

# **HANDBOOK OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY**

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## Religiousness and Spirituality

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Religiousness and spirituality have been a part of human experience throughout the length and breadth of human history. Crossing every category of human endeavor, they have been the subject and object of art, music, poetry, culture, warfare, inspiration, aspiration, sacrifice, morality, devotion, contemplation, conflict, and multitudes of other human activities. For the past 100 years these phenomena have been examined through the lens of social science. Early inquiries within the field of psychology were undertaken by scholars such as William James (1902/1961), Edwin Starbuck (1899), G. Stanley Hall (1904, 1917), and George Coe (1900). And despite a lull in such research during the mid-20th century (Hill et al., 2000), there has been an upsurge in attention to religion and spirituality among psychologists at the turn of the 21st century.

This increase in interest has been well documented by a number of researchers (e.g., Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Hill et al., 2000; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Shafranske, 2002; Zinnbauer, Pargament, & Scott, 1999). In particular, the relationship between religiousness, spirituality, and health has received a great deal of attention and was the focus of the January 2003 edition of the *American Psychologist*. As noted by Mills (2002, cited in Shafranske, 2002), citations including the keywords *religion and health* or *spirituality and health* in databases such as PsychINFO and Medline quintupled from 1994 to 2001. Also currently prevalent are articles and books describing the integration of religiousness and spirituality with psychological treatment (e.g., Miller, 1999; Richards & Bergin, 1997, 2000; Shafranske, 1996; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000).

This scholarly and scientific inquiry has generated a considerable amount of theory, data, and information about religiousness and spirituality. Indeed, this *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion* is itself a culmination of the fruitful theoretical and empirical efforts of numerous scientists and scholars, past and present. Given this increasing knowledge base, one might assume that there exists a clear consensus among psychologists about the nature and definition of religiousness and spirituality. Alas, this is not the case. The psychology of religion is presently in the midst of flux about the meaning of its key

constructs. Previous research has documented the diversity of definitions of religiousness and spirituality among researchers and adherents (see Zinnbauer, Pargament, & Scott, 1999, for a summary). From the earliest studies by Coe (1900) and Clark (1958), through more recent studies by McReedy and Greeley (1976) and Scott (1997), the terms have been associated with various beliefs, behaviors, feelings, attributes, relationships, and experiences. Similarly, the content analysis of Zinnbauer et al. (1997), as well as the policy-capturing studies of Pargament, Sullivan, Balzer, Van Haitsma, and Raymark (1995) and Zinnbauer and Pargament (2002), suggest that individuals have clear ideas about the meaning of these terms, are able to describe their beliefs in a reliable fashion, and are able to distinguish religiousness and spirituality from other constructs and phenomena. What has been missing, though, is agreement within the psychology of religion community itself. Some positive signs are finally appearing in the literature, but definitions of religiousness and spirituality remain relatively inconsistent across researchers.

This lack of consensus presents a critical challenge for the psychology of religion. Progress within the field rests on a certain degree of agreement about the identity and meaning of its key constructs, and the nature of the most relevant phenomena of interest (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Hill et al., 2000; Moberg, 2002; Shafranske, 2002). Without such agreement, the field loses focus, its boundaries become diffuse, and it produces findings that do not generalize across studies (Zinnbauer et al., 1997).

This chapter begins with an examination of historical trends and current challenges faced by psychologists who seek to define religiousness and spirituality. Modern tendencies to differentiate and polarize religiousness and spirituality are then examined and evaluated, and some of the challenges and possibilities for the conceptualization and measurement of these constructs are considered. The chapter concludes with the presentation of definitions of religiousness and spirituality that avoid past and present pitfalls, and incorporate the concepts of multilevel-multidimensional analysis and developmental change.

### **DEFINING RELIGIOUSNESS AND SPIRITUALITY THROUGH THE TRADITIONAL LENS**

Although the terms “religiousness” and “spirituality” have been defined by psychologists in a number of different ways over the past century (see Zinnbauer et al., 1997; Zinnbauer et al., 1999; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2002), there has been general agreement that both concepts are multidimensional (Hill et al., 2000; Moberg, 2002). Furthermore, psychologists have traditionally regarded religion as a “broad-band” construct, not explicitly differentiated from spirituality (Hill et al., 2000; Pargament, 1999; Zinnbauer et al., 1997, 1999). From this perspective, religious and spiritual phenomena have been subsumed beneath the broad umbrella of the construct religion, or the terms *religion* and *spirituality* have been used interchangeably (Spilka & McIntosh, 1996). A selection of several past and present definitions of religiousness and spirituality can be seen in Tables 2.1 and 2.2.

A feature of traditional approaches is the understanding of religious phenomena from both substantive and functional perspectives. Substantive approaches define religion by its substance: the sacred. Research thus investigates those emotions, thoughts, behaviors, relationships, and the like that are explicitly related to a transcendent or imminent power (Bruce, 1996), or that have acquired sacred qualities themselves (Pargament & Mahoney, 2002; Emmons, 1999). One example of this is the definition of religion by

TABLE 2.1. Past and Present Definitions of Religion

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| Argyle and Beit-Hallahmi (1975, p. 1): A system of beliefs in a divine or superhuman power, and practices of worship or other rituals directed towards such a power.                                                           |
| Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis (1993, p. 8): Whatever we as individuals do to come to grips personally with the questions that confront us because we are aware that we and others like us are alive and that we will die.     |
| Bellah (1970, p. 21): A set of symbolic forms and acts that relate man to the ultimate conditions of his existence.                                                                                                            |
| Clark (1958, p. 22): The inner experience of the individual when he senses a Beyond, especially as evidenced by the effect of this experience on his behavior when he actively attempts to harmonize his life with the Beyond. |
| Dollahite (1998, p. 5): A covenant faith community with teachings and narratives that enhance the search for the sacred.                                                                                                       |
| James (1902/1961, p. 42): The feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.                          |
| O'Collins and Farrugia (1991, p. 203): Systems of belief in and response to the divine, including the sacred books, cultic rituals, and ethical practices of the adherents.                                                    |
| Peteet (1994, p. 237): Commitments to beliefs and practices characteristic of particular traditions.                                                                                                                           |

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Argyle and Beit-Hallahmi (1975) as “a system of beliefs in a divine or superhuman power, and practices of worship or other rituals directed towards such a power” (p. 1).

