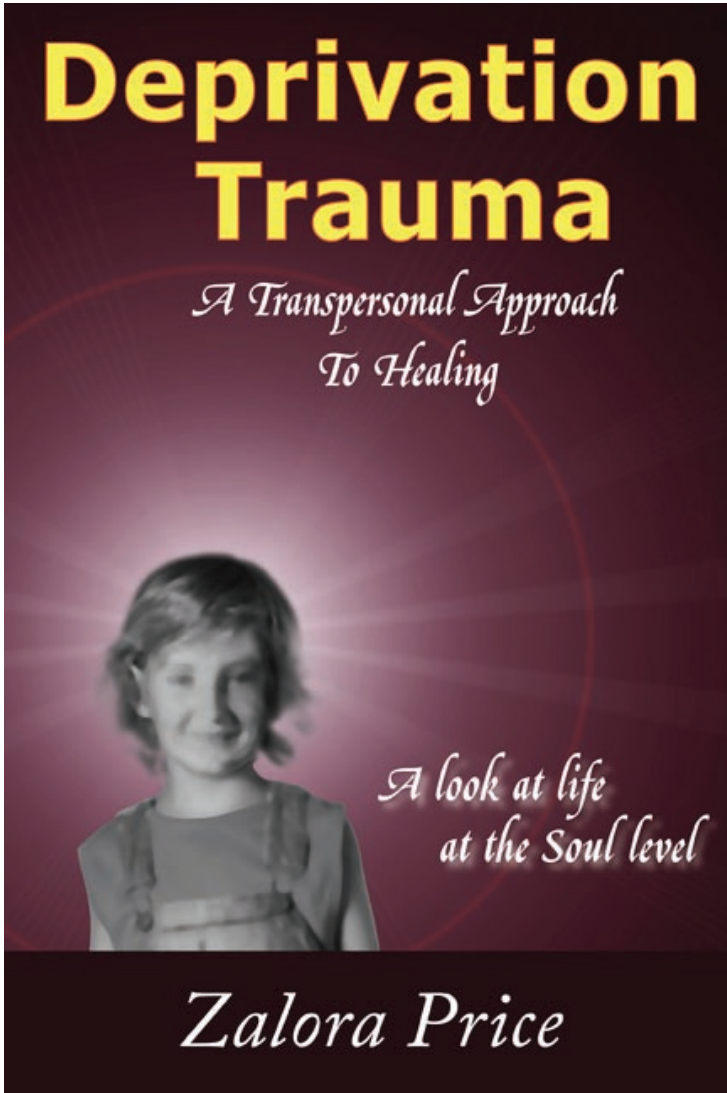


Excerpt from



Part 1, Chapter 1, pages 27-31

This chapter provides a brief historical perspective of the development of Transpersonal Psychology and its connection to the healing process presented in the book. It is here that I state the concept upon which the content of the book is built (the importance of the relationship between Consciousness (physical functioning) and Soul (spiritual wellness) to our lives).



Chapter **1**

Aristotle, Cicero, Kant, and Emerson

The book is first and foremost a memoir. No attempt has been made to be an authority on any one of the philosophical, psychological, or spiritual concepts addressed. The definitions used are for the simple understanding of where I am going and/or taking the reader on this journey.

I have resorted to ‘name dropping’ to show that my ideas are not new ones. While I wish they were my own ideas and concepts, I am in fact merely borrowing them to put some understanding to life and experiences.

When I began to look back on my life I had many questions. The questions I asked most often that started me on this journey of writing about my life were, “What is the source of our vocabulary (which resulted after a ‘peak experience’ and I had no words to explain it)? Does the working knowledge of a word imply its true and complete meaning in all societies? How did our thought processes (use of words) concerning the study of our mind and soul come to us?” In other words, our whole concept of our world and our lives are reflected by the intention of our vocabulary. And I reasoned that mankind needed to take “soul” out of the strictly religious framework and put it into a working understanding of everyday life. I want it to be recognized as our wonderful true self that does not need to carry the guilt and shame associated with sin (separation from God) advocated by the church. I want our souls

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to be recognized as ourselves to be nurtured for our fullest human potential.

Going back in history I found that Aristotle's interpreted works indicate that he spoke of consciousness and the soul. Socrates and Plato addressed the body, mind, and spirit. These ancient ancestors worshiped many Gods and may have looked at things a little different within the framework of their society. Ancient Hebrew and many other religious and philosophical traditions often consider the soul (spirit) as the true basis for sentience in a living being. This concept we recognize and accept in religion today.

