

The Past, Present, and Future
of the International Transpersonal Association (ITA):

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The International Transpersonal Association (ITA) was formed in 1978 for the purposes of promoting education and research in transpersonal subjects, as well as sponsoring global conferences for the international transpersonal community. The association was subsequently dissolved in 2004, but is now in the process of being reactivated and revitalized. As background for this development, this paper reviews the history of ITA including its international conferences and noteworthy presenters, the organization's definition, strategies, and specific goals, and details of its contemporary revival.

The Association of Transpersonal Psychology (ATP) was created in the late 1960s and has held regular conferences in California since its inception. Later, several transpersonal conferences were held outside of California but still within the US, including those held in Council Grove, Kansas, which were started in 1969 by a small group of people (e.g., Walter Pahnke, John Lilly, Ken Godfrey, Helen Bonny, Elmer Green, Alyce Green, and Stanislav Grof). These Kansas conferences had some participants from abroad and represented the precursor of later international transpersonal conferences. As interest in the transpersonal movement grew, extending beyond the San

Francisco Bay area and outside of the US, occasional international transpersonal conferences were held.

The first of these meetings was held in **Bifrost, Iceland** in 1972, organized by Geir and Ingrid Vilhjamsson. Among the attendants were Joseph Campbell and Jean Campbell-Erdman, Huston Smith, Walter Houston Clark, Joan Halifax, Bill and Ilse Richards, Stanislav Grof, Paul and Eva Grof, Nick Herbert, and Icelandic mythologist Einar Palsson. Special event at this meeting was an improvised wedding of Stanislav and Joan Halifax that took place in a volcanic crater during sunrise at 3 o'clock in the morning (white nights). The ritual, designed by Joseph Campbell and Einar Palsson, was a replica of a Viking wedding that had not happened in Iceland since the arrival of Christians. Stanislav Grof described it in the book *When the Impossible Happens*. This was followed by another conference held in **Bifrost** in 1973, again organized by Geir and Ingrid Vilhjamsson.

The third international transpersonal conference was held in a school in **Inari, Finnish Lapland**, in 1976, on the Soviet border. Among its participants were Salvador Roquet, Prince Peter of Denmark, Stanislav and Christina Grof, and Leo Matos. Prince Peter, who had spent 20 years in Tibet, showed a remarkable film on the four Tibetan oracles.

The fourth international transpersonal conference was held in 1977 in Belo **Horizonte, Brazil**, and was organized by Pierre Weil and Leo Matos. During the final meeting of this 1977 conference, it was noted that these conferences had become quite popular and well attended, and it was suggested that the tradition of the international transpersonal conferences should be formalized and hosted by an international association of transpersonal psychology. In the final plenary session, Stanislav Grof was unanimously designated as its founding president. In 1978, Stanislav Grof, as the founding president, and Michael Murphy and Richard Price, (the founders of the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, CA) as founding members, launched the International Transpersonal Association (ITA).

The ITA was incorporated in California on February 27, 1980, as a scientific and educational corporation whose mission was to promote transpersonal education and scientific research, as well as to guarantee continuation of these international transpersonal conferences into the future. In contrast to ATP, which was founded primarily as an American institution limited to the discipline of psychology, ITA was explicitly formed to be international and interdisciplinary in its focus. By that time, it had become obvious that the transpersonal vision was being embraced

globally and that it transcended psychology as a singular discipline.

Also, since calling the new organization - International Association of Transpersonal Psychology, as some had suggested, would have implied a hierarchical superiority over the extant organization ATP, this name was soundly rejected. After a discussion with Arthur Hastings, Stanislav Grof decided to use the name ITA and determined that its primary activity would involve continuing to hold international transpersonal conferences in different parts of the world.

The interdisciplinary nature of these international transpersonal conferences is exemplified by the fact that they featured not just prominent psychologists but also many representatives of other healing professions such as psychiatrists, body therapists, physicians, homeopaths, naturopaths and psychic healers, as well as mathematicians, quantum-relativistic physicists, biologists, anthropologists, educators, artists, economists, mythologists, philosophers, politicians, spiritual teachers, and leaders from many other areas of human endeavor sharing the transpersonal vision.

