

WALSH, ROGER N. & SHAPIRO, DEANE H. (Eds.). *Beyond health and normality: Explorations of exceptional psychological well-being*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983. \$28.50, 528 pp.

The publication of *Beyond Health and Normality* will probably be seen in retrospect as a landmark event in transpersonal psychology. This very ambitious book attempts to systematically map out for the first time a range of personality organization and functioning which extends beyond the usual norms of mental health. Its term for this is "exceptional or optimal psychological well-being." Its argument is that optimal well-being is neither an ideal fiction, as Freud once described it, nor a useful heuristic device, but a real possibility. The book suggests that what we take as the norm of healthy adult development really represents no more than limiting assumptions of our prevailing cultural and medical paradigms. To make its case, the contributors to the book appeal to psychological systems which they are quite right in maintaining have not been taken into account by mainline academic and clinical psychology. These include the techniques, the processes of change, and the outcomes of what one of its editors calls the "consciousness disciplines" of the Great Traditions. Though these are often spiritual in form, they are actually therapeutic in aim and practical in nature, and propose very different baselines and norms of psychological well-being than our contemporary psychologies.

Jack Engler

The book opens with a lucid discussion of methodological issues which has too often been lacking in the field. This centers on the nature and role of paradigms in psychological systems. The editors make clear that conceptual paradigms play as much a role in the consciousness disciplines as they do in the behavioral sciences. The conflict between the traditions over what constitutes health is explained as an instance of "paradigm clash" in which each has only been able to view the other in reductionistic and pathologizing terms, perpetuating their history of misunderstanding and

mistrust. The following two sections present "Western" and "non-Western" perspectives on states of optimal well-being and suggest right away that models of exceptional psychological health are found in Western as well as Eastern traditions. This avoids the frequent facile equation of transpersonal psychology with Eastern spirituality. The final section then attempts a critical integration of the preceding chapters, in effect a new paradigm of optimal mental health.

Beyond Health and Normality is a fascinating study. Whether it succeeds in fully arguing its case seems less important to me than the fact that it represents a number of extremely important developments in the field of transpersonal psychology as a discipline. Transpersonal psychology went through an initial phase of excitement and discovery in which anything and everything was included under the rubric "transpersonal." Now this book makes a systematic attempt to define the exact domain of the field relative to other areas of psychology. It is also the first deliberate attempt to develop integrating paradigms for the field rather than simply generating more theoretical constructs or data. Second, there is a convergence of perspectives in the book around a developmental model of mental illness and health. This coincides with the developmental spectrum concept of psychopathology which has come to play such a central role in current clinical thinking and practice and which is one of the most important findings to emerge in clinical psychiatry and psychology in the last decade. The heart of this concept is that the pathogenesis of mental disorder follows a developmental chronology. Qualitatively different levels of personality organization and functioning are rooted in failures, arrests, or regressions at different stages of psychic development, irrespective of whether the distal etiology is inborn vulnerability, developmental traumata, or some combination of both. (See M. H. Stone, *The Borderline Syndromes: Constitution, Personality and Adaptation*).

The corollary is that different levels of personality organization require different approaches to treatment. The developmental model used by most of the authors does not seem to be consciously derived from this research—in fact all but Wilber seem surprisingly unfamiliar with it. However their descriptions of optimal states actually map out a further range of functioning on the same developmental continuum. Thus the book opens up the possibility of integrating the consciousness disciplines with mainstream clinical thinking with each addressing disorders at opposite ends of the developmental spectrum.

Third, *Beyond Health and Normality* demonstrates that the same therapeutic principle which guides other levels of treatment applies to the consciousness disciplines as well, namely, treatment should be relative to the level of deficit or dysfunction. That means, higher in the sense of states of consciousness does not always mean "better" or even "good." Meditation, for example, may not be good for everyone under all conditions. In weak ego structures for instance, uncovering-types of meditation can foster ego regression rather than regression in the service of the ego, and lead to disorganization. This represents a much more sophisticated understanding of what interventions are appropriate for what problems across the range of human development. It contrasts sharply with the global enthusiasm for the consciousness disciplines as alternatives to conventional therapy or to just plain growing-up that characterized a lot of earlier writing in the field. This vital insight needs to be worked out in much more detail than it is here, however, where it is only stated as a general principle.