Functional approaches examine the purposes religiousness serves in an individual's life. Beliefs, emotions, practices, and experiences are investigated as functional mechanisms that are used to deal with fundamental existential issues, such as meaning, death, suffering, isolation, and injustice (Bruce, 1996; Pargament, 1997). The definition of religiousness by Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis (1993) captures the functional approach: “whatever we as individuals do to come to grips personally with the questions that confront us because we are aware that we and others like us are alive and that we will die” (p. 8).

Traditional psychological research has also emphasized the personal aspects of religiousness (Miller & Thoresen, 2003). Although sociologists of religion have typically in-

TABLE 2.2. Past and Present Definitions of Spirituality

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| Armstrong (1995, p. 3): The presence of a relationship with a Higher Power that affects the way in which one operates in the world.                                                                                                                                                          |
| Benner (1989, p. 20): The human response to God's gracious call to a relationship with himself.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Doyle (1992, p. 302): The search for existential meaning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Elkins, Henderson, Hughes, Leaf, and Saunders (1988, p. 10): A way of being and experiencing that comes about through awareness of a transcendent dimension and that is characterized by certain identifiable values in regard to self, life, and whatever one considers to be the Ultimate. |
| Fahlberg and Fahlberg (1991, p. 274): That which is involved in contacting the divine within the Self or self.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Hart (1994, p. 23): The way one lives out one's faith in daily life, the way a person relates to the ultimate conditions of existence.                                                                                                                                                       |
| Shafranske and Gorsuch (1984, p. 231): A transcendent dimension within human experience . . . discovered in moments in which the individual questions the meaning of personal existence and attempts to place the self within a broader ontological context.                                 |
| Tart (1975, p. 4): That vast realm of human potential dealing with ultimate purposes, with higher entities, with God, with love, with compassion, with purpose.                                                                                                                              |
| Vaughan (1991, p. 105): A subjective experience of the sacred.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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cluded social or communal aspects of religious life in their conceptualizations, psychologists of religion have traditionally focused on individuals' beliefs, emotion, behavior, motivations, and so on (Pargament, 1997). The definition of religiousness by William James (1902/1961) illustrates this individual focus: "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine" (p. 42).

Traditional research also rests on the understanding that religiousness and spirituality can have both positive and negative forms (Hill et al., 2000; Hood, Spilka, Hunsberger, & Gorsuch, 1996; Zinnbauer et al., 1999). Despite the efforts of a few writers to paint religion as illusory or pathological (e.g., Ellis, 1980; Freud, 1927/1961), most investigators have provided balanced depictions. For example, Fromm (1950) contrasted *authoritarian religion* in which people demean themselves in relation to a greater power with a *humanistic religion* in which God represents and empowers individuals' strength and self-realization. There is also Allport's (1966) famous contrast of *intrinsic religion* with *extrinsic religion*. The intrinsic believer "lives" his or her religion and views faith as an ultimate value in itself. In contrast, the extrinsic believer "uses" religion in a strictly utilitarian sense to gain safety, social standing, or other secular or antireligious goals.

Whereas traditional approaches have been marked by their use of substantive and functional frames, an individual level of analysis, and depiction of positive and negative forms, the picture has changed. The most notable shift has occurred with the rise in popularity and recognition of the construct spirituality.

### **SPIRITUALITY AND THE RISE OF OPPOSITES**

As outlined in several sources (Hill et al., 2000; Hood, 2003; Wulff, 1997; Zinnbauer et al., 1999), spirituality has emerged as a distinct construct and focus of research in the past several decades. Previously undifferentiated from religiousness, numerous forms of faith under the label "spirituality" have risen in popularity from the 1980s to the present. References to spirituality in the Religion Index increased substantially from the 1940s and 1950s to the present (Scott, 1997), and spirituality has received increasing attention within psychology in terms of measurement and scale development. These changes have occurred against a background of decline in traditional religious institutions, an increase in individualized forms of faith expression, movement from an emphasis on belief toward direct experience of the sacred, and a U.S. culture of religious pluralism (see Hill et al., 2000; Hood, 2003; Roof, 1993; Zinnbauer et al., 1999). Spirituality has also replaced religiousness in popular usage, as illustrated by the increasing number of mass-market books on spiritually related topics.

With the emergence of spirituality, a tension appears to have risen between the constructs of religiousness and spirituality. In its most extreme form, the two terms are defined in a rigidly dualistic framework. The most egregious examples are those that place a substantive, static, institutional, objective, belief-based, "bad" religiousness in opposition to a functional, dynamic, personal, subjective, experience-based, "good" spirituality.

#### **Substantive Religion versus Functional Spirituality**

Functional descriptions that were once applied to religion are now becoming the province of spirituality. Spirituality has come to represent individuals' efforts at reaching a variety of sacred or existential goals in life, such as finding meaning, wholeness, inner potential,

and interconnections with others. For example, spirituality is now being depicted as a search for universal truth (Goldberg, 1990) and as a form of belief that relates the individual to the world and gives meaning and definition to existence (Soeken & Carson, 1987). In contrast, religiousness is substantively associated with formal belief, group practice, and institutions. As such, it is often portrayed as peripheral to these existential functions (Pargament, 1999).

This polarity is also becoming evident in the reports of adherents. In an interview study of faith among the seriously ill, Woods and Ironson (1999) found that those identifying themselves as “religious” tended to link their beliefs to institutional, traditional, ritualized, and social expressions of faith. In contrast, those who identified themselves as “spiritual” presented their beliefs and practices as mechanisms for transcendence and connectedness.

### **Static Religion versus Dynamic Spirituality**

Speaking to this contrast, Wulff (1997) notes that, traditionally, religion was conceptualized as a verb. More recently, however, it has been transformed into a noun. In the process it has become a static entity to many people (Pargament, 1997), reduced to its elements and stripped of its function. Static depictions of religion portray “what religion is, not what it does or how it works” (Zinnbauer et al., 1999, p. 904). In contrast, spirituality is associated with dynamic verbs and adjectives (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003). As discussed by Hill et al. (2000), it is often used in modern discourse as a substitute for words such as *fulfilling*, *moving*, or *important*.

### **Institutional Objective Religion versus Personal Subjective Spirituality**

Departing from traditional analyses of individual beliefs, emotions, and experiences, many writers are now contrasting the “institutional,” “organized,” and “social” aspects of religion with the “personal,” “transcendent,” and “relatedness” qualities of spirituality (e.g., Miller & Thoresen, 2003). Peteet’s (1994) conceptualization of the terms within psychotherapy illustrates this contrast. *Religiousness* is defined as “[reflecting] commitments to beliefs and practices characteristic of particular traditions,” and *spirituality* is characterized as “[viewing] the human condition in a larger and or transcendent context and [being] therefore concerned with the meaning and purpose of life and with unseen realities, such as one’s relationship to a supreme being” (p. 237).

