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Seeking to Understand the Nature of Reality
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ATransC Occasional Update 14

Tom Butler, 2017

(Also at <http://mailchi.mp/4c68e09afc18/atransc-occasional-update-14>)

Greetings!

Here, on the east side of the Sierras, we have already received double our annual expected rainfall. They are letting water out of the reservoirs to make room for Spring runoff and we seem to be having a population explosion of rabbits in our back yard. And so, our little corner of the world is greeting the Spring. We trust your part of the world is happy, as well.

The Mindful Way

Perhaps the most important thing we can do for ourselves is to consciously step on the mindful way; learn what it is, the mechanics of mindfulness and why it is important. This is true for our own best interest. This is true for our neighbor ... for the best interest of society. This is why I wrote *Your Immortal Self*.

Since you are reading this Update, it is reasonable to assume you have already taken the first step on the mindful way by beginning to question what you have been taught. If so, then you are part of a very small community of citizens. In Line 12 of most translations of the *Emerald Tablet*, Hermes is said to say:

So the world was created. Hence were all the wonderful adaptations of the One Thing manifested; but the arrangements that follow this great mystic path are hidden. (Line 12, *Emerald Tablet*, translated from the Latin of Ficinus by Kircher, and into English by Dr. Everard. It was first published in 1650.) See [The Hermes Concepts](#).

In terms of current thought, this can be understood as:

And so, I have told you how the world has been created. But be mindful that these truths are not evident to those who have not stepped onto this path of learning. (In contemporary terms, the *Emerald Tablet* can be titled *The Truly Great Work*. The *Great Work* is our imperative to gain understanding through experience by recognizing and learning to work with natural principles in reality. The *One Thing* is the existence of and nature of natural principles ordering nature.)

You may have a different term for mindfulness, so please take a moment to translate what I say here into more familiar terms. The point is that, unless a person has consciously turned toward the Great Work, they are little informed about the concept of the One Thing (mindfulness).

A simple definition of mindfulness is the habitual examination of personal beliefs and their implications, with the intention to align those beliefs with the actual nature of reality (understanding). In terms of the Hermetic teaching, mindfulness is the great work: turning the course nature of a person (lead) into the refined nature of a self-aware person (gold).

Self-Determination or Conditioned-Determination

An important Organizing Principle in the Implicit Cosmology is **Perceptual Agreement**: *Personality must be in perceptual agreement with the aspect of reality with which it will associate*. The principle applies to how we organize ourselves in the conceptual space of the etheric, but it is clearly applicable to everyday life. It can be paraphrased as: *A person turns toward familiar ideas*.

In the last Update, I said that *implication* was our word for the year. The motto for ethericstudies.org is *Believe what you wish but understand the implications of what you believe*. Acting on what we believe to be true produces consequences. To some extent, those consequences are predictable. Are they what you believe, as well?

How we think is discussed in detail in *Your Immortal Self*, but also in several essays such as [Perception](#) and [How We Think](#), so I will spare you the supporting argument for the motto. The basic concept is that emerging understanding about the way we think suggests that all information, including from our physical senses, comes to us by way of our mostly unconscious mind. We become consciously aware of only that which agrees with our worldview. Since our worldview is populated with what we have been taught, unless we have learned to habitually examine our beliefs with the intention to act more reasonably, we act and experience as we have been taught by our culture. (Reasonable: In accordance with the actual nature of reality.)

Worldview has considerable momentum. Once a decision has been made, it is very difficult for alternative choices to pass our worldview.

Consider the consequences of these three concepts: perceptual agreement; unconscious filtering of awareness; and, momentum of choice. We are more apt to associate with people who agree with us. For instance, if we were taught to think city folk are degenerate, it might be difficult for us to support one in an election even if the person is most qualified. There might not be anything the person can do or say to overcome our unconscious prejudice. Much the same can be said about people of other faith if we were taught to distrust all but our own congregation.

Self-determination is our most fundamental ability but its expression is dependent on informed choice which implies personal responsibility. However, current understanding about how we think indicates that we only have conditioned-determination. We are predisposed to gravitate toward people who agree with us, we understand experiences in ways that supports our expectations and spontaneously decide based on prior beliefs learned from our local culture.

