



ATransC Occasional Update 13

Greetings!

This is our thirteenth submission to the ATransC Occasional Email Update list. We trust it finds you happy and well.

Our thought for the new year comes from [Charles Krauthammer](#):

In the end, everything, all the beautiful elegant things in life depend ultimately on getting politics right.... science, art, poetry, baseball must ultimately bow to politics.

Krauthammer's statement is profoundly simple in that, clearly, intention comes before expression but is informed by what we are taught ([worldview](#)). It is the human politics that determines what first populates worldview. All else serves at the whim of political expediency. Here, of course, I use *politics* in the global sense of social politics.

Krauthammer was speaking of governmental politics but it is an organizing principle influencing all human endeavor as a consequence of the [Collective Organizing Principle](#): *Personalities related by a shared source tend to cooperate to favor the progression of mutually entangled individuals*. This is a definition for the concept as a formative principle of reality discussed in *Your Immortal Self*. In terms of human cooperation, read it as: *People related by a shared ideology tend to cooperate to further that ideology*.

Implications

The word for the year is *Implication*. (Used in the sense of *inferred from a given*.) When we say that a person should practice discernment, we are saying that the person should stop to consider the implications of what is presented. The selection of this term comes from what I see as the most common error people make in evaluating experiences.

Probably the most difficult duty I have had as a co-director of the ATransC has been explaining to people why their example or experience might not be paranormal. Most of the time, people just get mad at me and go away. Often, people will argue and tell me I am wrong, that for instance, their dream was paranormal because they were having an OBE.

Much of *Your Immortal Self* was written as a way of explaining these phenomena so that I will not have to tell people they are wrong. They can read the book and decide for themselves. That is also why I proposed the [Classification Best Practice](#). It can be applied to all forms of phenomena so that a possible OBE can be classified as a **Type 2 Mental**: *Spontaneous or induced experience not shared by others and only substantiated by personal references*. I can call their OBE a Type 2 Mental experience and let it go at that.

Implication as this year's word is proposed as another way for me to address people's examples without feeling I need to tell them they may not be paranormal. It is up to the individual to examine the

implications of what they believe. Such discernment is the foundation concept of [mindfulness](#) and the single most important expression of a discerning person.

My assumption is that currently emerging understanding about how we think, coming from mainstream psychology and parapsychologists alike, is mostly correct. That is, we unconsciously process environmental information and only become aware of the results of that process. Second, the filter through which we pass this information in the unconscious is worldview. Third, that worldview is populated in our youth with the animal instincts of our human, and as we mature, those instincts are moderated by what we are taught in school, by our parents, the media and religion. Our only way to consciously influence worldview is with our intention. Worldview will only change in small increments, so that a belief learned in our youth will only gradually change.

If these assumptions are correct, the implications are profound. Old habits of thought can only be changed by first recognizing their implications, followed by conscious and persistent determination to change.

Evolving Objective of the ATransC

I have talked about the influence of politics on virtually every human endeavor and the need to examine implications of beliefs so that I can address the main point of this update. The needs of the paranormalist community have evolved and it seems necessary to realign the mission statement of the ATransC to keep pace. Here are a few of the changes influencing our decision:

Practitioner Abuse: I personally have spent considerable time trying to find ways to convince the parapsychological community that the way [some paranormalists treated their research subject is unethical](#). Every one of us who produce phenomena as practitioners and seek to be studied by science is likely to be treated the same way ... not directly because outright rejection would be *unscientific*, but by selective reporting and turning to psychological handwaving. An effort to start a [Practitioner Advocacy Panel](#) fizzled and I continue to encounter people who have no historical references for why they should be concerned.

Media: As a Wikipedia editor focused on paranormalist subjects, I have been defeated by an overwhelming majority of skeptic editors. Now there is the SPR online encyclopedia that, in some articles, is equally deceptive. Our efforts to provide reliable information about these phenomena to a wide audience have thus far been only minimally successful. Here, I must emphasize “reliable information.” There is a lot of information on the Internet which is not well supported by evidence.

Technology: Our formal rejection of radio-sweep technology for EVP has been met with dismay that we *inexplicably reject* the technology. There has been no hesitation in promoting *silver bullet* devices with happy acceptance by people who do not know better. As I see it, if people better understand these phenomena, they will be better prepared to evaluate the tools they select. Selling such devices without adequate research supporting their effectiveness is simply unethical.

Cooperative Communities: Organized spiritualism is important as a model for developing local communities which support people in their search for understanding. Not just traditional organized Spiritualism. Any cooperative community of like-minded people can be a powerful tool for gaining personal understanding. By *spiritualism*, we mean the more contemporary spiritualism evolving from our understanding of survival—continuing our relationship with loved ones rather than grieving our loss.



The problem is that emerging understanding of how we process information sensed from the other side tends to go against the grain of traditional spiritualism. Part of our evolving mission is to make information about this new understanding more available to people sympathetic to Spiritualist Tradition.