Fourth, this volume marks the emergence of a long overdue self-critical posture. The editors are careful to make their own assumptions and biases explicit for instance. They are also less afraid to critique each other's works. Shapiro's final chapter is just such an attempt to look critically at the different consciousness disciplines presented in the book, to compare one against the other, and to begin to see the weaknesses as well as the strengths of each. The stage is evidently passing when researchers in the field feel the need primarily to support and protect each other's efforts in the face of skeptics, critics, and unbelievers. There is a new and healthy note of confidence in the validity of their own work and the need to subject it to the same critical review as any other psychological discipline.

This is related, fifth, to the emergence of "invisible colleges" in transpersonal psychology. An invisible college is a group of researchers who live in different geographical locations, but who often attend the same conferences, publish in the same journals, invite each other to give presentations at their home institutions, and who share drafts and reprints of their work. The emergence of these small, informal collegial groups marks a definite stage in the development of a field and it is through the power of such "colleges" that many of the changes in a science are made as shown by Price in *Big Science, Little Science*. The contributors to this volume comprise a major "invisible college" within transpersonal psychology today, and their long previous collaboration has made these advances possible. Following a new research

paradigm which is emerging in the study of altered states, they are not only researchers but participant-observers of the disciplines they research. Persuasive as they are however, other researchers will need to remember that the book's two editors' conceptual orientation represents only one school of thought, derived largely from altered states research and social learning theory. Others need not be hesitant to pursue alternate lines of inquiry and interpretation.

Despite these major contributions, *Beyond Health and Normality* asks to be judged in other terms as well. Its explicit intent is to persuade, or in the editors' terms, provide "ennobling visions" which should give us a sense of hope and purpose and motivate us to reach beyond our limiting assumptions about our capabilities for well-being. It is questionable whether the book fully succeeds in this ambition. Here I found it somewhat disappointing. By and large the discussion is carried on at too high a level of abstraction. I was reminded of Guntrip's axiom for theories of therapy: abstract concepts need to be anchored in and illustrated by relevant clinical material. As Walsh himself points out, the perspectives presented in the book are still largely lacking empirical support. Only Kornfield's essay offers tentative and tantalizing glimpses into the actual phenomenology of optimal psychological states, and for that reason I found it easily the most evocative and compelling. However, his selections are randomly chosen and not systematically or theoretically developed. There is a great need for empirical research on the subject population Wilber points to as likely exemplars of psychological health: the saints, sages, mystics, masters and enlightened individuals of the Great Traditions who presumably embody quite different baselines and norms of functioning and appear to have a very different subjective experience of themselves and reality. Heath's essay on "The Maturing Person" is the only one to really come to grips with this issue and I found it particularly important for that reason.

The contributors also appeal largely to outcomes. What is missing is more discussion of the actual *process* by which these changes come about. This would make the claimed outcomes more plausible and intelligible. When they do address the dynamics of change, there is an over-emphasis on cognitive mechanisms. Change at any level is more than a matter of changing our "limiting beliefs" of who we are (p. 419). In my own experience as a clinician, therapist and meditation teacher, the key factor in bringing about change is not insight but the capacity for mourning. Every thera-

peutic-developmental progression involves separating from a former level of outgrown self-object ties, and these are surrendered only when they have been adequately mourned.

A second issue for me is the constant assumption of a transpersonal viewpoint in the book. Despite its developmental perspective, it tends to adopt the vantage-point of the consciousness disciplines toward *all* levels of development according to which "ego" in the sense of a separate self is illusory, a distortion of awareness, and a defense system. In actual individual development, the attainment of ego boundaries and a cohesive self is an enormous adaptive achievement. It is the basis for all further growth and a prerequisite for practicing meditation or any of the other consciousness disciplines themselves. Even from the perspective of optimal well-being, it is not very satisfying to describe our normal state as "psychosis" or a "nightmare" (p. 43f) in view of its very real and important structural differences from the clinical psychoses or the severe disorders. This kind of thinking tends to collapse all other states into the category of "pathology" and does not allow crucial distinctions to be made between developmental achievements. It can therefore obscure the vital necessity of making different therapeutic interventions at different levels of organization and functioning. A more consistently developmental perspective, such as the one Wilber takes in his essay, "The evolution of consciousness," would allow transpersonal and clinical perspectives to be integrated on the same developmental continuum in a way the book as a whole still falls short of doing.