International Transpersonal Conferences Held by ITA

1. Danvers (Boston), USA, 1979. The first project of the new ITA was to organize the next international transpersonal conference. Elias and Isa Amador offered to be the organizers, while Stanislav and Christina Grof chose the topic, **The Nature of Reality**, created the program and assembled the presenters. The responsible parties decided to make an attempt to bring together all major representatives of the field and make it a “coming out” for ITA and the global transpersonal movement.

All the presenters invited to the conference agreed to present only for traveling expenses and accommodations, despite the fact that many were able to command significant fees for presenting elsewhere—and this then became the tradition that continued at all the subsequent ITA international transpersonal conferences. The Grofs were the program coordinators; special guest of the conference was Swami Muktananda and presidential candidate Jerry Brown made unexpected appearance.

2. Melbourne, Australia, 1980. Alf and Muriel Foote, Australians who had attended an Esalen monthlong workshop with the Grofs, offered to be organizers of the next international transpersonal conference. Since transpersonal psychology was completely unknown in Australia, the conference desperately

needed advertising. The Grofs traveled to Australia to give a series of workshops, lectures, and TV/radio interviews. Their visit was successful; the conference had over 400 participants and brought together people from all over Australia who had interest in transpersonal subjects, often without their having any prior knowledge of the term. This meeting started the transpersonal movement in Australia.

3. **Bombay, India, 1982.** The next international transpersonal conference was organized in cooperation with Swami Muktananda and the Siddha Yoga Foundation and the site coordinator was Marilyn Hershenson. Its theme was *Ancient Wisdom and Modern Science* and focused on bringing together spiritual teachers and new paradigm scientists to show the convergence of worldviews. The conference was supposed to be opened by the Dalai Lama and closed by the Karmapa with the Black Crown ceremony, but the illness of the Dalai Lama and death of the Karmapa prevented this.

However, the program was still unusually rich; presentations included many prominent spiritual figures (Swami Muktananda, Mother Teresa, and the Parsee high priest Dastoor Minocher Homji) and scientists (Karl Pribram, Fritjof Capra, Rupert Sheldrake, Elmer and Alyce Green). The first connection

was made with Karan Singh, former Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu, an Aurobindo scholar and a brilliant speaker who later participated in a number of ITA conferences. There was also a cultural program featuring the then Indian rising star, dancer Alarmel Valli, Paul Horn with Al Huang, an evening of Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah with Shlomo Carlebach and Zalman Schachter, and a Sufi dhikr by Sheikh Muzaffer and the Halveti Jerrahi dervishes. Over seven hundred people participated in this conference.

4.Davos, Switzerland, 1983. At the end of the Bombay conference, Stanislav Grof passed the ITA presidency on to Cecil Burney, who organized the next international transpersonal conference with the help of Rashna Imhasly. The Dalai Lama was able to come this time and among the special guests were Frederic Leboyer, Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, Sri Chakravarti, Gopi Krishna, Karan Singh, and Marie-Louise von Franz.

5.Kyoto, Japan, 1985. The theme of this international transpersonal conference was *Spirituality and Technological Society*. After the success of the Davos conference, Cecil Burney traveled to Japan with his teacher Dora Kalff, who was extremely popular in Japan. He managed to recruit to the conference

organizing committee the founder and honorary chairman of Sony and the founder of Kyocera, then the fastest growing company in Japan. Encouraged by this alliance, Burney decided to rent the Kyoto International Conference Center at the cost of \$11,000a day for the conference.

This was based on the fact that he expected to get 1,500 paying participants. He did not realize, however, that he had to sell not only transpersonal psychology (unknown at the time in Japan), but also the concept of a conference where the Japanese needed to take a week off from their work to attend a meeting unrelated to their job. Among the guests were prominent Japanese spiritual teachers and philosophers (e.g., Nikitani Roshi), African shaman and anthropologist Credo Mutwa, and astronaut Rusty Schweickart.