This contrast is evident among researchers and adherents alike. For example, Emblen (1992) conducted a content analysis of references to religiousness and spirituality that appeared in the last 30 years of the nursing literature. After compiling lists of the key words identified with the two constructs, definitions of each were derived from the most common associations. *Religiousness* was thus defined as “a system of organized beliefs and worship which a person practices,” and *spirituality* was defined as “a personal life principle which animates a transcendent quality of relationship with God” (p. 45).

In a well-regarded examination of trends in the conceptualization of the terms, Hill et al. (2000) have also used the individual–institutional dimension to distinguish between spirituality and religiousness. Whereas they propose that the sacred lies at the core of both constructs, religion also includes “the means and methods of [a] search [for the sacred] that receive validation and support from within an identifiable group of people” (p. 66).

This contrast is becoming more evident in the general culture. Walker and Pitts’s

(1998) study of moral maturity included a section of questions that asked participants to rate a number of descriptors in terms of the degree to which they represented a prototypically moral, religious, or spiritual person. Results indicated that manifesting moral character and believing in a higher power were central descriptors of both religious and spiritual people. However, spirituality was seen as a “personal affirmation of the transcendent” in contrast to religion which was seen as “the creedal and ritual expression of spirituality that is associated with institutional church organizations” (p. 409).

Similarly, in a content analysis of religious and spiritual definitions by Zinnbauer et al. (1997), personal beliefs in the sacred were common to definitions of both constructs. However, definitions of religiousness often included references to organizational practices or activities, attendance at services, performance of rituals, church membership or allegiance, commitment to organizational beliefs, or adherence to institutionally based belief systems. In contrast, definitions of spirituality often referred to feelings or experiences of connectedness or relationship with sacred beings or forces. Also, from the policy-capturing study of Zinnbauer and Pargament (2002), the participant group comprised of nurses tended to characterize religiousness in terms of formal/organizational religion, and spirituality in terms of a closeness with God or feelings of interconnectedness with the world and living things.

### **Belief-Based Religion versus Emotional/Experiential-Based Spirituality**

This polarity can be seen in both theoretical writings and empirical research. Elkins (1995), for example, defines *religion* as institutional, dogmatic, and theological. In contrast, *spirituality* “is a way of being that comes about through awareness of a transcendent dimension and that is characterized by certain identifiable values in regard to self, others, nature, life, and whatever one considers to be the Ultimate” (Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf, & Saunders, 1988, p. 10).

The research literature also contains this contrast. In an interview study of 42 African American and 37 European American elderly participants, Nelson-Becker (2003) gathered personal definitions of the terms and found that religion was more often associated with beliefs, and spirituality more often associated with connection or a feeling in the heart. The two constructs were not always sharply distinguished from each other, but the unique descriptors of religion included elements such as heritage, basic principles, a way of thinking, and duty. In contrast, unique descriptors of spirituality included connection with God, relationships with others, and choice.

### **Negative Religion versus Positive Spirituality**

Another contrast is the valence attached to the terms. In many writings, spirituality is credited with the positive: the loftier side of life, the highest in human potential, and pleasurable affective states. Religiousness gets slapped with the negative: mundane faith, outdated doctrine, or institutional hindrances to human potentials. For example, writing during a time of countercultural upheaval, Tart (1975) stated that religiousness implies “too strongly the enormous social structures that embrace so many more things than direct spiritual experience.” Religion is associated with “priests, dogmas, doctrines, churches, institutions, political meddling, and social organizations” (p. 4). In contrast, “the term ‘spiritual’ . . . implies more directly the experience that people have about the meaning of life, God, ways to live, etc.” Spirituality, for Tart, is “that vast realm of hu-

man potential dealing with ultimate purposes, with higher entities, with God, with life, with compassion, with purpose" (p. 4).

### CRITICISMS OF POLARIZATION

In general, the usefulness of polarizing religiousness and spirituality is unclear. Certainly, the constructs will evolve in professional and popular usage over time, and differences between the two will continue to be identified. But narrow definitions of the terms or polarizations of the two as incompatible opposites are likely to hinder inquiry within the psychology of religion for several reasons.

First, the polarization of substantive static religion and functional dynamic spirituality is unnecessarily constrictive. Solely substantive definitions of religiousness reduce the construct to rigid entities that do not address the way religion works and evolves in the life of the individual. The result is an impersonal religion frozen in time (Pargament, 1997). Likewise, purely functional definitions of spirituality can leave the construct with weak boundaries (Bruce, 1996). Lacking a substantive sacred core, there is little to distinguish spirituality from other responses to existential issues, and little to distinguish the psychology of religion from other disciplines such as philosophy, the humanities, and other areas of psychology (e.g., community, humanistic). At worst, to identify spirituality with innumerable secular experiences, existential quests, and personal values is to render it fuzzy (Spilka, 1993; Spilka & McIntosh, 1996), if not meaningless.

The polarization of institutional religiousness and personal spirituality as incompatible opposites is also problematic. Although psychological inquiry has expanded from a traditional focus on the individual to include social, political, historical, and economic contexts (Chatters & Taylor, 2003; American Psychological Association, 2003), this expansion of inquiry has not been evenly adopted within the psychology of religion. By limiting religiousness only to social context and disconnecting it from the individual, we lose sight of the fact that every major religious institution is fundamentally concerned with personal belief, emotion, behavior, and experiences. Some have written that the primary objective of religious organizations is to bring individuals closer to God (Carroll, Dudley, & McKinney, 1986). Likewise, to conceptualize spirituality as a solely personal phenomenon is to ignore the cultural context in which this construct has emerged. Spirituality as an individual expression is not culture-free; it is neither interpreted nor expressed in a social vacuum. As a movement toward individualism (see Hood, 2003; Roof, 1993, 1998), a rebellion against tradition, or a reaction to hierarchically arranged social organizations, spirituality is still embedded within a cultural context.

It is no coincidence that the popularity of spirituality has grown in a culture that values individualism, and has risen during a historical period in which traditional authority and cultural norms were being rejected (Berger, 1967; Hood, 2003; Roof, 1993). Interestingly, in spite of the anti-institutional rhetoric surrounding this construct, spiritual organizations and groups have emerged and gained in popularity (Hood et al., 1996). Those who leave traditional religions for spiritual pursuits often join others of like mind. Thus, there are established spiritual organizations that differ from established religions only in their novelty and in the content of their beliefs—not on the basis of a personal versus an organizational level of analysis.

