

Consciousness, Science and Society



A PROGRAM of RESEARCH and EDUCATION: 2003-2004

Science is not only compatible
with spirituality; it is a profound
source of spirituality.

— CARL SAGAN

Extended Human Capacities

CREATIVITY

MEDITATION

PSI STUDIES

WISDOM CAPACITIES

SUBTLE ENERGIES

STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

DEATH, DYING, AND BEYOND

This program area investigates states of consciousness suggesting the existence of human capacities that extend far beyond conventional assumptions of who and what we are.

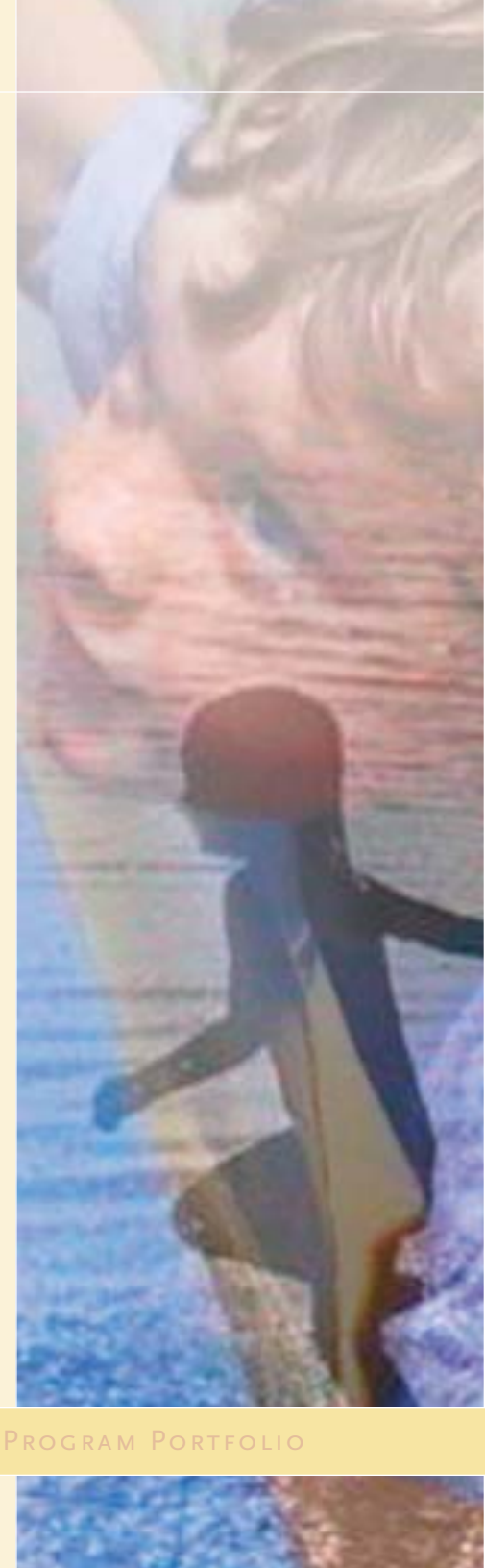
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In 2002, we completed a state-of-the-art psychophysiology laboratory to conduct basic research on the role of consciousness in the physical world.
- A decade-long project on meditation research culminated in ten invitational conferences at the Esalen Institute, IONS publication of a comprehensive annotated bibliography on *The Physical and Psychological Effects of Meditation*, the creation of an online searchable bibliography, and several scholarly monographs.
- We co-sponsored nearly a dozen scholarly meetings on the possibility of survival of consciousness after bodily death.

- We sponsored fieldwork on reincarnation by Dr. Ian Stevenson and his team and on the “Rainbow Body” by Catholic priest Father Francis Tiso and Benedictine monk Brother David Steindl-Rast.
- We developed a suite of online psi tests embedded within an adventure-type game that allows web users to test and explore their psi abilities. Thousands of people from around the world participate in these tests on a daily basis.
- In our commitment to develop new and innovative methods for the study of consciousness, we sponsored a special issue of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* on First Person Methodologies.
- Our world-renowned faculty and our cutting-edge research have led to many media productions, including television and radio programs for Discovery Channel, PBS, BBC, Canadian Broadcasting, ABC, NBC, National Public Radio, New Dimensions Radio, and numerous others.
- Our researchers have published hundreds of scholarly articles and presented lectures at many professional meetings in such venues as Harvard Medical School, Stanford University, the University of California, Davis, and many others.

