there was a pre-emergence stage and what was happening at that time. Or perhaps the client is actually in the pre-emergent state at the beginning of the coaching relationship.

17

Step One – Spirit Questions

- “WHAT IS FUELING YOUR DESIRE FOR THE CHANGES OR GOALS YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?”
- “WHAT ARE THE UNDERLYING BELIEFS AND EMOTIONAL, MENTAL, PHYSICAL, OR SOCIETAL STRUCTURES UPHOLDING THE ISSUE BROUGHT TO COACHING?”
- “WHAT IS SERVING THE CLIENT?” AND “HOW DOES IT SERVE YOUR SPIRIT?”
- “WHAT IS NOT SERVING THE CLIENT?” AND “HOW DOES IT NOT SERVE YOUR SPIRIT?”
- “IS THERE A SHADOW ASSOCIATED WITH THIS ISSUE?”, “IS IT LIGHT OR DARK?”
- “HOW IS THE SHADOW INTERACTING WITH THE ISSUE AT HAND AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO THEM?”

18

Step Two - Storming

If a client seeks coaching during an initial period of emergence the coach's role during this time is to:

- Empower the client to identify their needs and ask for assistance in creating the environment they need that would best support the process of integrating the experience.
- Give the client resources to learn more about their experience and find or develop understanding community.
- Referrals to qualified and SE trained mental health professionals must be made if the client is not functional.
- If the client is not functional can help to identify allies that are willing to learn about the developmental process and assist them to get their needs met.
- If a client is functional, a sensitive coach can help the client develop distinguishing language to be able to share their experience to family members and friends that may be concerned about the client.

19

Step Two – Questions

- "What was it like being you when _____ happened?"
- "What does it feel like in your body?"
- "What did your family say when you told them about the experience?"
- "How did their response support or cause problems for you?"
- "What is changing for you in your daily life?"
- "What support do you need to manage those changes?"
- "Ask questions about what is working at a relatively functional level right now.
- "Ask how they know they are functional?"
- "Have you accepted that the event happened?"
- "What is difficult about accepting the event?"
- "What has changed for you since you accepted it?"
- "Ask the client what they need to feel at peace, calm, or balanced."

20

Step Two – Questions

- Is the client grounded? If not, can they be coached into a grounded state? (Note: many people in the beginning stages of pleasant and happy spiritual experiences do not want to be grounded. They may be experiencing relief from grief and long-standing trauma or difficulties and are enjoying the relief and need to stay in this state for a while. Each client moves into that state at their own pace and it could take years to get there.
- Before working with a client at this stage be sure the client:
 - Is currently capable of making decisions and following through. (Ask them to give you examples of recent decisions they have made and how they followed through and what the results were).
- Share information about integration and ask them if they are interested or see a need for an area of integration.
- Is the client capable of seeing an opportunity in the midst of potential chaos?
- Can the client clearly define their goals for your coaching sessions together?
- If a client cannot meet the criteria of the above, they may not be ready for coaching and may be best served by a mental health professional.

21

Step Three - Forming

During this stage of the coaching process, the coach helps the client solidify awareness of the new insights, awareness, knowledge, talents, strengths, behaviors, and goals they have manifested during this process.

- "How do you see yourself, life, relationship, values, etc., differently than before the experience?"
- "Have you talked to others who have had this experience?"
- "What do you understand by talking to others who have had the same experience?"
- "How has your perception of yourself changed now that you have this understanding?"

The forming stage is a good time to complete values, strengths, and belief assessments. Appraising these qualities during the forming stage empowers clients and helps them identify their unique strengths and areas for improvement and provide guidance for their decisions regarding further exploration and action as the sessions move forward.

22

Step Four – Integration

During this stage of the coaching process, the coach will help clients identify and evaluate any conflicts the experience and the new understandings may have created in the client's life.

This time usually produces a lot of new questions the experiencer may have never had before, and a coach can empower the client to process and answer their questions. This process helps the client develop trust in his ability to discover truth for himself.

This is also the stage that the experiencer may be obsessed with the experience itself and engage in spiritual bypassing to avoid conflict. The experiencer must be willing to face the potential conflicts and develop new ways of being with the conflict to fully integrate.

23

Step Four– Questions

- "WHAT IS IT LIKE TO LIVE WITH THE NEW MEANING AND UNDERSTANDING YOU NOW HAVE?"
- "HOW WOULD THAT BE HELPFUL IN SUPPORTING YOUR NEW UNDERSTANDING?"
- "HOW DOES THIS NEW UNDERSTANDING AND MEANING EMPOWER YOU TO GROW, CHANGE, DEVELOP, ETC."
- "WHAT WOULD BE WORTH IT TO FACE THE CONFLICT?"
- "WHAT DOES FACING THIS CONFLICT LOOK LIKE TO YOU"?
- "WHAT WOULD YOU NEED TO CHANGE TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS?"

USE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY TECHNIQUES DURING THIS STAGE OF THE COACHING RELATIONSHIP. IT IS IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY SUCCESSES AND SETBACKS AND HELP THEM EVALUATE WHAT COMES NEXT. THE COACH WILL EMPOWER THE CLIENT TO REMAIN CONFIDENT AND SECURE DURING THE PROCESS BY AFFIRMING THEIR NEW UNDERSTANDING AND DEVELOPING SKILLS.