This polarization also appears related to an errant choice of words. There appear to be four terms relevant to the previous discussion rather than two: religion, religiousness,

spirit, and spirituality. As discussed by Miller and Thoresen (2003), *religion* is commonly characterized as an institutional, material phenomenon, and *religiousness* is often depicted in terms of individual belief or practice. Likewise, *spirit* as an external transcendent or internal animating force can be differentiated from *spirituality*, a sacred human activity. More appropriately, religion should be compared to spirit and religiousness to spirituality. However, in a dualism reminiscent of Descartes, religion is often distinguished from spirituality; that is, religion as an objective external entity (matter) is contrasted with spirituality, a subjective internal human attribute or process (mind). Thus, “findings” that differentiate the constructs on the basis of the social–personal and objective–subjective dimensions may be related to an a priori choice of words. To minimize confusion, investigators may do well to recognize when they are comparing constructs at the same level of analysis (e.g., religiousness and spirituality) or when they are comparing across levels of analysis (e.g., religion and spirituality).

The distinction between cognitive religion and emotional spirituality is fraught with limitations. It is difficult to imagine a religious adherent attracted to his or her faith solely through an idea, concept, or belief. It is also difficult to imagine a spiritual person whose devotion is bereft of beliefs or cognitive activity. Thoughts and feelings occur together and influence one another. Passionless religious belief and thoughtless spiritual experience are indeed possible, but are not representative of the rich ways thoughts, feelings, behavior, motivation, and experiences come together to mark both religiousness and spirituality.

Finally, the bifurcation of spirituality as “good” and religion as “bad” recalls criticisms already leveled against other theories: evaluation has been confounded with description (Hood et al., 1996). The determination of whether a set of beliefs or practices leads to positive or negative outcomes is an empirical question. To define the constructs as inherently good or bad severely limits psychological inquiry and may reflect simple prejudice rather than informed analysis.

A growing literature on religiousness and health also contradicts the characterization of religious involvement as pathological or malevolent (see Hill et al., 2000; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Pargament, 1997; Powell, Shahabi, & Thoresen, 2003; Seeman, Dubin, & Seeman, 2003). A sizable body of research has documented the supportive effects of involvement in religious institutions, especially for the disenfranchised (e.g., Hill et al., 2000; Pargament, 1997). The naïve notion of “good” spirituality may also lead investigators to ignore the potentially destructive side of spiritual life. In addition to seeking closeness with God through altruism and compassion, there are all-too-many examples of spiritual seekers who have used extreme self-punishing asceticism, suicide bombings, and mass suicides to achieve their sacred goals. To overlook the dark side of spirituality by definition is to leave an incomplete or distorted picture of this phenomenon.

It is also important to note that the splitting of religiousness and spirituality into incompatible opposites does not reflect the perspectives of all respondents. In a recent empirical study, Zinnbauer et al. (1997) found that most of their respondents identified themselves as both spiritual and religious (74%); in contrast, 19% identified themselves as spiritual but not religious, and 4% labeled themselves as religious but not spiritual. Similarly, in a large-scale study conducted by Corrigan, McCorkle, Schell, and Kidder (2003), 63% of respondents identified themselves as spiritual and religious, 22% identified themselves as spiritual but not religious, and 4% identified themselves as religious but not spiritual. According to another large-scale survey with a representative U.S. sample (Shahabi et al., 2002), 52% of respondents identified themselves as very or moder-

ately religious and spiritual, 10% identified themselves as very or moderately spiritual but slightly or not at all religious, 9% identified themselves as very or moderately religious but slightly or not at all spiritual, and 29% identified themselves as slightly or not at all religious or spiritual. Self-perceptions of religiousness and spirituality were also significantly correlated in the studies by Zinnbauer et al. (1997) and Shahabi et al. (2002). From these studies it appears that most people view themselves as both religious and spiritual (see also Cook, Borman, Moore, & Kunkel, 2000), and that spiritual development for most may occur within the context of a supportive religious environment.

Of note is the finding discussed by Hood (2003) and Roof (1993, 1998), and reported in studies by Zinnbauer et al. (1997) and Shahabi et al. (2002), that the subgroup of believers who characterize themselves as “spiritual but not religious” do indeed hold a negative opinion of religiousness and may maintain some of the polarized opinions of religiousness and spirituality. This group does report more mystical experiences and group experiences related to spiritual growth, and less religious involvement than those who identify themselves as both religious and spiritual. For these “spiritual mystics” (Hood, 2003), it may be the separation from religion that defines their spiritual identity. However, it is important to keep in mind that this is a subgroup rather than a majority of people in the United States.

From previous critical summaries and research efforts, several general conclusions about the meanings of religiousness and spirituality can be offered (see Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Hill et al., 2000; Hood, 2003; Shafranske, 2002; Shafranske & Bier, 1999):

1. Religiousness and spirituality are cultural “facts” not reducible to other processes or phenomena.
2. Most people define themselves as both religious and spiritual.
3. An identifiable minority identify themselves as spiritual but not religious, and they use spirituality as a means of rejecting religion.
4. Religiousness and spirituality overlap considerably in the U.S. population, and the constructs are generally regarded as “related but not identical.”
5. Religiousness and spirituality are multidimensional, complex constructs.
6. Religiousness and spirituality can be associated with both mental health and emotional distress.
7. There are substantive and functional aspects of both religiousness and spirituality.
8. Religiousness and spirituality are multilevel constructs—that is, they are related to biological, affective, cognitive, moral, relational, personality or self-identity, social, cultural, and global phenomena.
9. Religiousness and spirituality can develop and change over time for individuals and groups.
10. Religiousness and spirituality are acquiring different denotations as their use evolves. Religiousness is often associated with a social or group level of analysis, and spirituality is often associated with an individual level of analysis.

## **CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES**

The above historical and lexical trends point to vital challenges for the psychology of religion as the field moves into the 21st century. In this section a number of these challenges

are highlighted, followed by the presentation of definitions and a framework for psychological inquiry.