The mindful way is based on actions each of us can take to align our beliefs with the actual nature of reality. The easiest is to simply stop and consider what we know about the consequences of every act. Are the consequences what we intend? We must be aware that our experiences are colored by past experiences and always be cautious about spontaneous decisions.

We should learn to practice suspended judgement when confronted by new information. Rather than deciding we agree or disagree with information, we can learn to consciously not decide. Instead, we can tell ourselves that we will wait and see if there is more information before deciding.

While the mindful way is a means of gaining understanding, we must be aware that understanding is relative. Like a nested doll, gaining understanding reveals the opportunity for greater understanding as we converge on the actual nature of reality via many moments of realization. This is important to remember so that we do not decide that our understanding is absolute or greater than another's.

Informed citizens can only be a reality if they are aware of the limitations of their ability to choose. If you want to continue living in a democracy based on the humane application of the rule of law, then it is important that you learn to talk about these concepts and share them with your friend. When you do, charge them with the responsibility to tell their friends, so that they may also learn to have better informed self-determination. It is not for us to proselytize, but as one of my teachers once noted, we have a moral obligation to at least let people know that such alternatives exist. The rest is for their inner wisdom.

This is where spirituality enters the everyday world of our democracy. Seekers after spiritual understanding have spent much of human history learning in hidden places, away from rulers and devoutly religious citizens. Our ability to freely express our self-determination is not guaranteed.

Prime Imperative

Take a moment to contemplate the implications of long-transitioned Uncle John talking to you via EVP. Consider the implications of a stranger having the ability to relay information from Uncle John via mental mediumship. We spend a lot of time talking about how to record for EVP or the nature of mediumship, but we spend little time talking about the larger question of why these things are possible.

From my fascination with the origins of metaphysical understanding, I have decided that there has been one original revelation explaining who we are and why we are here. The information thought to have come from Hermes some six thousand years ago has been revealed anew for each phase of civilization's evolution. In just about every round, the concepts have been cloaked in religious trappings, usually overshadowed by the dogma of social engineering.

Transcommunication is beginning to look like a new kind of revelation that is more like the Hermetic revelation than the subsequent retelling that came after. For sure, our current round is very different, in that there is not a single teacher. Actually, Hermes the man may have been more the outward expression of a school of thought than an individual. The Egyptian gods of the hermetic time were actually just representative of unique characteristics of their one god. Hermes could easily have been such a representation.

The evidence of our actual nature is in our phenomena. It is available for each of us to discover without the need for a person as a revealer. If we think of the phenomena we work with as also being the phenomena we study, then we are a new school of thought based on revelation via transcommunication.

As I composed the *Implicit Cosmology*—as I discovered it, really, out of the implications of transcommunication—I identified thirty-eight organizing principles, which are like principles of Natural Law. All are important building blocks of the cosmology, but one that stands out to me is the Organizing Principle I refer to as the Prime Imperative. I just posted an essay exploring the concept. You might find it easier to follow than some of my other essays, as it was composed as a talk for the Spiritualist Society of Reno. It is at ethericstudies.org/prime-imperative/

ATransC White Paper on Transcommunication

In 2006, I was alerted to the existence of an EVP article on Wikipedia. It was pretty bad, so I spent time developing what I thought would be a balanced and informative replacement. Thus, began my education as a minority Wikipedia Editor.

An edit war began with many skeptical editors working as a tag-team to make EVP look like woo and a few pro-balance editors trying to show what it is and the nature of supporting evidence/research. We lost, and I think I am the only pro-balanced editor in that group that has not been banned for life.

Two important arbitration cases resulted. The *Fringe* case determined it was okay to use skeptical magazines as sources because they are *mainstream*. It was not okay to use any paranormal literature because it is not.

Of course, then they had to define *paranormal* in a second case. That was when it was made clear that I could not edit the EVP article because I have a conflict of interest. Today, the EVP article is of little use for people wanting to understand EVP.

The proposed article I developed became our first version of the *ATransC White Paper on ITC*. The paper has undergone at least six major revisions and the latest is now available at atransc.org/itc-white-paper/. There is also a PDF version accessible from there.