Potential Government Intervention: There is increasing possibility of censorship from the new administration. Our study of things paranormal is not guaranteed. It is sometimes an irritant to people of strong Christian faith, and a mean-spirited government with no humanitarian influences may well follow the lead of organized skeptics to brand our work a dangerous pseudoscience. This may be an overreaction, but there is precedence for government suppression of free and open study in the way [Wilhelm Reich](#) was treated.

Selling untested devices for EVP to grieving mothers opens the door for unwanted government regulation. The same can be said for mental mediums and EVP practitioners who claim to contact loved ones for others. It does not matter if there is fraud. Any good skeptic can make honest transcommunication appear fraudulent. However, appearance can be managed if practitioners understand their craft and are able to speak of it in logical terms. Part of our work is to teach practitioners how to speak of these phenomena in rational terms. We must also propose a code of ethics designed to help all of us avoid government intervention.

Advocacy

The best way to describe our current efforts to support “Objective Evidence of Survival” is *advocacy*. Education must come before research.

It has probably been confusing for you who have followed this work and supported the ATransC, as our newsletters and essays have changed from a strong focus on the phenomena to a focus on the community, philosophy and theory. We will be more candid about our change in direction in the future. Research, experimentation and informing you about these phenomena remain important, but the theoretical and political aspects of these phenomena will be center-stage for the time being.

Perhaps a useful mission statement would be something like: *ATransC will seek to inform paranormalists and mainstream society about the nature of survival-related phenomena and principles, while advocating for a code of ethics that promotes community cooperation and personal progression.*

We are interested in your thoughts.

We will know that we are successful when we see many of you telling your friends and speaking as if you understand the concepts.

News

iDigitalMedium January Newsletter

Keith Clark posted a link to the [latest newsletter](#). Keith’s group is becoming a promising source of information for our community.

Are Skeptics Better Organized?

[“How Can Skepticism Do Better?”](#) by Scott O. Lilienfeld, *Skeptical Inquirer* Volume 40.5, September/October 2016. Also see *Skepticism: The New Religion* by Roy Stemman.

Unless you want to study these things in a cave, it is good to understand your attackers. Thanks to organized skeptics, our government accepts the idea that all things paranormal are pseudoscience and that pseudoscience poses a danger to society. That is all a mean-spirited government need to act against our freedoms.

ITC

We recommend [ITC Seattle](#) as one of the more interesting groups working with video feedback loop visual ITC. We have had great success with older analog video equipment, but it is difficult to establish a useful video loop with the modern digital equipment. This group seems to have found the right combination of hardware to produce a good loop. There is much to look forward to from them as they continue to develop.

Our hope is to be able to begin a new round of work with video-loop visual ITC this year.

ATransC Newsletter Archive

We have finely finished converting all of Sarah Estep's AA-EVP Newsletters to digital format. You can now access all of the AA-EVP-ATransC newsletters on [atransc.org](#). Thanks to the help of Steve, we have also converted all of Bill "Dutch" Weisensale's [Spirit Voices newsletters](#). *Spirit Voices* are pretty technical to read, but they give an important look at the early days of EVP research.

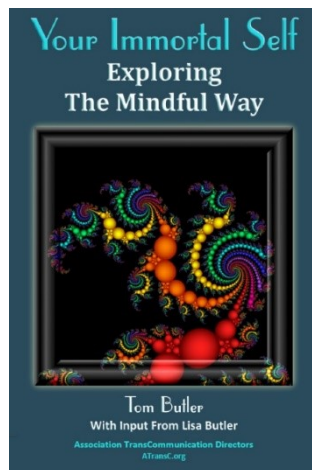
Best Practices

We had established the ATransC Collective as a wiki for members of the community to work together to produce best practices for how to work with these phenomena. It was intended to be a collaborative effort, but after several years and still no participating editors, we have closed the Collective and moved the draft practices to my personal pages on [ethericstudies.org](#). I am still interested in your input.

Media Watch

A reminder that all of the Media Watches are now on [spiritualistsocietyofreno.org](#).

Your Immortal Self



A slightly corrected version of the book has been uploaded and should be the next version purchased by the end of this week. We migrated both [atransc.org](#) and [ethericstudies.org](#) to a mobile friendly design and all of the reference links for those sites that are in the book were wrong. Me and my proofreader missed *verses* in many places where *versus* should have been used, and there were a lot of little things that needed to be cleaned up. Otherwise, the book is the same. Oh yes! I also added active links to the references in the eBook version.

A page is being maintained to provide color versions of all of the pictures for people who purchase the black and white paperback. I am keeping a record of errors there as well. See:

http://ethericstudies.org/immortal_self/

Asking for Help

At the very end of the book, I added:

No one likes a person on a discussion board who begins a comment with "My book explains that." I don't want to be that person, but sometimes the point I want to make actually is in the book. In most instances, that is why I wrote the book.

If you find value in this work, please consider telling a friend. Better yet, consider starting a study group. The book touches on most of the concepts related to the study of things paranormal and personal potential. Use it as a study guide.

Step on the path of a teacher by being a wayshower for others.



Thank You!

It is important in these politically interesting times that we all keep an even mind. Have the courage of your convictions, but moderate your expression with understanding gained through informed contemplation. Be mindful. Be a wise role model.

Tom

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