### Consensus

One obvious challenge for the field is to generate some degree of professional consensus about the definitions of religiousness and spirituality while remaining sensitive to the various phenomenological nuances of the terms. Whereas a plethora of popular definitions may honor a diversity of groups and voices (Moberg, 2002), within the realm of psychological research a lack of consistency can be problematic. As suggested by Emmons and Paloutzian (2003, p. 381), "in order for progress to occur in a scientific discipline, there must be a minimum of consensus concerning the meaning of core constructs and their measurement." This commonsense reminder has also been advanced by Hill et al. (2000), Moberg (2002), and Shafranske (2002), and speaks to the need for a certain degree of intragroup reliability in definitions in order to build a cumulative knowledge base. Lacking such consistency, communication within the field is impaired, as is the ability to generalize research findings across studies (Zinnbauer et al., 1997).

On the other hand, should researchers define the terms in ways that are fully removed from popular uses, or in ways that narrowly exclude great sections of the religious and spiritual landscape, the legitimacy or relevance of the field may be questioned. The varieties of religious and spiritual experiences provide remarkable examples of human diversity. Universalist assumptions about the religiousness or spirituality of *all* people obscure important variations in the belief and practice of some people (Moberg, 2002). At worst, they have the potential to insult or oppress minority groups. Accordingly, there have been numerous calls for increased attention to religious and spiritual differences among various groups, and cautions that existing research and theory overrepresent white Protestants (Hill & Pargament, 2003; Moberg, 2002).

It should be noted that psychology is neither the first nor the only discipline to wrestle with issues of definition. For example, in an anthropological discussion of the term "shamanism," Bourguignon (1989) discusses the long history of efforts to refine conceptualizations that bridge emic and etic vocabularies. *Emic descriptions* are culture-specific and recognizable by cultural insiders. *Etic descriptions* are supracultural, and as such they permit comparative research. By using native concepts and terminology, emic conceptualizations can capture the essence of meaning within a given group or culture. Etic descriptions, on the other hand, allow for the identification of commonalities across different groups. Both approaches are important. A solely emic science can produce little more than accumulations of unique cases (Bourguignon, 1989); a solely etic science can minimize or distort important cultural differences.

It may be tempting to stay in the shallow waters to avoid tackling these deep issues. Limiting the study of religiousness and spirituality to simple quantitative behaviors, such as the number of church services attended in the week or the number of praying behaviors completed each day, has the great advantage of being observable and countable, but this approach falls far short of the depth of human experience touched by religiousness and spirituality. If we agree that these concepts can encompass core sacred elements that orient, motivate, and shape central aspects of the human psyche, we must not limit investigations based on the ease of measurement. The challenge is to produce studies that can capture the richness and diversity of religiousness and spirituality while striving for the precision required by scientific inquiry.

It may also be tempting to sidestep these issues through the development of new

measures of spirituality. However, in some instances, the new measures overlap with old measures of religion. For instance, one purportedly new index of spiritual experiences, INSPIRIT, consists of items that tap into closeness to God and mystical experiences, constructs that have been measured previously in the psychology of religion (Kass, Freidman, Lesserman, Zuttermeister, & Benson, 1991). Other spiritual measures contain items that could just as easily be found on secular measures of life satisfaction, happiness, and well-being. For example, the spiritual well-being measure developed by Brady, Peterman, Fitchet, Mo, and Cella (1999) includes items that assess meaning and peace in life without any explicit reference to God or a faith tradition. Thus, it is doubtful that more scale development will solve the problems of definition in the field in and of itself. The community of researchers may be better served by focusing on definition and theory development as a prelude to the next wave of measures (see also Hill, Chapter 3, this volume).

### **Reductionism and Levels of Analysis**

A controversy that often is raised in discussions of measurement and definition is that of *reductionism*, the process of understanding a phenomenon at one level of analysis by reducing it to presumably more fundamental processes (see discussions in Idinopulos & Yonan, 1994, and Wilber, 1995). In some sense this process is unavoidable in scientific study (Moberg, 2002; Segal, 1994). However, reductionism is often accompanied by a loss of information. For example, the reduction of mystical experiences of oneness with the universe to a change in neurotransmitter levels eliminates information at all other levels (e.g., the cultural, social, familial, affective, cognitive, and behavioral). There may indeed be important physical correlates of such an experience, but to deny the relevance or value of other modes of interpretation and understanding is to commit the error of reductionism.

One way to avoid reductive investigations is to be mindful of the concept of levels of analysis. As used here, this presupposes different interconnected planes of information, ranging from the subatomic level up through the global level. Wilber (1995) presents this idea in the following progression from the microscopic to the macroscopic: subatomic particles, atoms, molecules, organelles, cells, tissues, organ systems, person, family, community, culture/subculture, society/nation, biosphere. Referring to the "great chain of being" concept from the philosophical tradition (Huxley, 1944; see also Wilber, 1995, 1999), each increasing level includes and transcends the previous level, and displays emergent phenomenon appearing at each novel level that are nonreducible to previous levels. Fundamental levels are necessary but not sufficient for the organization of higher levels. Thus, organ systems are composed of cells, but the function of the organs is not fully captured at the cellular level, and having cells does not guarantee the development of organ systems. Groups are composed of individuals, but group processes and behavior are not captured in the study of any single person in the group. Causality can move up and down the levels of analysis, and a phenomenon at one level may have correlates at different levels.

Confusion within the study of religiousness and spirituality may arise when different researchers define the constructs from different levels of analysis, but do not identify their definitions as such. Identifying religiousness as a social phenomenon and spirituality as an individual phenomenon, and then casting them as incompatible opposites illustrates this kind of mistake. For example, the phenomenon of religious conversion can be understood at multiple levels: cellular changes, brain system changes, cognitive-affect-behavioral changes, social changes, cultural changes, and global changes. A narrow focus on one

level to the exclusion of others can distort the picture or fall into a reductionist trap. Even people who define themselves as “spiritual but not religious,” rejecting religion and embracing spiritual individualism, can be understood through a social/institutional level of analysis (albeit one that is defined as a polemic). This is not to say that all levels are equally salient at all times. The important point is that different levels are not necessarily incompatible. A glance at Tables 2.1 and 2.2 reveals that many of the current definitions encompass only a single level of analysis or fail to address the range of information planes.

The process of defining religiousness and spirituality, in itself, can be viewed at individual, social, cultural, and global levels. In the above discussion it has been argued that social changes have produced a new emphasis on personal spirituality (see also Hood, 2003). One could also state that the intense personal mystical experiences of Jesus, Mohammed, and the Buddha led to changes in the social, cultural, and global consciousness of religiousness and spirituality. Social pressures inside and outside of the academic community of psychology can also direct the definitions of the terms religiousness and spirituality. Adequate theories in the psychology of religion such as the multilevel interdisciplinary paradigm (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003) will allow for research to be undertaken at various levels of analysis, examining the interactions between levels, determining the salience of different levels to a given phenomenon, and avoiding the pitfalls of reductionism.

### **Multidimensional Religiousness and Spirituality**

The dimensions of religiousness and spirituality include different levels of analysis and different strands of human activity and experiences. The cross-disciplinary character and reach of these phenomena have been appreciated within the psychology of religion in two ways. First, there is increasing emphasis on collaboration with other sciences (Belzen, 2002; Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Shafranske, 2002). Second, there are calls for more complex and far-reaching models that recognize the multiple levels of reality and psychological phenomena in ways relevant to the applied clinician (Vande Kemp, 2003). As noted by Emmons and Paloutzian (2003), new developments for the investigation of religion in cognitive science, neurobiology, evolutionary psychology, and behavioral genetics are part of the leading edge of research in a “multilevel interdisciplinary paradigm” (p. 395). Hall and Gorman’s (2003) presentation of a relational metapsychology that includes elements of object relations, attachment theory, and interpersonal neurobiology and Reich’s (1998) discussion of pluralistic religious theory are steps in this direction. A quick glance at the chapter titles within this volume can provide a sense of the breadth of research on religiousness and spirituality. Single-strand definitions are inadequate to the current demands for theoretical sophistication. Religiousness is not just beliefs about God. Spirituality is not just oneness with life. Both constructs contain multiple dimensions including, but not limited to, biology, sensation, affect, cognition, behavior, identity, meaning, morality, relationships, roles, creativity, personality, self-awareness, and salience.

### **Developmental Changes**

Another source of confusion is the failure to provide room within definitions of religiousness and spirituality for the concept of developmental changes. The means and ends of re-

ligious and spiritual belief, behavior, perception, and so on are reflective of and change with different stages of development for individuals and groups (Worthington, 1989). Religiousness and spirituality have their own developmental trajectory (and are not reducible to other developmental strands), but are also impacted by other changes, such as developments in cognition, affect, and morality (see McFadden, Chapter 9, this volume). Thus, religiousness is not a lower level of development than spirituality (or vice versa). As stated by Hill et al. (2002) religiousness and spirituality develop across the lifespan. They also reflect, and are interdependent with, other strands of human development. For example, a child at a magical thinking level of development may hold certain beliefs about the nature of God. As she grows and matures cognitively, her beliefs will likely become more sophisticated even if she remains within the same religious tradition, rates herself at the same level of religiousness, and attends the same number of church services each year. An adequate understanding of religiousness and spirituality must account for the process of development and change over time. Likewise, it must recognize the mutual impacts of religiousness and spirituality with other developmental strands.

Thus, several elements of an adequate approach to religiousness and spirituality have been offered. First, the field must move toward greater consensus in defining its terms. Second, definitions must be broad enough to account for the varieties of religious and spiritual experience, while allowing for differences of culture and context. Etic and emic concerns must be mindfully addressed, and reductionism that distorts the essence of religious and spiritual phenomenon must be avoided. Third, the perspectives of levels of analysis and developmental changes must be included.

## **TWO PROPOSED WAYS TO DEFINE RELIGIOUSNESS AND SPIRITUALITY**

In this section, we suggest several terms and characteristics that we believe are critical to definitions of religiousness and spirituality. Building on these common concepts, we then offer two different ways religiousness and spirituality can be defined that reflect contrasting trends in the field, one in which spirituality is viewed as the overarching construct and the other in which religiousness represents the more encompassing process.

### **Critical Terms**

The first construct that is critical to both spirituality and religiousness is "significance." As explained by Pargament (1997), significance is, in part, a phenomenological construct that involves the experience of caring, attraction, or attachment. We can speak of a sense of or feelings of significance. Significance also refers to a particular set of valued, meaningful, or ultimate concerns. These concerns may be psychological (e.g., growth, self-esteem, comfort), social (e.g., intimacy, social justice), physical (e.g., health, fitness), material (e.g., money, food, cars), or related to the divine (e.g., closeness with God, religious experience).

The concept of "search" is a second critical feature of both religiousness and spirituality (see Pargament, 1997, for a review). By search, we are underscoring the fact that people are goal-directed beings engaged in the pursuit of whatever they hold significant. The process of search involves the attempt to discover significance. But the searching process does not end with discovery. Once people find something significant in their lives, they attempt to hold on to or conserve that significance. Although people are often suc-

cessful in their efforts to sustain significance, pressures within the individual or within the individual's world may prompt the need for fundamental change. At times, then, the process of search involves a transformation of the individual's understanding of or relationship to significance (see also Paloutzian, Chapter 18, this volume). The searching process then shifts back once again to the attempt to conserve this newly transformed significance. In this fashion, the search for significance—discovery, conservation, and transformation—unfolds throughout the lifespan.

Finally, the concept of the sacred is the substantive core of both religiousness and spirituality, the construct that distinguishes these phenomena from all others. The *sacred* refers to concepts of God, higher powers, transcendent beings, or other aspects of life that have been sanctified (see Idinopulos & Yonan, 1996, for a discussion). Virtually any dimension can be perceived as holy, worthy of veneration or reverence. As stated by Durkheim (1915), "by sacred things one must not understand simply those personal beings which are called Gods or spirits; a rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house, in a word, anything can be sacred" (p. 52). Thus, the designation is not limited to higher powers or imminent forces, but includes others aspects of life that take on divine character and meaning through their association with or representation of the holy (Pargament & Mahoney, 2002).

Sacred aspects of life can be found at multiple levels of analysis: health (vegetarianism, body as temple), psychological attributes (self, meaning), people (saints, cult leaders), roles (marriage, parenting, work), social attributes or relationships (compassion, patriotism, community), cultural products (music, literature), and global concerns (Gaia, world peace). They also cross levels of analysis, such as the quality of relationship between an individual and God or congregation, or the nature of conflict between one's religious beliefs and the social or political order. One may view a relationship to others of the same faith as a sacred connection, or view the holding of religious tenets against the tide of popular opinion as a holy, noble charge. These objects or processes can change in status in two ways: they can move from secular to sacred through the process of sanctification (Pargament & Mahoney, 2002), or they can move from sacred to secular through the process of desanctification. There is already mounting evidence that people regard, react, and pursue those things sacred to them in ways different from secular objects and processes (see Pargament & Mahoney, 2002; Emmons, 1999).