My intention of the paper is to give people a manual of sorts to understand at least the ATransC version of theory and how to collect examples. There are many references. It is available under the Creative Commons license, and we encourage people to send copies to friends and freely use content from it with proper credit.

As always, your comments and suggestions are invited.

Open Letter to Paranormalists

When Lisa and I assumed leadership of the ATransC (It was the AA-EVP back then), our first move after building a website was to begin contacting scientists. We even considered sponsoring an invitation only conference to develop a roadmap for the scientific study of ITC, designed after the [Esalen conference on Survival of Bodily Death](#). The contact person at Esalen ignored our emails. That began our estrangement with science.

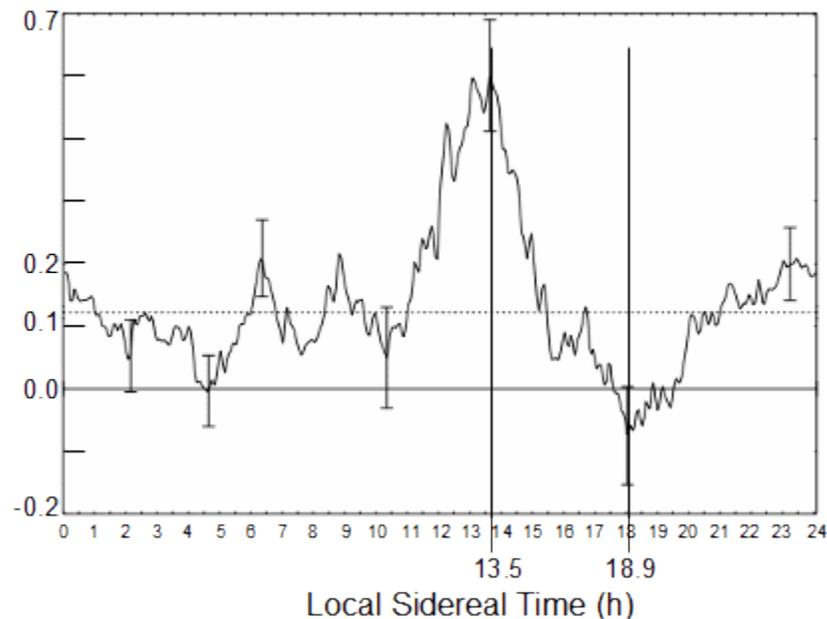
You can see that science is important to me. It is important to our work; indispensable, actually. But it just has not worked out. In fact, some of my friends have been damaged by academics under the banner of science. If you think survival is real and feel the need to better understand it, then you have also been hurt by our trusted scientists. It is not getting better and will not unless people point out the problem and act accordingly.

The hardest essay to write for me has been this one, explaining things you as a paranormalist need to consider in order to get along with scientists. This is especially true if you produce phenomena and would like to be studied. The essay was hard to write because it shames me and our community that it needed to be written. You be the judge: [Open Letter to Paranormalists: Limits of science, trust and responsibility](#).

Sidereal Time EVP Study — call for participation

Psi functioning studies (ESP, Psychic, Remote Viewing) widely vary in results. This more than expected variability in study results has undermined the repeatability aspect of psi studies and has given support to skeptic claims. However, a pattern emerged from meta-analysis of a large number of psi functioning trials indicating psi performance was more consistent when LST is considered. A four-fold increase in functioning was seen to occur around 1330 local sidereal time.

Mean effect size versus local sidereal time for the entire data set



The Implicit Cosmology predicts psi function and the collection of EVP involve the same processes. However, the linkage between psi functioning and collection of EVP is not empirically well established. Determining if there is one might further our understanding of how EVP works and how sidereal time is involved in psi function.

We are asking you to participate in a study to see if the ease with which you collect Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) changes with sidereal time. atransc.org/sidereal-time-evp-study/

Big Circle

(From the [Big Circle Recording Sessions](#) article)

The Big Circle consists of our loved ones in the etheric along with their loved ones in the physical. The realization that this group existed in the etheric, and was trying to connect to their loved ones here in the physical world, prompted members of the Association to form a special group called “Big Circle – Bridge to the Afterlife,” which is now referred to simply as the “Big Circle.” This group is composed of bereaved parents, spouses, siblings and friends, whose mission is to build a channel between the physical and etheric aspects of reality—a Bridge to the Afterlife.