The conference was extraordinary, particularly its cultural program (an imperial drama, a Shinto fire ceremony, a flute performance by a group of monks who live with their heads covered by special baskets, etc). Unfortunately, only 700 people attended the conference, which, though quite impressive under the circumstance, was still a financial disaster. The conference lost over US \$ 56,000 and sent the ITA into bankruptcy.

6. **Santa Rosa, CA, USA, 1988.** Some fortuitous circumstances allowed the ITA to survive. After difficulties with Heldref Publications, the publisher of the Re-Vision Journal, Ken Wilber resigned as editor of that journal and Stanislav Grof was invited to take his place. Heldref sent one of its staff members, Stuart d'Egguff, as observer to the Kyoto international transpersonal conference. After this observer gave an enthusiastic report about the conference, Heldref offered a loan as seed money for another international transpersonal conference.

The ITA was resurrected, this time with a home in Washington, D.C., and Stanislav Grof resumed its presidency. He and Christina Grof then faced the problem of avoiding another Kyoto fiasco, while working under debt to Heldref. To increase the likelihood of financial viability, they decided to place the meeting close to the San Francisco Bay Area, where a large number of prominent presenters could participate without incurring significant traveling expenses. The participation of this core group made the conference attractive not only for participants, but also for additional presenters.

The theme of this international transpersonal conference was *The Transpersonal Vision: Past, Present, and*

Future. The coordinator was John McKenzie, helped by Tav and Cary Sparks. Among the special features of the conference was participation of the discoverer of LSD Albert Hofmann and an evening with Mickey Hart. Dora Kalff received a special Award from the ITA for her contributions to the transpersonal movement. Stanislav and Christina Grof conducted before the conference their first Holotropic Breathwork workshop with a large group, attended by 350 participants. A positive aftermath of the unfortunate Kyoto conference was participation of 55 Japanese. The conference was a great financial success, with the profit over \$130,000. This made it possible for the Grof not only to return the loan to Heldref (\$70,000), but also have enough seed money for its next conference.

7.Eugene (Oregon), USA, 1990. The theme of this international transpersonal conference was *Mystical Quest, Attachment, and Addictions*. Its purpose was to bring together representatives of the alcoholism and addictions field, who were offering successful treatment for addictions, with the transpersonal community that provides a scientifically acceptable support for spirituality, an essential element in the treatment of addictions. Among the presenters were prominent representatives of the addiction field (John Bradshaw, the Sierra Tucson staff, Linda Leonard, Marion Woodman, and others).

8. **Atlanta, GA, USA, 1991.** The next international transpersonal conference was on the same theme, *Mystical Quest, Attachment, and Addiction*. It was brought to the East Coast after the success of the previous Eugene conference. After that conference, Stanislav Grof passed the ITA presidency to Patricia Demetrios-Ellard.

9. **Santa Clara (San Francisco Bay Area), USA, 1994.** The theme of this international transpersonal conference was *Spirit in Action: Awakening to the Sacred into Everyday Life*, bringing the transpersonal perspective into politics, business, economy, and medicine. New presenters included Isabel Allende, Gloria Steinem, Michael Ray, Jerry Brown, Jim Garrison, Thomas Benyaka, Michel Odent, and others.

10. **Killarney, Ireland, 1995.** The next international transpersonal conference was to some extent a continuation of the Santa Clara meeting, an application of transpersonal psychology to urgent problems in other areas. The conference theme was *Spirituality, Ecology, and Native Wisdom*, and its coordinator was Ralph Metzner.