One final problem has to do with the way issues of health and normality are approached. The psychological disciplines appealed to adopt a therapeutic orientation and focus on the diagnosis and alleviation of human suffering. While the contributors are well aware of this, the tenor of much of the book seems more in line with the "positive well-being" orientation of current human potential psychologies. This will appeal to the spirit of our time, but to this reviewer it is disturbing how easy it will be to assimilate the book's argument into what Christopher Lasch calls the "culture of narcissism" which enervates much of this spirit.

Beyond Health and Normality reflects the shift of emphasis in clinical thinking in recent years from illness to health. Even though there is as yet no clear consensus on a definition of health or normality, there is a growing consensus that health is not simply the absence of illness. This is the prob-

lem the English psychoanalyst, D. H. Winnicott, once said psychodynamic therapies had not yet faced: "What is life about, apart from illness?" The charter of the World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of infirmity." Freud described such a norm as an "ideal fiction" because he believed we would find no instances of individuals who embodied it. Other ethnopsychiatric systems, like the ones discussed in this book, specify actual methods for its attainment and offer living individuals as evidence. The perspectives in this study are anomalous in terms of most psychiatric and psychological paradigms. But one function of all anomalous findings is to force rethinking of limits, methods and possibilities. This kind of cross-cultural evidence points not "beyond health or normality," but beyond the culture-bound assumptions, limiting theoretical models and restricted range of populations on which our norms of health and normality have heretofore been based.

Ψ CALIFORNIA STATE PSYCHOLOGIST

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I:3 Beyond Health and Normality: A Review

Ed. by Roger Walsh, Ph.D. and Deane H. Shapiro, Jr., Ph.D. Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983. 516 pp., including glossary and index. \$28.50.

Health, wryly observed Eliot, is only the incubation of another disease. This collection of interesting essays is part of that contemporary genre making capitalistic largesse out of religion and philosophy—chiefly Eastern, not Western—by promising with the aid of these “psychologies,” the achievement of noble well-being and realization of full human potential—a kink of Nietzschean superman apocalypse. The camel will become an eagle!

This “super health” chic advocacy can be dangerous. It becomes another tyranny, telling people how they “should” and “shouldn’t” be, gloomily devaluing their lives, substituting ideology for reality. The excellent last chapter of this book by Shapiro recognizes these dangers but it does not slow the thrust of this book. A greater variety of articles representing other and more modest voices in the health and psychology fields

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If knowledge comes from the testing of beliefs by action, then the position advocated in this book can only be tested by Buddha and Ghandi figures or other holy men and gurus. These are not satisfactory guides for people struggling for psychological well-being in their everydayness. True, the book purports to go “beyond” health and normality and to explore “exceptional” well-being, but a more mundane exploration, for example, of what Freud termed “normal unhappiness” or Jung’s “legitimate suffering” would have added perspective and depth. Nevertheless, the material presented is uniformly interesting and helpful—in the way that evangelicism at its best can be a call to that which is potentially “higher” in us. The editorship and connecting comments and summaries are very useful. The chapters include excellent discussions by Roger Walsh of East and West contrasts and Buddhist enlightenments, fascinating exploration of human potential and the evolution of conscious-

ness by Ken Wilbur and Jack Kornfield, a good exposition of meditation by Daniel Golemdin and Mark Epstein, maturity issues by Douglas Heath, Sufism by Arthur Keikman and superbly integrating and, at times, cautionary chapters by Deane Shapiro. Contributions by Werner Erhard et al., Johanna Shapiro, Frances Vaughan and, in particular, Maria and Gordon Globus are also commended.

Maybe, it would all be acceptable if this type of writing was called religion or philosophy or political ideology—all vitally important and necessary in our world. But do wise, noble thoughts and lofty explorations merit the name of psychology?

Murray Bilmes, Ph.D.

