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# The Seasons of Wellbeing as an Evolutionary Map for Transpersonal Medicine

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The four Seasons of Wellbeing (Discover, Transform, Awaken, and Integrate) refer to distinct rhythms, periods, and factors that influence the accessibility of an individual's resources during the journey of life. Each season is explicitly and implicitly related to an individual's experience, focus, and capacity for self-organizational states. Each can be used to understand, organize, and foster behavior change, positive growth, transformation, and human development. A genealogy of the seasons is described, emphasizing the empirical and theoretical foundations of Reorganizational Healing and its roots in models such as Grof's Systems of Condensed Experiences (or COEX Systems) and Wilber's Integral Theory and Pre/Trans Fallacy. In the context of transpersonal medicine, the seasons offer a framework through which various levels and states associated with an individual's growth can be mapped and utilized for personal evolution. In this context, seasons are applicable for practitioners and clients who have used transpersonal states to avoid painful emotions or difficult actions. The seasons can guide transpersonal medical clients on a path towards transpersonal being and integration of various states leading to a higher organizational baseline. As a practical tool, the seasons have pertinence in the development of "transpersonal vigilance," a term defined in this article. The seasons offer resources to practitioners to support clients toward transpersonal being, in a reorganizationally informed or reorganizational way.

**Keywords:** *Transpersonal medicine; integral theory; reorganizational healing; seasons of wellbeing; behavior; vigilance.*

The Seasons of Wellbeing are elements of the Reorganizational Healing paradigm developed by Donald Epstein. This paradigm is based on an expanded worldview of healing as reorganization that grew from empirical research and embodied healing practices originating with apparent and reproducible neurophysiologic spinal wave phenomena (Epstein, Senzon, & Lemberger, 2009; Senzon, Epstein, & Lemberger, 2011), and a healing process structured in 12 stages of somatic and respiratory integration (Epstein, 1994, 2009b). After almost 30 years of research and development driven by these phenomena (Blanks, 2009; Blanks,

Schuster, & Dobson, 1997; Blanks, Schuster, Dobson, & Jauregui, 2001; Epstein, 1986b, 1991, 1996a, 2004c, 2008; Jonkheere, Lohsoonthorn, Musuvarthy, Mahajan, & Stefanovic, 2010; Schuster, Dobson, Jauregui, & Blanks, 2004) and drawing upon several transpersonal and integral models to interpret better how the consciousness states may be associated with the physiological states (Epstein, 1992b; Grof, 1975; Maslow, 1969; Wilber, 1995, 2005; Wilber, Brown, & Engler, 1986) the seasons have emerged as a cyclical map of human transformation (Epstein, 2007).

While the Seasons of Wellbeing first emerged from the development of Epstein's technologies, they

may be applied to many health disciplines, especially those focused on the transpersonal. Seasons are optimally aligned with a transpersonal approach to medicine. They offer a simple map to assist individuals in healing on the way toward the transpersonal and on the journey back from the transpersonal. Practitioners may use this map in helping their clients to navigate and create these pathways, and also to understand better the appropriate timing through which they might best utilize the transpersonal dimensions of being.

### The Seasons of Wellbeing

The Seasons are Discover, Transform, Awaken, and Integrate (Epstein et al., 2009; Fig. 1). By using this terminology in present tense verbs, rather than process-based forms, such as “discovering/discovery,” “transforming/transformation” “awakening,” and “integration” we are consciously developing a new terminology to designate four primary cycles throughout life. Processes happen during the season, but the season

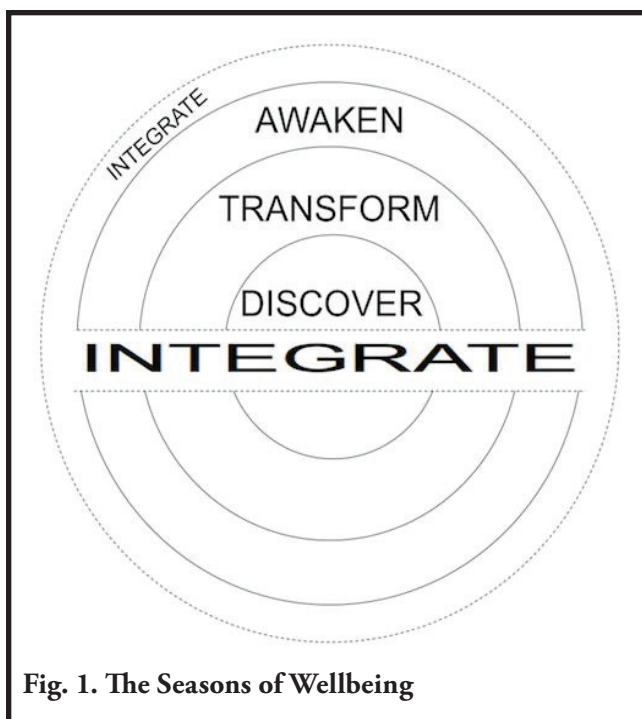


Fig. 1. The Seasons of Wellbeing

itself represents periodic and cyclical periods of each individual’s life. Living from a season means that the individual’s focus and life circumstances habituate toward or center around a particular season. The seasons may be viewed cyclically or progressively.