I have no doubt whatever that most people live, whether physically, intellectually or morally, in a very restricted circle of their potential being... We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon, of which we do not dream.

— WILLIAM JAMES



CURRENT PROJECTS

Current Research

Experimenter effects and the remote detection of staring

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD,

& Richard Wiseman, PhD

This psychophysiological study aims to understand the role of the experimenter in studies investigating the "feeling of being stared at." It employs a cross-over design to test the role of the experimenters in establishing a sense of comfort, enthusiasm and positive expectations in the participants. This study is funded in part by the Samuelli Institute for Information Biology.

Gut intuition experiment

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, & Dean Radin, PhD

This study investigates the role of visceral perception, or gut feelings, in an individual's perception of a distant person's intention and emotions. Commonalities between reports of gut feelings and intuitive hunches suggest that the "belly brain," or enteric nervous system, may be especially responsive to psi perception. The experimental method monitors gut feelings in one person using a noninvasive technique called an electrogastrogram, while a distant person views a series of emotional photos. This study was funded by the Bial Foundation.

Effects of meditation on individual and small group effects in a long-term care facility

Rebecca Vela

This study investigates the effects of a daily relaxation-meditation intervention on depression, anxiety, and spiritual well-being in residents living in a long-term care facility for older adults. Effects of this daily intervention are also being studied in the non-meditating neighbors of the study participants. Funding completed.

Brain imaging of the Jhana states

Douglas Finlayson, MD

This study is investigating brain activity related to seven Jhana states of meditation in a single practitioner using fMRI, PET and EEG technologies. This project was funded by the Marius Robinson Meditation Fund.

Consciousness and mind-body relationships during lucid dreaming

Stephen LaBerge, PhD

This project is exploring the potential of lucid dreamers to carry out specific experiments in the lucid dream state. The study includes both phenomenological and psychophysiological measures. Funding completed.

Functional MRI, psi and the brain

Edwin May, PhD

This project examines the relationship of brain electrical activity and psi abilities. Preliminary experiments have shown that psi does appear to

be associated with activity in the outer cortex; thus this project is searching deeper structures within the brain for regions that may be specialized (or perhaps optimized) to detect psi. Funding completed.

Examination of the experience of percipients in the Ganzfeld ESP situation

James Carpenter, PhD

This study is examining 236 Ganzfeld telepathy transcripts on a complex set of dimensions that projectively assess different aspects of the percipient's ongoing experience, attitude, and approach. It should also be possible to isolate important aspects of experience that may be useful as targets for future experiments. Funding completed.

Global Consciousness project

Roger Nelson, PhD

The Global Consciousness project is an international effort designed to explore whether the concept of interconnectivity can be scientifically validated through objective measurement. Recently it has been shown that random event generators (REGs) exhibit non-random sequences when human consciousness is focused on deeply engaging events. In this project, a world-spanning array of sensitive REG detectors is collecting and documenting effects of collective consciousness inferred to be reacting to global events.

Additional funding requested, \$40K.

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Hypnosis, altered states of consciousness, and the facilitation of human potentials

*Philip G. Zimbardo, PhD
& Stephen LaBerge, PhD*

Experience of perceptual or cognitive anomalies lead to variable responses resulting in either positive peak experiences or confusion, distress, and other unwelcome behavior. This study focuses on how these experiences can serve as a platform for positive change, providing a conceptual context through which anomalies can be interpreted, and through post-hypnotic suggestions, that help guide experiencers toward positive outcomes, enhanced personal problem-solving, and creative capacities. Funding completed.