I:3

**BEYOND HEALTH AND
NORMALITY:
EXPLORATIONS IN
EXCEPTIONAL
PSYCHOLOGICAL
WELL-BEING**

Edited by Roger Walsh and Deane H. Shapiro, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983, 516 pages. \$28.50

Reviewed by Tom Hurley

This set of readings has a dual purpose. First, it aims to help create a vision of human growth and development possibilities that would answer the modern need for meaning and inspire individual effort and achievement—a vision that touches our shared conviction that we harbor, individually and collectively, the potential to be and to do far more than we ordinarily demonstrate with our lives. Ideally, for editors Roger Walsh and Deane



H. Shapiro, Jr., this vision would draw both from traditional psychospiritual disciplines (principally Eastern) and from our Western intellectual, scientific, and cultural traditions.

Second, *Beyond Health and Normality: Explorations in Exceptional Psychological Well-Being* aims to shape an approach to the continuing development of that vision that is critical, refined, and experimental. In an introductory essay, Shapiro warns that while

certain chapters in this book will be somewhat evangelical in tone and have an intent to share a new vision of possibilities . . . this must be balanced by attempts to ground the vision, to show scientific problems in the study of the healthy person, and to point the way for future research.

The material that Walsh and Shapiro have assembled in *Beyond Health and Normality* tends to support their view that an empirically-based, integrative vision of expanded psychological capacity is possible and that we can already discern both its outlines and some of its principal features. The book's 18 chapters are neither definitive nor comprehensive, but they are provocative enough to make further effort along the lines represented seem interesting and important.

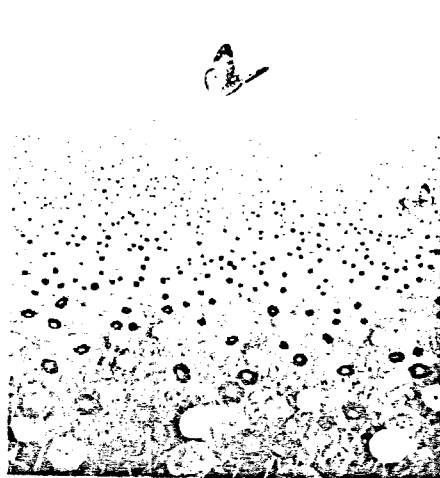
Four major sections comprise the anthology. The first consists of three introductory essays that examine issues raised by a cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary approach to the study of psychological health and well-being. Like the four articles in the final section, these are some of the most valuable chapters in the book since they are as concerned with creating the proper context for the study of extreme levels of psychological well-being as they are with the specific content of those levels.

It is clear, for instance, that our culture lacks a cohesive vision of human growth and development that is equal in range or depth to our own inner sense of our possibilities. There are a variety of reasons for this, and in the opening pages of *Beyond Health and Normality* Walsh and Shapiro identify several. These include cultural factors such as the tendency to find "well-being and liberation" . . . externally through technological manipulation and mastery of the environment rather than through mastery of our minds

and ourselves," as well as historical and methodological factors which have resulted in our views of human nature being pathology-based. Without denying the value of that approach, the editors argue that we have erred in failing

to recognize the possibility that the psychologically healthy may display capacities, ways of being, modes and depths of experiencing, interests, values and motives that do not show up at all in the unhealthy. In addition, the very healthy may not do some things which are so widespread in the culture as to have been accepted as universal and intrinsic to human nature.

Now, the possibility that our model of human growth and development is severely deficient in its scope is not an academic issue,



nor is it one that we can afford much longer to ignore. As Walsh and Shapiro emphatically remind us, our models are "powerful determiners of the ways in which we perceive and interpret our world and ourselves"; we "tend to see what is consistent with our models and to overlook or misinterpret what is not."

The second and third sections of *Beyond Health and Normality* include descriptions of exceptional psychological well-being representing a variety of Western and non-Western perspectives. These eleven essays differ widely in terms of clarity, style, content, and significance, and range from a summary of behavioral science research findings to descriptions of enlightenment from the great Asian psychospiritual traditions such as Buddhism and Sufism. The views of such figures as Werner Erhard and

Carlos Castaneda add variety and spice to the mix.

Of the Western perspectives in this set, the chapters by Ken Wilber and Douglas Heath are most informative. Wilber's sympathetic interpretation of Freud's views on the self and soul throws an intriguing new light on that pioneer of the unconscious, while Heath's overview of what the behavioral sciences have discovered regarding psychological health and adaptation is surprisingly rich. One hopes that his model for organizing these findings will be a strong spur to further research and theory, for even he concludes his survey by noting that "our Western scientific understanding of healthy growth, becoming, maturing has made only a small step, particularly when one places what we may now know against the backdrop of the other views of human potential reported in this book."

