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A New Integrative Model for States of Consciousness

INTRODUCTION

The central task of our New Integrative NLP model (Stanojevic-Vitaliano 1995), whether experimental or applied, is the understanding of the nature of human consciousness. In order to understand normal and altered states of consciousness (Tart 1969) – dreaming, light and deep sleep, relaxation response, hypnosis, trance states, meditation, near-death experiences, psychedelic drug experiences, some psychopathological states, inspirational and some religious states, to name a few of them – this model explores different, relatively separate areas of human behavior. These can include perception, learning, language, emotional and cognitive processes, and motor skills. As our understanding of these different areas of study in psychology grows, we continue to uncover the structures of human consciousness.

Our model proposes that the various levels of consciousness, which were empirically recognized and clearly described by many ancient civilizations, are the product of evolutionary development. Psychological development and functional specialization of neural structures are associated with biological development and the myelination of brain structures. Thus, each level of consciousness occurs as its supporting brain structure becomes myelinated and functionally enabled. Our comparative analysis of phylogenetic and ontogenetic development of the brain and its structures uncovers the multi-leveled manifestation of human consciousness.

Consciousness manifests *dualistic* properties that are paraconceptual by our ordinary concepts of space and time. Thus there is a traditional dichotomy between the biological and psychological models of consciousness. Neuro-scientists often describe a fast parallel mode of 'unconscious' information processing that is equivalent to the speed of neural firing and which can range from 40 to 100 times per second.