Young adults in India who as children remembered previous lives

Antonia Mills, PhD

This field study re-investigates a set of young adults in India who, as children, claimed to have remembered past lives.

Additional funding requested, \$15K.

Garden of Dreams: Web-based research and education

Dean Radin, PhD

This suite of online psi tests, embedded within an adventure-type game, allows web users to test and explore their psi abilities. The game tracks individual performance and provides a Hall of Fame with which to compare each person's ability against all other players. The tests are designed so they can be automatically adjusted to match the performance level of each user, thus

providing a constantly challenging game that may be useful in training intuitive skills. Funding completed.

Online psi talent test

Dean Radin, PhD

An ongoing suite of online psi tests originally written by Dean Radin and hosted by the Boundary Institute, has collected nearly 30 million trials from 150,000 people worldwide since September 2000. This project is investigating whether the top performers in that test can demonstrate significant results in a formal test. This research is funded in part by a grant from the Fetzer Institute.

Rainbow Body research project

Fr. Francis Tiso, & Br. David Steindl-Rast

Ancient wisdom texts in Tibet, China and India describe a phenomenon appearing at the time immediately following bodily death in some spiritual adepts. The "Rainbow Body" is said to be the literal transformation of the whole person into light. This project involves fieldwork as well as ethnohistorical data collection aimed at gathering evidence for the alleged Rainbow Body manifestation in a Gelugpa monk who lived and died recently in eastern Tibet.

Funding requested, \$25K.

Transformational Practices: Phase I

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Cassandra Vieten, PhD, & Tina Amorok, PsyD(cand)

This project studies how transformational practices such as meditation and yoga affect psychological, physiological, and spiritual well-being. Detailed interviews

were conducted with 35 teachers and scholars of transformation. These interviews are now being analyzed for patterns and a survey instrument is under construction. This pilot study was jointly funded by Peter Baumann and Richard Gunther. Funding completed.

Transformations in Consciousness: Phase II

Cassandra Vieten, PhD, Tina Amorok, PsyD(cand), & Marilyn Schlitz, PhD

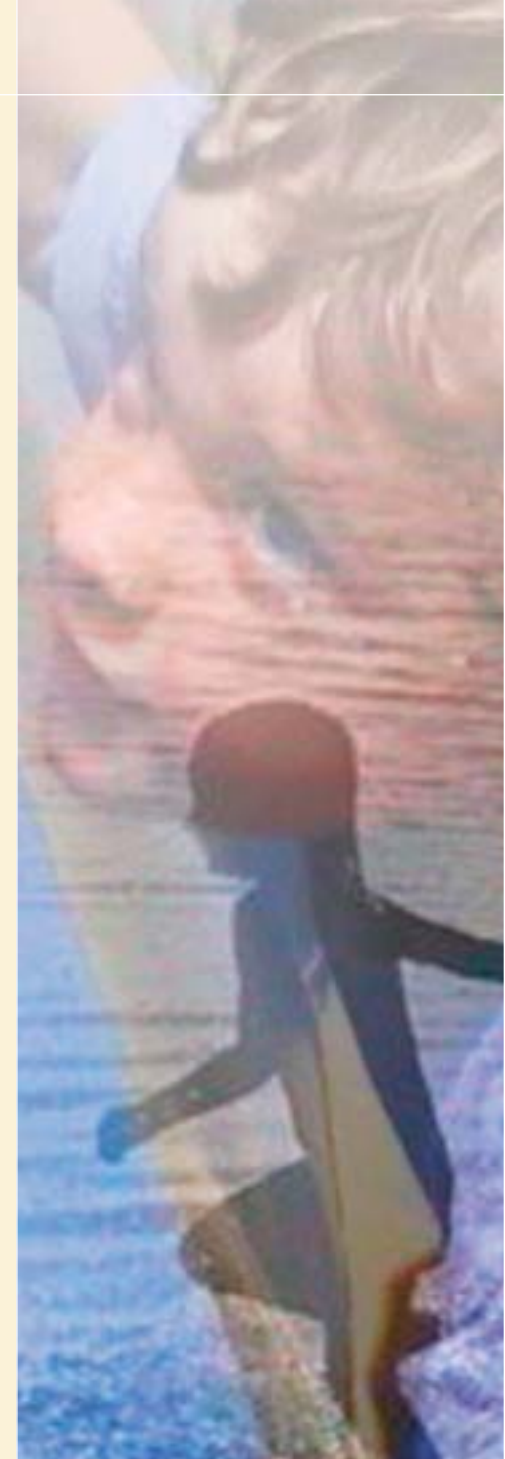
Phase I of this research project resulted in several hypothesis regarding predictors, mediators, and outcomes of transformative experiences and practices, as well as a framework for studying transformations in consciousness. Building on these findings, and utilizing a multidisciplinary approach, Phase II will focus on designing a number of rigorous studies intended to empirically validate these hypotheses through large-scale surveys of individuals engaged in a variety of spiritual and secular transformational processes. It will also include a longitudinal study, and integration of qualitative and quantitative methods to elucidate the transformative process. **Funding requested, \$100k.**