In view of such paucity of scientific data, the editors have turned to what Walsh collectively refers to as the consciousness disciplines for much of both the overall form and specific content of a vision of expanded psychological capacities. The principal claim of the consciousness disciplines is

that through intensive mental training, it is possible to attain states of consciousness and psychological well-being beyond those currently described by traditional Western psychologies, as well as profound insight into the nature of mental processes, consciousness, and reality.

The seven non-Western perspectives in *Beyond Health and Normality* include expositions on Zen, Sufism, the writings of Carlos Castaneda, the perennial psychology, and Buddhism. The latter is treated most extensively—as Huston Smith notes, "of the great traditions it is Buddhism that puts its message most psychologically"—and may in fact prove an abundant source of material when it comes to formulating testable hypotheses regarding more advanced levels of psychological growth and development. In the discussion by Daniel Goleman and Mark Epstein of the Buddhist text, the *Abhidhamma*, for instance, we learn that it outlines a detailed model of mental states and psychological change based on a list of cognitive, affective, and perceptual factors that may number up to 175 categories! These include

Japan, Vol. 3, Kodanshi International Ltd. Osamu Tsuruta

"healthy" mental factors such as insight, adaptability, modesty, and composure, and "unhealthy" mental factors such as delusion, egoism, indecisiveness, and torpor, and suggest the degree of precision and sophistication toward which modern psychologists might aspire in mapping the subjective domain.

As provocative as such characterizations are, they are perhaps less important than certain principles which emerge throughout these readings as necessary guides for the study as well as the facilitation of psychological growth. One such principle, for instance, is that our usual concern with the contents of consciousness must be balanced by sustained attention to the psychological mechanisms shaping awareness. Goleman and Epstein explain that

Conventional psychotherapies assume as given the mechanisms underlying perceptual, cognitive, and affective processes, while seeking to alter them at the level of socially conditioned patterns. Asian systems disregard these same socially conditioned patterns, while aiming at control and self-regulation of the underlying mechanisms themselves. . . . In the Asian approach, behavioral and personality change is secondary, an epiphenomenon of changes, through the voluntary self-regulation of mental states, in the basic processes which define our reality.

Similarly, we must realize that the mental states and abilities characteristic of advanced levels of psychological well-being are trainable and that tools for that training exist; meditation in its many forms is

perhaps the most fundamental. Yet we are wise not to underestimate the work that is required or the difficulties that may be encountered.

The fourth section of *Beyond Health and Normality* contains integrative essays that begin to develop the new conceptual frameworks that will be necessary to bridge the gulfs now hampering progress toward a compelling contemporary vision of exceptional psychological well-being—the gulf between scientific and normative approaches to the subject, for example, or that between the consciousness disciplines of Asia and current Western psychologies. The final article, by Shapiro, is particularly revealing. He critically dissects the viewpoints presented in preceding chapters and demonstrates that while there are certain similarities among their visions of health, there are also substantial differences regarding such issues as the nature of human nature, the need for a teacher or specific techniques in order to achieve more advanced levels of well-being, and the qualities of motivation or awareness required for such efforts.

While *Beyond Health and Normality* will probably prove a watershed volume for transpersonal psychology as that field consolidates itself, it does not wholly fulfill its own purposes. It is too academic to be visionary or, by itself, to inspire individuals to undertake the work necessary to achieve advanced levels of psychological well-being. There are too many omissions for it to be an adequate sourcebook,

though it does contain much information that should be essential regardless of what form the study of psychological well-being takes.

For instance, the Western perspectives on psychological well-being include no contribution from a Christian or Hebrew perspective, though Heath briefly mentions aspects of these as well as our Greek heritage that could provide the basis for a new vision. There is little or no treatment of a variety of areas which are converging toward a resurgence of interest in what Maslow called a scientifically-based value system. There is also only cursory mention of developments in scientific and professional fields which are beginning to be beachheads for the true incorporation of ideas and concepts from the consciousness disciplines, including the idea of state-specific skills and abilities. One thinks in this context of psychoneuroimmunology and other mind/body initiatives in medicine, of sports psychology, and even, among other areas, of military research and training.