24

Step Five - Evaluation

If the SE was a light-filled experience this is the stage the client realizes the honeymoon period or the high of the experience is over or waning. It is common to feel abandoned by God during the dark night of the soul. It is a time of silence after an active period of communication with their spirit.

This is the stage where a client's "homesick for heaven" process begins or intensifies to the point of potential depression.

The vein of questions at this time is designed to give clients the opportunity to brainstorm processes and structures to help resolve any unresolved internal and external conflicts and to empower clients to reassess the benefits that have already been experienced.

Coaches can also question clients as to how they can care for themselves during the temporary time of silence.

25

Step Five– Questions

- "What new perspectives do you have?"
- "What are the internal/external blocks that are keeping you from feeling peaceful and balanced?"
- "Are there any actions that you would like to modify or try something new to achieve a different result?"
- "What would help you accept this time of silence?"
- "Have you talked to a spiritual advisor?" "What did they advise?"
- "How has your inner life improved since the experience happened?"
- "What new strengths do you have now?"

26

Step Six -

This is the stage that clients make potential life changing decisions based on their experiences. The process of defining and refining new understanding and meanings has led to action. **This is the time the new creativity begins to emerge in the world of the experiencer.**

It can be a time of prolific creativity or a time of quiet reflection that changes the experiencer at depth. Roberto Assagioli (1978) explains there are three potential ways in which the experience can manifest. **One – as a permanent state of full enlightenment.** This happens to very few people on the planet. Most people must still go through the stages of unearthing unconscious beliefs and emotional wounds before reaching full enlightenment.

Two – Transformation. This happens relatively quickly for those who are already emotionally and mentally healed or balanced. **Three – Self-Awareness.**

27

Step Six– Questions

Whether the client is in the second or third category, the coaching process will benefit the client to identify ways they would like to integrate the new understandings and meanings brought forth from their experiences.

The vein of questions during this phase are geared to empower clients to establish and manifest clear objectives and decide on the action and exploration steps.

Also, be sure to ask the client how they would like to be held accountable and what support the coach can provide for them during this process as well as identifying outside sources of support. Remember to begin a line of questioning to empower the client to **create a new success matrix** as experiencers will by now have recognized how success looks and feels different to them after the experience but may not have articulated it.

28

Step Six– Questions

- “How can the new understandings and meanings empower me to excel in my function in the world, relationships, health, etc.?”
- “What idea or thoughts will not leave you alone?”
- “What have you thought about doing about that idea?”
- “What areas of your life are functioning well?”
- “What areas of your life are not working well? (Ask questions to find patterns, emotions, issues that need to be addressed).”

29

7 Spiritual Needs

- Discover and develop inner wisdom, creativity, and love of self
- Develop a deepening awareness of oneness with other people, the natural world, and all living things.
- Have spiritual resources to help heal grief, guilt, resentment, unforgiveness, self-rejection, and shame and deepen experiences of trust, self-esteem, hope, joy and love of life. (Clinebell, 1992)

30

7 Spiritual Needs

- Experience the healing and empowerment of love from others, selfe, and an ultimate source
- Experience renewing times of transcendence – expansive moments beyond the immediate sensory spheres.
- Have vital beliefs that lend meaning and hope in the midst of losses, tragedies, and failures.
- Have values, priorities and life commitments centered in justice, integrity and love to provide guidance in personally and socially responsible living.

31

SUMMATION

Most experiencers are **compelled to find a place of deep inner peace** if their experiences did not provide this for them and also to discover and complete purposeful and meaningful action in the world. The coach has a unique opportunity to help clients:

- **Develop clarity** of their unique meaning of the experience,
- **Develop trust** in themselves and their experiences,
- Assist them to **develop an understanding** of the wisdom that can be gained from the experience,
- Help them **identify and create an individuated integration plan** and,
- Assist them to **build their team of helpers and resources**.

Resources

Assagioli, R. (1978). Self-realization and psychological disturbances. *Synthesis*, No. 3-4, 148-171.

Grof, S., & Grof, C. (1989). *Spiritual Emergency*.

<https://aciste.org/competency-guidelines-for-professionals/>

Poitou, N. (2000). *The Awakening*. *Exceptional Human Experience*, Vol.16, No.1

32

HOPE-Holistic Options for People Everywhere *Create Holistically Supportive Community in Your Area*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CS1HsCZtWtk&feature=youtu.be>

HOPE SISTER CITIES

Do you live in an area that has little support for the understanding and inclusion of alternative practices in holistic health or spirituality? Or perhaps you live in an area where these practices are supported but there is little to no dialogue between different interest groups.

If you do, HOPE can help create and support the processes required to develop a more holistically integrated and supportive community.

Opening a chapter of HOPE in your local area is simple; find like-minded people in your area passionate about community who are willing to work together and learn from each other.

We will work with you to plan and organize the projects and programs each sister city would like to create. Each sister city will grow and develop organically based on the individual needs and interests of each local community.

HOPE is a 501 c (3) educational non-profit charity

33

Resources

Community Development

www.hopecommunity.us

www.hope-nonprofit.org

Education and Certification

www.itccampus.com Coach Certification and Training

www.aciste.org Annual Conference and Training for Mental Health Professionals, Spiritual Directors, Coaches

www.spiritualcompetency.com Dr. David Lukoff Online Training for Medical and Mental Health Professionals

34