Changing our Minds

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Cassandra Vieten, PhD, & Tina Amorok, PsyD(cand)

This trade book will overview the Transformational Practices project and provide excerpts of the interviews with the teachers of transformation identified in Phase I. The materials are now being analyzed and a book-length manuscript is in preparation for wide distribution of the findings to a general audience.

Funding requested, \$40K.



Current Educational Events and Conferences

Noetic Sciences Internship Program

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Dean Radin, PhD, & Cassandra Vieten, PhD

Through collaborations with universities in the San Francisco Bay Area, we have created a graduate-level internship program. We have over a dozen students from the California Institute of Integral Studies, Sonoma State University, Saybrook Graduate School, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, and University of California, Berkeley. This new resource allows us to significantly expand our programs by helping to create databases, archive video and audio data, conduct experiments, build our website, and advance our outreach to a younger generation of noetic scientists.

Funding requested, \$20K.

Exploring the Frontiers of Consciousness, IONS lecture series

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD & Jenny Mathews

Now in its seventh year, this lecture series continues to provide a multidisciplinary forum for exploring current developments in consciousness studies. These audio-recorded programs are carried out in San Francisco, covering topics as diverse as lucid dreaming, quantum holograms, neurophysiology, distant healing, Gaia theory and cross-cultural journeys. The 2002-2003 lecture series was underwritten by Warren Wertheimer. **Funding requested, \$5K.**

Living Deeply: Expanding human capacities

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD

This three-day conference held on the IONS campus explored the most challenging questions arising from the interface between science and spirituality: How do we live in peace and harmony when faced with challenging new crises nearly every day? What qualities will help us live the fullest lives possible as our world grows increasingly complex? Can capacities such as loving kindness, wisdom, forgiveness, and gratefulness be trained, and if so, to what end? Faculty included Sharon Franquemont, Jeff Levin, PhD, Fred Luskin, PhD, Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Brother David Steindl-Rast, Russell Targ and Frances Vaughan, PhD. Funding completed.

Mind and Matter:

New directions in psi research

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD & Jenny Mathews

This three-day conference held on the IONS campus provided a state-of-the-art review of psi phenomena by leaders in the field. The format included a blend of formal presentations, experiential exercises, and participation in formal experiments. Participants included Daryl Bem, PhD, Jane Katra, PhD, Ed May, PhD, Dean Radin, PhD, Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Russell Targ, and Jessica Utts, PhD. Funding completed.