It is important to understand that the Big Circle does not belong to the ATransC. It is a universal ... let us call it a cooperative community with members on both sides of the veil who are working together to communicate and help one another progress. You need only follow the instructions in the Big Circle article to participate.

Recording at the same time may be beneficial. We are not sure. We do know our combined intention seems to help build a powerful contact field that helps the exchange of information via personal and instrumental mediumship. You need not be with other practitioners, as in the etheric, everywhere is where you are.

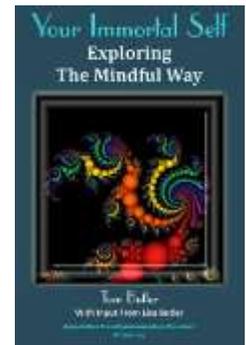
[This contact field should also help with your personal communion with a loved one. If you are not an EVP practitioner, consider meditation at the appointed time.](#)

We are happy to announce that two of the Big Circle founders are supporting a small, closed group on the [Idea Exchange](#). Access is limited to protect the member’s privacy, so contact us if you feel there may be benefit to you from direct participation. In advance, we hope you will understand if we are slow to give you access or ask additional questions. Use the contact tool at the bottom of every page on [atransc.org](#).

Promoting Your Immortal Self

Lisa and I paid our dues promoting EVP and the ATransC the first ten or so years after we assumed leadership of the Association. Helping Universal Studios sell the *White Noise* movie was the highlight. Of course, it is more than a little unnerving to tour over a hundred reporters around LA’s Roosevelt Hotel penthouse while recording for EVP and explaining what we were doing. We actually recorded a few EVP which we played for them at a theater-style presentation later that day. Getting EVP on demand is difficult for us and having to kind of makes us want to go live in a cave.

[The “John Belushi” example was recorded the day before in the penthouse. We were told that he frequently stayed there. You can listen to it at \[atransc.org/evp-tom-lisa-butler/\]\(#\)](#)



There have been some really interesting conferences, both ones we sponsored and ones we simply presented to. We never turned down a podcast or talk show, and of course, we wrote *There is No Death and There are No Dead* as part of our public outreach. However, in time, we realized how much money and time the public demanded from us for so little benefit to the ATransC and withdrew.

In recent years, we have been reluctant to make public appearances. That is until I finished the book and realized I needed to sell it if the word was to get out. My preference is to go on to other things ... sort of leave it to my friends in spirit. They were the ones so insistent about having it written. (No, it is not channeled, but logical problems were often solved in my mind as I crawled out of bed.)

So, now I am more open to public experiences and have been on a number of programs.

Spirit Talk April 2017

The link below will take you to Chris Fleming's April Spirit Talk. We had a most interesting discussion in which you may be interested. Lisa and I had the opportunity to work with Chris on several occasions and thought he had

considerable ability. It was during this discussion that I learned just how well informed and dedicated to this work he has become. spirittalk.planetparanormal.com/?p=1103

Shattered Reality

I had a good conversation with Fahrusha on Shattered Reality Podcast. An interesting possible EVP popped in after the discussion. You can hear the podcast and possible EVP by following the link.

atlanticcoastufos.com/shatteredrealitypodcast.com/podcast/tom-butler-evps-45/

Seeking Reality

One of the first people I spoke with about the book was Roberta Grimes on Seeking Reality. You can listen at:

webtalkradio.net/internet-talk-radio/2016/10/10/seek-reality-tom-butler-talks-about-studying-the-greaterreality/

We Don't Die

My first interview was with Sandra Champlain on her We Don't Die program. You can listen at directory.libsyn.com/episode/index/id/4669302

Thank You!

My focus now turns to writing a new book about transcommunication and migrating our favorite video-ITC technique from analog to digital equipment. This is a good time for you to let us know how we can better serve you ... not as a club or social site, but as a tool with which you might gain understanding. That is the path we all must follow.

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