There are a few other common features to the definitions of religiousness and spirituality that follow. First, in contrast to approaches that distinguish the terms by level of analysis, this view maintains that both religiousness and spirituality can be pursued by individuals and groups. Further, they have their own developmental trajectories, are influenced by related developments of phenomena at other levels, and can have both substantive and functional elements.

Second, it is the religious or spiritual adherents' perspective that is privileged when determining whether a given search for significance is sacred or secular. This avoids imposing a certain value perspective on adherents, but does not place constraints on the ways in which investigators may approach or evaluate the constructs. In this sense, the definitions are sensitive to emic concerns but do not preclude etic characterizations or force investigators to make ontological assumptions about whether "holy" or "divine" realities exist. Recognizing multiple perspectives and multiple levels of analysis is vital to a progressive research program. The means and ends of significance, as well as the substance and function of religiousness and spirituality, have been and will continue to be examined through various sacred and secular lenses by investigators. Regardless of the in-

interpretive frame used by investigators, it is suggested that the essential feature of both religiousness and spirituality is that religious and spiritual adherents take paths and/or seek goals that are related to what they perceive as sacred.

Third, neither religiousness nor spirituality is inherently good or bad, effective or ineffective. Pathological forms of both constructs may exist along all levels of analysis and all strands of development. Extreme spiritual asceticism or self-denial can damage the physical body, exaggerated spiritual beliefs of specialness can lead to narcissism, spiritual groups can engage in self-destructive behaviors, and sanctified cultural beliefs of superiority can lead to civil wars and genocide. Religiously justified abuse under the guise of "discipline," systematic religious oppression of one gender or group, and manipulation of mass media for monetary purposes can also be seen as the seedy side of religiousness.

Finally, religiousness and spirituality may involve both unique and universal phenomenon. They may include local truths, such as particular aspects of sacred belief or worship among identified cultural groups, or single unique experiences of the sacred. They may also involve supracultural truths such as the identification of core mystical experiences (see Hood, 2003), worldviews such as the great chain of being (Huxley, 1944; see also Wilber, 1995, 1999), and metagroup developmental processes (e.g., Beck & Cowan, 1996). Therefore, in order to understand and integrate wide-ranging currents such as biological components of spiritual experience and global trends in defining religiousness, multiple forms of investigation from multiple perspectives are needed. Accordingly, the use of a variety of methods, qualitative and quantitative, is unavoidable (Moberg, 2002).

Keeping in mind these points of commonality, we now present two sets of definitions of spirituality and religiousness that reflect two trends that are now visible in the field.

### **Spirituality as the Broader Construct**

According to the first author (Zinnbauer), *spirituality is defined as a personal or group search for the sacred. Religiousness is defined as a personal or group search for the sacred that unfolds within a traditional sacred context.* From the perspective of these definitions, religiousness and spirituality are both embedded within context, and the nature of that context can be used to discriminate between the constructs. Both constructs are directed toward the search for one particular type of significant concern: the sacred. However, religiousness specifically represents the personal or communal search for the sacred that occurs within a traditional context or organized faith tradition. This context includes systems of belief, practices, and values that center around sacred matters and are explicitly embedded within or flow from institutions, traditions, or cultures. For instance, a believer's religiousness may involve pondering scriptural passages, cultivating religious virtues, performing rituals, listening to the experiences of other believers, achieving formal status as a member of a religious congregation, and connecting with others of the tradition from different parts of the world. Of note is the interest that religious settings (e.g., churches, synagogues, temples, denominations) have in teaching people to sanctify their lives, and to imbue seemingly secular pursuits with sacred value and meaning (Pargament & Mahoney, 2002). Through religious services, systems of belief, rituals, and educational programs, people are encouraged to perceive many aspects of life (e.g., physical health, personal identity, relationships, work, etc.) within a greater transcendent perspective.

Whereas some spiritual adherents describe spirituality solely in terms of individualistic belief or practice, spirituality always manifests within a context. That is, culture, com-

munity, society, family, and tradition exist as the crucible within which spirituality unfolds, or the background from which it differentiates. As with religiousness, spirituality may occur within a traditional context. When it does, adherents may be less likely to draw strong distinctions between the terms. Spirituality may also occur within nontraditional, novel, or emergent contexts. Such spiritual adherents, like the "spiritual mystics" discussed by Hood (2003) and the "spiritual but not religious" adherents identified by Zinnbauer et al. (1997), may make a greater distinction between religiousness and spirituality, and define their search for the sacred in part as a rejection of tradition.

Thus, according to these definitions, spirituality is a broader term than religiousness. Spirituality includes a range of phenomena that extends from the well-worn paths associated with traditional religions to the experiences of individuals or groups who seek the sacred outside of socially or culturally defined systems. For example, an individual's spirituality may include feelings of devotion, memories of a mystical experience, gatherings with other seekers, rebellion against a culture antagonistic to such a search, and a sense of unity with all sentient life. Significant changes in any of these levels or developmental strands may change the search itself. Development of a serious illness, for example, may change feelings of devotion to confusion or anger, make gatherings more difficult to attend, and cause psychological isolation from a sacred connection to others.

It is particularly important to recognize that the primary mission of organized religions is the individual and communal search for the sacred. Additional objectives such as social connection, community service, education, healthy lifestyle promotion, or financial assistance may also be pursued by religious organizations, families, and cultures in order to support the spiritual development of its members. As opposed to some contentions that organized religion exists by definition as a barrier or hindrance to personal experiences of the sacred, it is maintained here that the search for the sacred is in fact the core function of both spirituality and religiousness, and that most individuals seek the sacred within existing traditions. The success or failure of different organized religions to nurture this search is a question open for investigation.

### **Religiousness as the Broader Construct**

According to the second author (Pargament), *spirituality is a search for the sacred. Religiousness refers to a search for significance in ways related to the sacred.* In contrast to the first set of definitions that differentiates religiousness and spirituality according to their contexts, this set of definitions distinguishes the two constructs by the place of the sacred in the means and ends of the searching process. Every search consists of an ultimate destination, a significance, and a pathway to reach that destination. Spirituality refers to a search in which the sacred is the ultimate destination. In search of the sacred, people may take any number of traditional or nontraditional pathways, from prayer; meditation; participation in churches, synagogues, and mosques; fasting; study of Scriptures; and the monastic life to a walk in the woods, quilting, sexuality, social action, psychotherapy, and listening to a symphony. What these diverse pathways may share is a common endpoint: the sacred.