Nine Gates Mystery School

This program, directed by Gay Luce, provides an intense spiritual training ground for those seeking to make a shift towards inner clarity and guidance. The school is presented in two nine-day sessions with individual mentors for the six-month integration period between. The program focuses on diverse aspects of the human energy system, and individuals spend over 200 hours with nine master teachers from the Celtic, tribal African, Native American, Sufi, esoteric Christian, Hindu, Taoist, Hawaiian Huna, and Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

Survival of Consciousness after Bodily Death: Invitational conference co-sponsored by IONS & Esalen Institute

Frank Poletti, MA, Michael Murphy, & Marilyn Schlitz, PhD

Where does our consciousness go when we die? This conference approaches this intriguing but often marginalized topic with empirical rigor, subjecting ancient beliefs in reincarnation and after-life states to cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural research. The intention is not only to shed new light on this central human question but also to learn how to affect society's views of our passage into and out of this world. Among other things, this invitational conference is leading to publication of a book on the historical contributions of William James and Fredrick Myers on the study of consciousness and survival. To be held in 2004. **Funding requested, \$5K.**

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The Gateway Voyage

*Co-sponsored by IONS
& the Monroe Institute*

This program introduces participants to the Monroe Institute's Hemi-Sync method of inducing deep, altered states of consciousness. Gateway Voyagers learn how to return to these deep states easily at home so that they can explore them in more depth and find personal uses for them on their own path. After taking this course, graduates are certified to take more advanced trainings at the Monroe Institute in Virginia.

Current IONS Learning Media

Mind and Matter: DVD and videocassette

*Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Jenny Mathews,
& Kelly Durkin*

This is a 90-minute DVD and videocassette program with highlights from the Mind and Matter conference held on the IONS campus in January 2003. Funding completed.

Forgiveness:

A media education program

*Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Kelly Durkin,
Jenny Matthews, & Ken Corr, M Div*

In his recent presentation to the Living Deeply conference at IONS, Fred Luskin, PhD, a Stanford psychologist and director of the Stanford Forgiveness Project, reviewed his studies on the health effects of forgiveness. Having completed an educational DVD from

this lecture, we now plan to create a companion learning guide on this work and its implications.

Funding requested, \$15K.

Gratefulness:

A media education program

*Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Kelly Durkin,
Jenny Mathews, & Ken Corr, M Div*

In his recent presentation to the Living Deeply conference at IONS, Brother David Steindl-Rast discussed the importance of gratefulness in this time of rapid cultural and social change. He discussed the practice, implications, and research related to this practice. Having completed an educational DVD from this lecture, we now plan to create a companion learning guide on this work and its implications.

Funding requested, \$15K.

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Proposed Research

EEG correlation neurofeedback training experiment

Dean Radin, PhD

For over a century, telepathy experiments have suggested that the mental activities of one person can be perceived directly by another at a distance. In the past 40 years, about a dozen experiments examining electroencephalographic (EEG) correlations between two isolated persons have shown positive evidence, but only occasionally, and only in about

10% of tested pairs. This project tests whether it is possible to train pairs of people to generate correlated EEG signals using quantitative neurofeedback techniques, and if so, whether those trained pairs can sustain the EEG correlations when they are isolated from one another. **Funding requested, \$50K.**

Psi and psychophysiology in gifted, talented and creative populations

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD

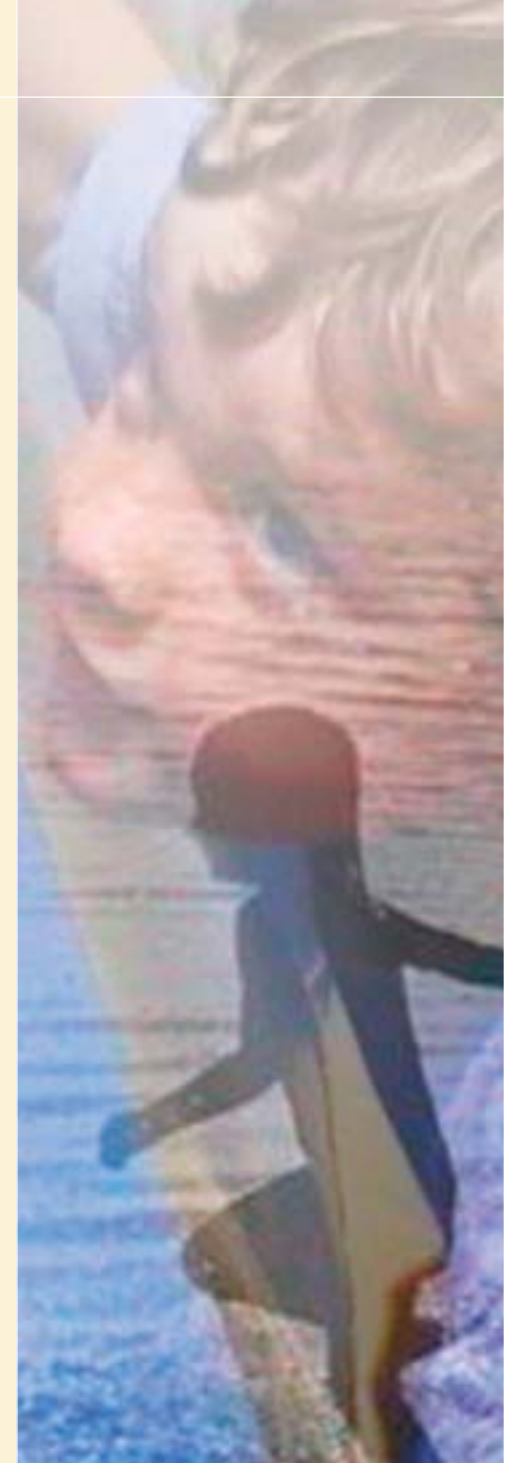
Progress in the field of psi research depends upon identifying populations of people who can repeatedly produce psi effects under well-controlled laboratory conditions. One of the strongest predictors of successful psi performance identified so far is musical talent. This suggests that a promising population to work with may be gifted, talented and highly creative people, especially since surveys indicate that these same populations express strong belief in psi. This study will test these populations using a suite of specially designed psi tests to assess whether "gifts and talents" manifest in psi functioning as well.

Funding requested, \$50K.

Presentiment

Dean Radin, PhD

Previous experimental studies have shown that human skin conductance unconsciously reacts to randomly selected calm or emotional pictures seconds before those pictures are selected and displayed. A new series of experiments is examining this



“presentiment” phenomenon using conscious report measures in conjunction with measurements of electrical brain activity, heart rate, respiration, eye movements, and peripheral vascular blood flow. **Funding requested, \$25K.**

Online intuition games: Phase II

Dean Radin, PhD
IONS’ online suite of psi tests called the *Garden of Dreams* was designed to track individual performance to allow each game to be customized to each user’s abilities. The first phase of this study is completed and online (www.noetic.org). In Phase II we want to add new games, to interface them more directly with membership activities at IONS, and to conduct experiments to see if use of the games can improve players’ intuitive abilities. **Funding requested, \$40K.**

Psychological and psychophysiological effects of meditation on depressed patients

Allan Wallace, PhD, Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, & Greg Simpson, PhD
Contemporary research on mind and consciousness is largely focused on a methodology that is both reductionistic and materialistic, with little attention paid to the study of subjective experience. This research aims to conduct a rigorous study of consciousness by examining subjective and objective effects of training in attentional stability and clarity. The project involves a meditation retreat and training for advanced practitioners. **Funding requested, \$50K.**

RNG field consciousness product

Dean Radin, PhD
Recent experiments with electronic random number generators suggest that group coherence may have measurable effects on the distribution of truly random numbers. This project is developing a hardware/software product that will provide an easy-to-use tool to record and analyze data collected in such “field consciousness” experiments. The primary goal is to produce a stand-alone product that other researchers can use in their own experiments. **Funding requested, \$20K.**

Proposed Educational Conferences and Activities

Faculty of the noetic sciences

Our goal is to assemble a renowned team of experts to discuss the content of our current programs, develop ideas for future studies, and brainstorm new approaches to the study of consciousness. Our intention is to create a sustained dialogue between the noetic aspects of human experience and the sciences. The group would come together twice a year and each participant’s term on the faculty would be for two years. Some faculty may contribute towards special conferences during each year. Faculty representation will draw on our three program areas. **Funding requested, \$35K.**