11. **Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1992.** After the death of Patricia Demetrios-Ellard, Stanislav Grof resumed again the presidency of ITA. After an unsuccessful attempt to organize a conference in Russia (due to perestroika and glasnost), the conference on the theme of *Science, Spirituality, and the Global Crisis: Toward a World with a Future* was held in Prague and was enormously successful. The hall with a capacity of 1600 people was sold out and the registration for Westerners had to be stopped a month before the conference, while hundreds of interested Czechs could not be admitted to the conference due to space limitations. The participants came from 36 different countries. The large pre-conference Holotropic Breathwork workshop had 150 participants.

After heir stellar performance, Olotunji Babatunde with ten African drummers and dancers walked through the central lane from the Smetana Concert Hall and danced through a narrow street to the Old Town Square, joined by conference participants Czech people. The drumming and Dionysian dancing continued there until wee hours.

12. **Manaus, Brazil, 1996.** The theme of this international transpersonal conference was *Technologies of the Sacred: Ancient, Aboriginal, and Modern*. Shamans from Peru,

Ecuador, Brazil, and representatives of the Santo Daime people, members of Union de Vegetal, and spiritists attended. The cultural program included capoeira, School of Samba, Santo Daime chants, and others. The highlight of the conference was a concert in the famous Manaus opera house featuring Jai Uttal, Geoff Gordon, Chungliang Al Huang, and others. Over 900 people participated in the conference. One of the post-conference workshops took participant to Mapia, the jungle center of the Santo Daime movement.

13. Palm Springs, CA, USA, 2004. The theme of the most recent international transpersonal conference was *Mythic Imagination & Modern Society: The Re-Enchantment of the World*. The conference was inspired by the 100th anniversary of the birth of Joseph Campbell. The coordinator was Robert Duchmann. Among the special guests were John Cleese, Lorin Hollander (playing Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition), and Indian classical dancers Vishnu Tattva Dass and Barbara Framm.

Outstanding Presenters at ITA Conferences

Many of the presenters at ITA Conferences have been outstanding representatives of various fields. These include luminaries from psychology and psychiatry, other sciences, spiritual life, art and cultural life, and politics, some of whom are

listed as follows: **psychology and psychiatry**—Frances Vaughan, Roger Walsh, Sandra Harner, June Singer, John Perry, James Fadiman, Arthur Hastings, R. D. Laing, Virginia Satir, Dora Kalff, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, Marie-Louise von Franz, Jean Shinoda Bolen, Claudio Naranjo, Ken Pelletier, Ralph Metzner, Angeles Arrien, Christopher Bache, Paul Grof, Stanislav Grof, Christina Grof, Charles Tart, Steven Larsen, Robin Larsen, Kenneth Ring, Arthur Hastings, Judith Cornell, Richard Tarnas, Jean Houston, Steve Aizenstat, Arnold Mindell, Amy Mindell, Roger Woolger, Gilda Moura, Raymond Moody, John Bradshaw, Pierre Weil, Marion Woodman, Massimo Rosselli, Ann Armstrong, Paulo Rzezinski, Linda Leonard, Jane Middelton-Moz, Rokelle Lerner, Charles Whitfield, John Mack, Robert Jay Lifton, Robert McDermott, Stanley Krippner, Andrew Weil, Seymour Boorstein, Dean Shapiro, Charlene Spretnak, Marilyn Schlitz, Ingo Jahrsetz, Hércoles Jaci, John Beebe, Harris Friedman, Jenny Wade, Michael Mithoefer, Charles Grob, Richard Yensen, Vladimir Maykov, Donna Dryer, Dennis Slattery, Rick Strassman, Phillippe Bandeira de Melo, Michael Grosso, David Ulansey, Don Juan Nuñez del Prado, and Roberto Baruzzi.

Other sciences—David Bohm, Karl Pribram, Fritjof Capra, Rupert Sheldrake, Fred Alan Wolf, Ervin Laszlo, Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, Willis Harman, Albert Hofmann, Orlando Villas-

Boas, Vasily Nalimov, Ilya Prigogine, Lee Sannella, Igor Charkovsky, Elmer and Alyce Green, Michael Harner, Peter Russell, Richard Katz, Russell Targ, Arthur Young, Jean Achterberg, Duane Elgin, Ivan Havel, Zdenek Neubauer, Carl Simonton, Frederic Leboyer, Peter Schwartz, Bernard Lietaer, Brian McCusker, Terence McKenna, Brian Swimme, Amit Goswami, Igor Charkovsky, Luiz Augusto de Queiroz, Michel Odent, and Rachel Naomi Remen;

Spiritual teachers—Mother Teresa, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Swami Muktananda, Brother David Steindl-Rast, Pir Vilayat Khan, Sheikh Muzaffer and the Halveti-Jerahi dervishes, Sogyal Rinpoche, Ram Dass, Chungliang Al Huang, Matthew Fox, Jack Kornfield, Wes Nisker, Nishitani Roshi, Gopi Krishna, Thomas Banyacya, Don Manuel Q’espí, Andrew Harvey, Lauren Artress, Alex Polari de Alverga, Huston Smith, Cecil Williams, Shairy Jose Quimbo, Brooke Medicine Eagle, Zalman Schachter, Olotunji Babatunde, and Shlomo Carlebach;

Art and cultural life—John Cleese, Alarmed Vali, Paul Horn, Mickey Hart, Steven Halpern, David Darling, Randall Bramblett, Michael Vetter, Gabrielle Roth, Nina Wise, Jiří Stivín, Patricia Ellsberg, Alex Grey, Silvia Nakkach, Lorin Hollander, Tara Tupper, Nina Simons, Jon Voight, Jai Uttal, Geoffrey

Gordon, Russell Walder, Vishnu Tattva Das, Barbara Framm, Susan Griffin, Robert Bly, Robert Schwartz, Gloria Steinem, Isabel Allende, Jill Purce, Georgia Kelly, Steve Roach, Rusty Schweickart, Raizes Caboclas Orchestra, Mar Azul Capoeira group, and Lost at Last; and politics—Karan Singh, Jerry Brown, John Vasconcellos, Jim Garrison, Burnum Burnum, and Sulak Sivaraksa.

Documents of the ITA

The following **Definition and Description of the ITA**, as well as its **Theoretical Position and General Strategy** and **Specific Goals** were produced at the time of the organization's founding and evidently were upgraded over time. They are reproduced as they were last documented, with slight editing, and they are as apropos today as they were in January, 1980 when first signed by ITA's founding president, Stanislav Grof.

Definition and Description of the ITA.

The ITA is a scientific organization that unites individuals of different nationalities, professions, and philosophical or spiritual preferences who share the transpersonal orientation. That means that using the specific methods of their disciplines and the results

of their observations they are moving toward or have arrived at the recognition of the fundamental unity underlying the world of separate beings and objects and are applying this new understanding in their respective fields.

In theory, the ITA supports the development of new scientific paradigms recognizing the role of consciousness and creative intelligence in the universe, emphasizing the unity of the mind and body, and studying human beings in their complex interpersonal, social, ecological, and cosmic context. It is interested in bridging the gaps existing at present between various scientific disciplines and seemingly disparate or contradictory approaches, such as ancient wisdom and modern science or the Eastern spiritual philosophies and Western pragmatism. The ITA encourages all serious efforts to formulate a comprehensive and integrated understanding of the cosmos and of human nature.

In practice, the ITA works to facilitate the application of the new principles and conceptual frameworks to therapy, scientific research, education, spiritual practice, economy, ecology, politics, and other areas of human life. The following groups can be mentioned as typical representatives of the ITA membership:

1. Psychiatrists and psychologists with a transpersonal orientation, interested in consciousness research, mystical states and other experiences of non-ordinary realities, metavalues and metamotivations, meditation and other forms of spiritual practice, clinical and laboratory techniques of inducing unusual states of consciousness, paranormal phenomena, therapeutic value of the death-rebirth process and unitive experiences, revisioning of everyday life, spiritual emergency, and other related subjects.
2. Physicians who are trying to overcome the mechanistic and overspecialized approaches of medicine and develop a holistic understanding of human beings, including the psychological, interpersonal, social, philosophical, and spiritual dimension. Such an orientation is usually associated with an interest in the healing potential of the organism, awareness of the relevance of emotional and transpersonal factors for the disease process, and exploration of alternative approaches to therapy. An important task of the medically oriented members of the ITA is to develop models of the mind, body, and the central nervous system that would bridge the present gap between biology, medicine, and transpersonal psychology.

3. Scientists exploring the philosophical implications of modern physics, the nature of reality, the relationship between consciousness and matter, the role of creative intelligence in the universe, and the convergence of modern science and mysticism.
4. Anthropologists holding a transpersonal orientation, studying shamanic practices, rites of passage, spiritual healing ceremonies, trance phenomena, aboriginal technologies of inducing non-ordinary states of consciousness, and development of paranormal abilities by individuals and entire groups, or native religions, mythologies, and cosmologies.
5. Educators interested in the application of the principles and techniques of transpersonal psychology to education and to the process of enhancing learning capacity and creativity.
6. Theologians, priests, spiritual teachers, and creative thinkers interested in direct experiences of spiritual realities and techniques of inducing them, as well as in attempting to bridge the gap between spirituality, philosophy, and science.

7. Practitioners of complementary medicine, holistic health, and alternative health modalities who seek to understand and treat the whole human being.
8. Sociologists, economists, ecologists, politicians, philosophers, and members of other groups trying to develop conceptual systems and practical approaches that can help to overcome the antagonism between individuals and groups separated by racial, sexual, cultural, social, and political differences or economic interests, and facilitate interpersonal, international, and interspecies synergy, as well as ecological harmony.
9. Musicians, painters, sculptors, dancers, poets, and other artists who are interested in conveying through various media the nature of transpersonal experiences or transpersonal philosophy.
10. Individuals who have paranormal abilities, have had episodes of non-ordinary states of consciousness or are involved in systematic spiritual practice and search for a deeper understanding of their personal process or are willing to share their experiences with interested researchers and audiences.

Theoretical Position and General Strategy of the ITA

1. To emphasize inner life, quality of the human experience, self-actualization, and the evolution of consciousness, as compared to a one-sided focus on the quantity and quality of external material indicators, and to acknowledge the importance of spiritual needs and impulses as integral aspects of human nature. To recognize subjective experiences and introspection as valid sources of scientific data.
2. To respect every individual's right to pursue the spiritual path and choose his or her own approach to self-discovery. This is based on the assumption that systematic self-exploration conducted with integrity and honesty will eventually lead to the recognition of the unity underlying creation and result in a better adjustment of the individual to family members, fellow humans, and nature than externally imposed and enforced rules and restrictions.
3. To explore and develop safe and effective techniques of in-depth self-exploration and inner transformation and to make these approaches available as a complement to the typical Western strategies of problem-solving that rely entirely on manipulation and control of the external world.

4. To encourage and emphasize complementarity, synergy, and cooperation versus antagonism and competition, a holistic approach versus the focus on isolated aspects of reality, and harmonious tuning into the cosmic process versus manipulative intervention.
5. To maintain an open-minded approach to the exploration of the world unimpeded by rigid adherence to the existing paradigms. This is based on the recognition that reality is infinitely more complex than any scientific theory can describe and that theoretical models of any kind are just temporary approximations and integrations of the data known at a particular time; they can never represent an accurate, exhaustive, and final description of objective reality.

Specific Goals of the ITA

1. To create a network of cooperating organizations in different countries of the world that would locally organize lectures, seminars, and workshops with transpersonal focus.

2. To facilitate international exchange of information in the form of guest lecturers, researchers, students, books, journals, articles, films, and tapes.
3. To apply the transpersonal theory and its specific practical approaches to the pressing problems in the world, particularly reducing the political tensions and the danger of wars, helping various underprivileged groups, and alleviating the ecological crisis.
4. To publish an international journal reflecting the basic philosophy of the ITA.
5. To organize and coordinate international research project focusing on crosscultural comparison of various transpersonal phenomena, such as spiritual practices, healing ceremonies, culture-bound forms of transpersonal states, rites of passage, attitudes toward death, near-death-experiences, paranormal performances, etc.
6. To encourage the establishment of chairs and departments at universities and other teaching facilities offering transpersonally oriented courses and training.

7. To continue the tradition of the International Transpersonal Conferences. The past thirteen conferences were held in Iceland, Finland, Brazil, Australia, India, Switzerland, Japan, USA, Czechoslovakia, and Ireland.
8. To raise funds for an International Center for Transpersonal Studies to be established in the San Francisco Bay Area. This is an ambitious and long- term project and the ITA board deeply appreciates any advice and assistance in this regard.

Death and Rebirth of the ITA

After the 2004 International Transpersonal Conference in Palm Springs, CA, the ITA dissolved as an organization when Stanislav and Christina Grof did not want to invest time and energy into yet another transpersonal conference and none of their transpersonal friends who they approached was willing to take on the task.

The death of ITA was noticed when it became apparent to two individuals that there was a lacuna created by its absence. Specifically, Harris Friedman, Editor of the International Journal of Transpersonal Studies (see transpersonalstudies.org), was looking for an organization to sponsor this journal after Saybrook

Graduate School, its previous owner, had some financial difficulties and withdrew its commitment to the journal.

It occurred to Friedman that an international journal would be best sponsored by an international organization, something he began to discuss with the then Managing Editor of the IJTS, Glenn Hartelius, as well as other members of the journal's editorial board, particularly Les Lancaster, IJTS's Coordinating Editor, who accepted the role of exploring how to use the journal's website to link the international transpersonal community—and who also received a small grant from the British Psychological Society to fund this effort.

Simultaneously David Lukoff, Co-president of ATP, began to explore the possibility of forming a new international organization, which led to his creating a google group (see <http://atpweb.org/googlegroup/>) for what he called the International Associations of Transpersonal Psychology, which was conceptualized to become an organization of organizations, uniting the various other worldwide transpersonal organizations. At the World Congress of Spirituality and Psychology held in Delhi, India in January 2008, Lukoff sponsored a meeting to discuss forming such a group, which was well attended, including by Friedman, Hartelius, Lancaster, Lukoff, and many others.

As a follow-up to that meeting, there was discussion on the Google group from some of the meeting's participants, as well as others who joined in, regarding the shape and direction of such a new organization. Friedman advocated exploring a resurrection of the ITA name and, after much debate on the Google group, it was decided to name the new organization ITA, after the original ITA—and to continue the ITA tradition, including its conferences.

Stanislav Grof gave his blessing to the idea and Friedman offered to solicit funding from the Floraglates Foundation, a nonprofit organization that owns IJTS, to incorporate ITA again, this time as a Florida nonprofit. The participants on the google group agreed to support this plan with initial officers being Friedman serving as its President, Lukoff as Vice President, and Hartelius as Secretary and Treasurer—and with the initial officers being the incorporating board.

ITA's Future

After incorporation occurs, a number of future steps are anticipated. First, a mission statement and other documents for the newly resurrected ITA need to be developed or further specified. All involved in this discussion seem to agree that extending the

tradition of holding international transpersonal conferences is a high priority and already there is discussion of holding the next such conference in either Brazil or Russia. In addition, an expansion of the ITA board to include leaders from the global transpersonal community is in line, as is development of a website that can link the international transpersonal community. Current plans call for a transfer of the IJTS to ITA; as part of this transition, Friedman will relinquish the journal's editor role to devote more time to presiding over ITA, while Hartelius has agreed to replace Friedman as IJTS's editor. All in all, these are exciting times for the international transpersonal community and everyone interested is invited to participate in ITA's newly unfolding future.

Note

1. The new ITA was incorporated on May 27, 2008.