The words soul, spirit, psyche (mind), consciousness, originated in the early Ancient Greek philosophy around 500 B.C. (recorded philosophical history is a little sketchy before then) and the word consciousness was later found in the writings of Cicero (Latin) around 100 B.C. The words were carried down through the centuries within the context of law, philosophy, religious thought and doctrines. During this time frame mankind was interested in developing a moral and orderly society. Cicero, himself, used the word consciousness in trying to ascertain if man knew he was breaking the law. Similarly, the ancient religions of the world still observed today (incl. Jainism, Hindi, Judaism, Buddhism, Baha'ism, Islam, and Christianity), all contain some concept of soul and/or spirit.

In this book I am taking these same words (concepts) and applying them within the context of an individual's life instead of that as a culture. Cultural things like morality, religious worship, and law may not be sufficient for understanding and satisfaction in some people's lives. When man feels that he needs more to understand life and his mortality, he will seek within.

The extent of our knowledge and understanding is found 'within' our consciousness. Soul and consciousness are used interchangeably throughout literature. To accept one's consciousness as the seat of the soul gives us a place to go for understanding and enlightenment. It may not be a priority today but when our consciousness and awareness of ourselves and our

world expands, we may be able to transcend our limitations as human beings. Or, as some advocate, we may see an evolution of mankind.

The word transcendental, or transcendence, originated as a Latin word in ancient philosophy and implied the concept of climbing or going beyond. It came into prominence in America through the works of German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804).

Immanuel Kant used the word 'transcendental' in a written reply to the philosopher Locke (who believed that there was nothing in our intellect that had not been put there by experiences) stating that there was a very important class of ideas which did not come from experiences but through which experiences were acquired. He said that these were intuitions of the mind and called them transcendental forms of thought. He also emphasized the power of the mind in shaping our experiences.

Kant's work was well respected by American philosophers Emerson and Thoreau and influenced their ideology. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote and presented a paper in 1842 called *The Transcendentalist*. In it he emphasized intuitive thought and called it transcendental. At the time, both he and Thoreau were taking exception with the church on many issues. At the forefront was the concept of self or the individual. Up until the 17th century the church and political systems had taken away much personal freedom from the populace. Both Emerson and Thoreau advocated the return of these personal and individual freedoms and further extolled the value of going back to nature.

Together with Sarah Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) they started the *Transcendentalists Newspaper* in Massachusetts. Margaret Fuller not only helped with the production of the paper but also wrote for the paper. A prevalent message in the paper centered on the divinity of each individual. This divinity could only be identified if the individual had the independence of mind to act accordingly. This individualism meant listening to man's inner voice and being guided by intuition. Further, they advocated, there is meaning in everything. All meaning and everything in

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life was good because it was part of a divine plan. That divine plan provides a divine spark within each of us and connects everything and everybody, including the environment.

Transcendentalism has been designated as a spiritual movement. But it sparked ideas on the development of the individual mind and personal liberty. A wide spread interest in self-development and human experiences occurred through the movement. Much of the philosophy from the sixteenth to the twentieth century had been trying to conceptualize how the mind knows the world, the divine, and itself. The writings from this period can fill libraries. And many theories were issued. While William James (1842-1910) spoke of 'selective consciousness and the will,' Freud (1856-1939) was coining the terms 'ego, superego, and id.' Jung (1875-1961) meanwhile was presenting the idea of 'collective unconscious,' Maslowe (1908-1970) spoke of 'peak experiences and self-actualization,' and Assagioli (1888-1974) started 'psychosynthesis' (synthesis - bringing together a scientific approach which encompassed the whole man). It was during this time that a vocabulary and a foundation were laid for the development of a field of psychology called Transpersonal Psychology. There were others involved then and now who have made significant contributions.

The word psyche from classical Greek is interpreted to mean 'soul' or 'mind'. The meaning of 'logos' is 'the study of'. Therefore, we have (Trans) going through or above the Personal (self) to study the mind/soul. Scientifically speaking, the field of psychology does not study the soul since there is as yet no "acceptable" empirical evidence to prove that the soul exists. Like electricity, radio waves, and the wind, we can only look at divinity and its effects on individuals and the world and know that we have something worthy of our attention.

To study the mind and soul, psychologists have turned to measuring consciousness. While some say that consciousness is merely a neural functioning of the brain that dictates the way we experience the world, others say that consciousness is the seat of the soul and that the soul is put there to lead and direct our

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lives. I believe that both definitions have merit. Each definition of consciousness serves a necessary function in our lives – physical functioning and spiritual wellness. This concept of the importance and dependency on the relationship between Consciousness and Soul to our lives is the foundation upon which this book is built.