### The Seasons as a

### Holarchical Model of Life Experience

The Season of Discover is when people find out something novel about their relationship between

avoidance, disassociation, and pain; the Season of Transform is when one accesses resources to take action through conscious choice and accountability; the Season of Awaken is when one embodies the domain of “beingness,” often by accessing transpersonal resources; the Season of Integrate is when one draws from each of the other three seasons in a deliberate way to achieve specific states and outcomes.

These four seasons are ranges of experience in a person’s life. An individual is not necessarily “in” one season all of the time because life embodies aspects of all of them, yet one season is usually predominant. By learning about the seasons, and fully receiving the gifts from each, the individual may move through them in a linear fashion. When appropriate, the individual may cycle back through them at various intervals throughout the lifespan. This is the reason of the metaphor “seasons”—to emphasize the cyclic nature of experience and the distinct rhythms available in wellbeing.

### Seasons and Approaches to Medicine

At the heart of the seasons is timing. Thus, every life or health challenge may be understood as a possibility for self-discovery, self-transformation, awakening, and/or integration at the right time. If the timing is right, the person may emerge from the current crisis or challenge at a new level of life competence, depth of emotion and insight, ability to access new resources of body, mind, heart, and spirit, and in some instances, an embodied awakening. If the timing of change and healing is not considered, individuals are more likely to return back to the life they were living before the current incident, remain at status quo, and even experience a decompensating of state if additional resources are not engaged. The latter approach (no timing) is characteristic of Western medicine, also referred to as “biomedicine” and “allopathic medicine” (Zhang, 2001). The former approach (right timing) is more consistent with a transpersonal approach to medicine.

Western approaches to medicine are based on the rational desire to fix or cure individuals and bring them back to a minimal state of functioning. More recently, Western medicine has embraced lifestyle as an important factor, which is generally focused on assisting individuals to achieve a higher level of health. Knowing the season a patient is in may assist the doctor to know which approach is most appropriate. Even when restoration to a previous state is the chosen path, just considering seasons may plant seeds of transformation for the person.

Transpersonal approaches to medicine are inherently focused on the transrational. This may include a wide spectrum of experience. On one end of the spectrum, practitioners may attempt to assist patients with entering their own transpersonal depths in the face of illness or even death. On the other end, the practitioner may seek to assist patients who are already accessing the transpersonal in some way in order to integrate it into their lives and use those experiences for healing. The middle of the spectrum may include a wide range of approaches in patient care and healing outcomes. Seasons may be used across the spectrum of transpersonal medicine to assist individuals to access systematically the transpersonal depths and to integrate those depths into daily life. This is accomplished by first acknowledging individuals' current situation, bringing it to their awareness, assessing if the individual is actually living in the "right" season, and then assisting them somatically, emotionally, psychologically, and/or spiritually to embody more fully the season that life is demanding.

Symptoms and disease may be used as calls for an interruption of the usual trajectory of life experience. Such an experience is a departure from the ordinary and a potential gateway to the healing state. From a deeper perspective, these experiences may be ways to trigger the transpersonal, or non-ordinary, awareness or experience. Since the transpersonal medical practitioner seeks to support and nurture the non-ordinary state, new maps are required to steer away from the medical approach, with its lack of timing and restorative focus. The medical model routinely follows the cultural dictate that seeks regression to the status quo as the ceiling or return to a prior minimal state. When symptoms are used as a catalyst for transformation and awakening, reorganizational healing is occurring.

Practitioners can use the seasons map to help people at threshold moments and pivotal times such as health crises, emergencies, transformations, and awakenings. By tracking and fostering their access to and integration of the transpersonal, practitioners can act as midwives to the spiritual dimensions inherent to any such moment in life. This can prove especially powerful for individuals who fear such spiritual connections or who have not fully embodied or accessed "condensed experiences" from the past. Condensed experiences have been defined by Grof (1975) as impactful experiences that shape the individuals' physiological, emotional,

psychological, and spiritual filters through which they experience future similar events.

### **A Genealogical View of the Seasons**

Reorganizational Healing was inspired and developed by Donald Epstein from the disciplines of Network Spinal Analysis (Epstein, 1996a, 2004c), Somato Respiratory Integration based on the 12 stages of healing, (Epstein, 1994, 2009b), and an emerging energetic educational discipline (Epstein, 2009c). The seasons were discovered in the development of the reorganizational approach through mapping the relationships between the inner subjective structural consciousness states with physical "external" posture and sensory motor spinal and body strategies. These linkages between inner and outer were explicitly established to ensure a deep holism as one way to apply integralism (Wilber, 1995).

Network Spinal Analysis care developed from network chiropractic, which was first taught to chiropractors in 1984 (Epstein, 1986a). The preliminary development of network chiropractic, between 1979 and 1984, stemmed from a wide range of chiropractic applications and empirical observations (Epstein, 1991). