

Peer Review to Ensure Scientific Integrity:

An Outline of ITJ's Peer Review Process and an Invitation to Submit Articles

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In my new role as Head of the Board of Reviewers of the Integral Transpersonal Journal (ITJ), I would like to briefly introduce myself and outline the aims of the peer review and the process involved. My educational background is in clinical psychology and psychiatry (University of Heidelberg) and integrative body-centered Gestalt therapy. For more than 15 years I have been working as a practitioner. The inclusion of spiritual dimensions and expanded states of consciousness has always been important for my work. As a clinician, I have been especially interested in intertwining practice and theory. To deepen my knowledge and gain further skills, I took an additional degree, a PhD in transpersonal psychology (Sofia University, U.S.) and in qualitative research, particularly embodied phenomenology (Centre for Qualitative Research, Bournemouth University, UK). A strong combination of practice and theory through research and publications in the field of transpersonal psychology is what I bring to my position as head of ITJ's peer reviewers and I hope to use it, to passionately serve and shape the transpersonal field internationally.

Why Peer Review?

Articles in scholarly journals contribute to the fund of scientific knowledge in a particular field. To ensure that the work is original, valid, and significant, scholars in equivalent fields review the manuscripts submitted. Since the last century, scholarly peer review has been the major mechanism by which the quality of research and academic publications is judged. Peer review is based on the concept that peers with

similar expertise may critically review the quality of each other's work. As part of the publication process, it can be a valuable tool for improving the quality of a manuscript. Peer review has its limitations, and has been accused of being highly subjective and even a vehicle for exploiting or intimidating authors. To reduce these dangers, we at ITJ have implemented a commonly-used process of peer-review that ensures quality, understanding and fairness between reviewers and contributors and involves the reviewer and author working dialogically in several stages on the development of the final manuscript for publication. The principle that we at ITJ adhere to is that peer review should be responsive, competent, unbiased, confidential, secure, constructive, and responsible. During the review process, the document is seen as a confidential text owned by the author. The peer review primarily focuses on eliminating plagiarism, clarification of terms and writing, and general improvement of the flow of the text. Special support is given to contributors having English as their second language. We also assist with the application of the citation guidelines and referencing system of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA, 6th edition, 2010). Information about the reviewing process and the style guide is available for download on ITJ's website. However, the peer-review process is not static, it is a lively endeavor that will continue to develop over time.

ITJ is a collaborative effort to ignite ideas and initiate fresh dialogues to move the transpersonal approach forward on a spectrum from inner life to our participation in social realities and non-ordinary states of consciousness. We invite a wide range of contributions from practitioners and researchers from interdisciplinary fields interrelated with transpersonal psychology. Specifically, our range is not limited to psychotherapy but is open to healing approaches from different traditions. We from

ITJ look forward receiving your contributions and answering any questions about relevant topics.

With joy,

Regina

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