Beyond Health and Normality succeeds best, perhaps, in being a model for a critical approach to the issues with which it is concerned. The editors' skillful blending of intellectual, scientific, personal, and social interests and aims represents the type of professional attitude, the willingness to risk and be responsible, which we are likely to see more of in a variety of fields. In both these respects, we may hope that this book is but the first in a series of ever finer efforts. □

BEYOND HEALTH AND NORMALITY

Explorations Of Exceptional Well-Being

Edited by Roger Walsh and Deane Shapiro, Jr.
Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1983, \$

Reviewed by Liz Campbell

This book is a far-reaching effort to establish ground-work for the integration of Eastern and Western psychologies by exploring their various theories and practices in relation to well-being.

Included in the non-Western perspectives are Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism and shamanistic traditions. These are complemented by Western views on relationships, empirical research and the development of consciousness.

The editors are well aware of the difficulty of gaining acceptance for non-Western psychological systems by Western psychologists. Walsh and Shapiro point out that major psychological models have tended to be pathology-based and self-prophetic. "For what is being increasingly recognized is that our models are powerful determiners of the ways in which we perceive and interpret our world and ourselves... What lies outside the range of a model may tend to be pathologized and diagnosed away by it." Much of the book addresses ways in which well-being may fall outside the Western scientific world view.

By looking at other models we are forced to reexamine our own unconscious assumptions. Also it becomes possible to see commonalities and begin to build conceptual bridges. For example, meditation may represent a meeting place for Eastern practices and Western science.

The editors see broader implications in the study of well-being. They remind us of the role of cultural beliefs in shaping individual self-image:

If our prevailing cultural and psychological models have underestimated what we are and what we can become, then perhaps we have set up a self-fulfilling, self-limiting prophecy. In such a case, the exploration of extreme psychological well being, and the permeation of that knowledge into psychology and the larger culture becomes a particularly important undertaking. Indeed it may even be that shifting our self concept may be one of the most strategic interventions for personal and cultural transformation.

Shapiro examines the relationship of values and beliefs to the descriptions of exceptional psychological health given by both Eastern and Western traditions. He lists difficulties that both East and West may have in perceiving the other accurately, and explores to what extent there might be a wedding between values and science.

Walsh follows with a chapter contrasting views of the human condition and potential in Eastern and Western psychologies. He points out that Western assumptions and models may reduce the ability to appreciate psycho-

logical systems other than our own, and that studies of altered states of consciousness, peak experiences, meditation outcome research, psychedelics and quantum physics have begun to lend support to claims of Eastern psychologies. He suggests that our most fundamental beliefs and world views may be called into question as we seriously study these disciplines.

In "Western Perspectives" Ken Wilber presents a brilliant argument for the development of the farthest reaches of human potential. He suggests that various psychologies have addressed different levels of identity, and the failure to recognize this accounts for much of the confusion and apparent contradiction.

One of the most interesting chapters is Erhard, Gioscia and Anbender's attempt to develop a paradigm of paradigms. They argue that we can be the ones who shift the paradigm, thereby empowering the human species to experience mastery of evolution.

Douglas Heath, in "The Maturing Person," presents findings from his impressive research on maturing, including multifaceted assessment and longitudinal studies. His model of the maturing person provides dimensions of integration, stability and autonomy.

Various selections in the "Non-Western Perspectives" section offer succinct presentations of Eastern models of psychological health. In "Integrations Among Perspectives," Walsh and Shapiro, aided by Ken Wilber and Frances Vaughan make an impressive and far-reaching effort to begin developing an integration of Eastern and Western psychologies.

Vaughan and Walsh, in their chapter, "Towards an Integrative Psychology of Well-Being," examine the dimensions of consciousness, perception, identity, motivation and defenses, and point to syntheses both within and between Western and Eastern psychologies. They suggest that certain qualities of well-being described in Eastern traditions can be understood from the perspective of this integration. Shapiro's "A Content Analysis of Eastern and Western, Traditional and New-Age Approaches to Therapy, Health and Healing" contains an analysis and comparison of each chapter. These final two chapters are pivotal and perhaps the most intriguing of the book. They are traveling on new ground, and in their attempt to provide integration they run the danger of offending particular schools and of making attempts at finding complementarity where it may not exist.