Resurrection of Christ and the Significance of the Rainbow Body conference

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Br. David Steindl-Rast, PhD, & Fr. Francis Tiso
The historical study of the resurrection of Christ, held in the light of current research on the Tibetan concept of the Rainbow Body, offers a new interpretation of what happened to Christ when he died. This conference will bring together scholars who can engage in a cross-disciplinary dialogue on this topic. It offers the opportunity to investigate a contemporary claim for “transcendence into light” after bodily death, a unique window into the far reaches of human nature, and the possibility of deepening our understanding of phenomena that have remained inexplicable for millennia. **Funding requested, \$25K.**

Towards A Science of Consciousness: Tucson VI

University of Arizona, Tucson & Institute of Noetic Sciences
With IONS playing a key advisory role, the field of consciousness research has emerged as a legitimate academic topic of inquiry. Following up on the five previous international conferences at the University of Arizona, Tucson, the next meeting again brings together leading researchers, philosophers, artists, and others interested in the many facets of human consciousness. **Funding requested, \$15K.**

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Proposed IONS Learning Media

Cultivating spiritual awareness: A media learning program for teachers and adolescents

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, & Cassandra Vieten, PhD

An innovative research program to study the beneficial effects of spiritually transformative practices is underway at IONS. It includes interviews with insights gleaned from scholars and teachers of spiritually transformational practices in the contemplative, mind, body, and consciousness altering traditions. The proposed project will create educational programs, including DVDs, as well as teaching and learning guides for teachers of adolescents 14-18. **Funding requested, \$100K.**

IONS' states of consciousness multimedia databases

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD & Ken Corr, MDiv
Over the last 30 years, IONS has conducted and collected extensive research on states of consciousness and wisdom practices. In the coming years, IONS will continue to generate content and data in various digital formats. *IONS' States of Consciousness Database* is a long term project which will analyze and index the content that IONS has gathered over the years to make it accessible to the public over the Internet. The databases will be thoroughly integrated with each other and with other databases being developed at IONS. **Funding requested, \$50K.**

Living Deeply: Expanding human capabilities DVD and videocassette

This educational DVD will include the most compelling moments from the IONS Living Deeply conference held in May 2003, as well as additional interviews with a number of the presenters, including Sharon Franquemont, Jeff Levin, PhD, Fred Luskin, PhD, Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Brother David Steindl-Rast, PhD, Russell Targ, and Frances Vaughan, PhD. The Living Deeply DVD will explore how human capacities such as loving kindness, wisdom, forgiveness and gratefulness can be developed to enable us to live the fullest possible lives. **Funding requested, \$15K.**

The Legacy of Transformation: A media educational program

Marilyn Schlitz, PhD

& Cassandra Vieten, PhD

What insights can be gleaned from the life experiences of researchers who stood at the frontiers of consciousness research, from the use of psychoactive substances in the 1950's and 1960's? This set of interviews will identify new approaches based on the wisdom of hindsight. Based on an invitational conference and video interviews with leaders in the field of psychoactive research, a DVD and web highlights are planned. **Funding requested, \$25K.**

The Universe of the Heart: A media education program

*Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Kelly Durkin,
Jenny Mathews, & Ken Corr, MDiv*

In 2003, IONS sponsored and video taped several lectures and interviews on love from master teachers and researchers in the field of transformation. These materials include both ancient wisdom and new research findings. We propose to edit these lectures and create a DVD with a learning guide including insights from the research findings, ideas for practice, suggestions for training, and implications for a new world view. **Funding requested, \$15K.**

What Happens When We Die? A media educational program

*IONS & Esalen Center for
Theory and Research*

Through a series of invitational conferences sponsored by the Esalen Institute and IONS, we have brought together experts from a variety of fields—including near-death experiences, reincarnation studies, channeling and mediumship, anthropological studies of death, and multiple personality research—to share their evidence toward a more cohesive whole. Our goal is to create an educational DVD with companion learning guide that will address state-of-the-art research in each particular discipline, the meta-issues involving societal implications of the survival questions, and the psychological and political dimensions of the research. **Funding requested, \$15K.**