Spirituality is the heart and soul of religiousness, the core function of religious life. Psychologist Paul Johnson (1959) once wrote: "It is the ultimate Thou, whom the religious person seeks most of all" (p. 70). However, religiousness in this second set of definitions has a broader set of ends than spirituality. Certainly, many people take sacred pathways in search of a relationship with the sacred, but they may be seeking other

destinations as well, such as physical health, emotional well-being, intimacy with others, self-development, and participation in a larger community. In this sense, religiousness addresses a wider range of goals, needs, and values than spirituality—the material as well as the immaterial, the basic as well as the elevated, and the secular as well as the sacred. Admittedly, this definition is less consistent with the popular shift toward a more narrow view of religiousness (Zinnbauer et al., 1997). It is, however, consistent with the large and growing body of literature in the psychology of religion that has focused on the implications of various religious beliefs and practices for physical health, mental health, and social functioning (e.g., Wulff, 1997).

It is important to note that, within the psychology of religion literature, a number of theorists and investigators have labeled these “extrinsic” forms of religiousness as immature (e.g., Allport & Ross, 1967). Yet there is nothing necessarily tawdry or inappropriate about the pursuit of secular ends through sacred means. Allport himself noted that the satisfaction of basic human needs through sacred pathways sets the stage for the pursuit of more elevated spiritual destinations. In fact, the process of religious socialization is largely concerned with both facilitating the shift among adherents from immediate goals and values to more ultimate concerns and teaching people to see the sacredness in even mundane aspects of life.

In short, spirituality is highlighted as a distinctive dimension of human functioning in the second set of definitions. Spirituality alone addresses the discovery, conservation, and transformation of the most ultimate of all concerns, the sacred. Yet religiousness is not viewed as inconsistent with or an impediment to spirituality. In fact, spirituality is the core function of religion. Indeed, considerable religious energy is dedicated to helping people integrate the sacred more fully into their pathways and destinations of living. But to succeed at this task, religion accepts and attempts to address the full range of human strivings. Thus, as defined here, religiousness represents a broader phenomenon than spirituality, one that is concerned with all aspects of human functioning, sacred and profane.

### **Implications of the Different Definitions**

As we have argued throughout the chapter, the ways in which religiousness and spirituality are defined have implications for psychological inquiry. Accordingly, the definitions presented above each have different strengths.

Presenting spirituality as a broader construct than religiousness has the advantage of following recent trends by believers and psychologists who also characterize the terms in this manner. This facilitates communication with the general public and within the discipline. It also has the potential to provide a link with other developments within psychology (e.g., positive psychology, wellness, spirituality and medicine, the study of virtues) that have begun to investigate spiritual phenomena without acknowledging the long history of scholarship within the psychology of religion (Park, 2003).

Presenting religiousness as the broader process has the advantage of maintaining continuity with a century of research and scholarship within the psychology of religion. It also allows for the study of extrinsic religiousness and thus maintains breadth within the field. By defining religiousness in a broad and inclusive manner, sacred paths taken toward secular goals are explicitly included as phenomena of psychological inquiry.

Finally, presenting any scholarly definition of religiousness or spirituality runs the risk of contradicting a given individual's self-definition. For example, in contrast to the

first of the above definitions, a believer could describe her spirituality as membership in a church, or her religion as taking personal time to pursue a hobby. Clearly, as alluded to previously in the discussion of etic and emic definitions, the tension between a diversity of definitions and a cumulative science must be mindfully addressed. There may well be times when scholars define these terms differently from believers. It becomes necessary in these cases to be explicit about the meanings of the terms, to explicate and operationalize the constructs clearly in research and writing, and to remain aware that over time the constructs may continue to change or evolve.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Over the past century, religiousness and spirituality have been investigated in a number of different ways and from a number of different perspectives. Modern investigations make clearer demarcations between the terms than traditional ones, sometimes with mixed results. Unfortunately, many recent characterizations polarize religiousness and spirituality in ways that fail to reflect the length and breadth of religious and spiritual experience.

It is clear that religiousness and spirituality are fundamental human processes and phenomena. As such, they cannot be reduced to other processes, or limited to a single level of analysis. Instead, investigations must account for the micro and the macro, the individual and the social, the particular and the universal, the subjective and the objective, and the meaning and the manifestations of religiousness and spirituality.

Religiousness and spirituality both involve the sacred. The notion of the sacred offers some much-needed boundaries for the psychology of religion and spirituality, yet is broad enough to incorporate both traditional and nontraditional expressions. Both constructs are also best understood as active processes of search that involve efforts to discover, conserve, and transform whatever may be held of greatest significance. Furthermore, both constructs extend up and down the various levels of analysis, and have developmental trajectories that reflect and influence other strands of human development.

We have not tried to resolve all of the definitional questions in this chapter. For instance, we have presented two sets of definitions of religiousness and spirituality that reflect two competing trends in the field: the belief that spirituality is broader than religiousness and the belief that religiousness is broader than spirituality.

Based upon the ongoing evolution of these terms, the following general recommendations are given regarding the meaning and measurement of these constructs. First, context must be accounted for when studying the religiousness or spirituality of individuals or groups. The search for the sacred can take place within and outside organized faith traditions, and can be impacted by sacred and secular elements at all levels of analysis. Second, the term religiousness has changed in popular use from a broad construct to a narrowly defined one. Measures of both religiousness and spirituality need to be included by researchers in their investigations of the sacred. Studies that link self-rated religiousness to various outcomes may yield different results today than in the past based upon these changes in definition. And finally, the meanings attributed to the terms religiousness and spirituality by individuals and groups must be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that researchers and participants are in agreement. A shared understanding cannot be assumed.

The field is poised to enter a new phase of investigation that welcomes multidimensional/multilevel models and characterizations of its two core constructs. Thus, today,

psychologists investigating religiousness and spirituality have the opportunity to bridge barriers that have limited inquiry in the past. Etic and emic differences, objective and subjective truths, research and clinical practice relevancy, local and universal truths, and science and hermeneutics may begin to be reconciled. There is much work to be done, but many to share it, and a great deal of interest and enthusiasm to energize the process.

Within the next several decades one thing is certain. Social and technological changes will continue to alter human culture and communication dramatically, leading to changes in all spheres of life. We stand at the edge of tomorrow, curious about some of the most fundamental human beliefs, feelings, and experiences. And whereas the field may evolve in due time to use methods and means currently undreamt of, current movements toward multidimensional/multilevel paradigms appear to hold great promise.

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