I wonder if traditional Western psychologists will be won over by arguments requiring them to step beyond their current models, or indeed if they accept the assumption that Western psychological models are deficient or partial. I fervently hope that, at the least, the book will stimulate dialogue regarding the nature of exceptional psychological well-being and how we might achieve it.

Liz Campbell is former Executive Director of AHP and frequent writer and lecturer on futurism and social transformation.

Book Review

Beyond Health and Normality: Explorations
of Exceptional Psychological Well-being

Edited by Roger Walsh and Deane Shapiro

Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983 \$32

Reviewed by Steven Hendlin

In Beyond Health and Normality, Walsh and Shapiro have brought together a fine reference source exploring the nature of high-level psychological well-being. Major Eastern and Western psychologies, philosophies, and religions are compared and contrasted in the search to find the possible common ground for integration of perspectives.

Articles are divided into four sections: an introduction, Western perspectives of health, non-Western perspectives, and integrations among the perspectives. The book is carefully planned and the editors have done a good job of relating the various articles in the book to each other in their integrative chapters. Walsh and Shapiro contribute liberally; Walsh authors or co-authors four chapters while Shapiro authors or co-authors six chapters. Other contributors on Western perspectives include Ken Wilber, Werner Erhard and associates, Douglas Heath, and Johanna Shapiro.

One of the strengths of the book is Shapiro's integrating work. In the second chapter he contrasts the scientific and the values traditions and clearly spells out the implicit and explicit global biases of each article to follow. I have never seen this attempted before in an edited collection and believe Shapiro does the reader a service by so openly presenting each author's inherent assumptions. Shapiro appears to have a balanced view of various Eastern and Western perspectives and an ability to fairly present many views without committing himself too strongly to any single position. His final integrating chapter is one of the best in the book and

the single best article by him that I have read.

This collection by Walsh and Shapiro is appropriate for graduate students and professionals interested in well-being, meditation, the consciousness disciplines, and comparative models of east-west psychology. It is not aimed toward the lay public. This book will be a welcomed contribution to the exploratory studies of "extreme" psychological health.



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SPRING 1983

**MEDICINE, BIOLOGY
AND PSYCHOLOGY**

BEYOND HEALTH AND NORMALITY
Explorations of Exceptional Psychological Well-Being
*Edited by Roger N. Walsh, Ph.D. and Deane H. Shapiro, Jr.,
Ph.D., 532 pages, 6 x 9, \$26.50r (February)*
ISBN 0-442-29173-6

Western psychology has only recently begun to focus attention on the human potential for advanced psychological development. This first full-scale exploration of the higher levels of mental health brings together some of the world's most eminent thinkers from psychology, philosophy, and religion. They compare and integrate all major descriptions of advanced stages of psychological development, then examine the essential ideas that underlie them. Professionals gain a provocative look at current research on altered states of consciousness, peak experiences, meditation, and relevant aspects of quantum physics. Buddhist, Hindu, Sufi, and other Eastern spiritual disciplines are examined and shown to possess sophisticated techniques for mental training and achieving higher states of consciousness.

BEYOND HEALTH AND NORMALITY

1.1 My enthusiastic congratulations on Beyond Health And Normality. The book is superb. Overall writing style, the intellectual level, the admirable clarity...enormous contribution.

**THE
BIOCENTRIC
INSTITUTE**

Executive Director
Nathaniel Branden, Ph.D.

BRAIN  MIND
bulletin

P. O. Box 42211
Los Angeles, Calif. 90042

BEYOND HEALTH AND NORMALITY: EXPLORATIONS OF EXCEPTIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, edited by Roger Walsh and Deane Shapiro (\$28.50 from Van Nostrand Reinhold, 135 West 50th St., NYC 10020).

What is optimal mental health? How do the

characteristics of higher states of consciousness described in the world's traditions compare with each other?

This anthology explores the nature of the human mind from the perspectives of Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism, Shamanism and Western psychology. Its contributors look at the "extremes of psychological growth, the most stirring visions of human realization."

Together they provide a common basis for discovering a genotypic understanding of healthy human growth. Although each offers slightly different methods and insights, the parallels in both theory and experience are striking.

The developmental points you make are sound and interesting. I liked your treatment of balance very much. (Ken Wilbur on Shapiro, Chapter 16, Self-control and positive health: Multiple perspectives of balance) In Beyond Health and Normality.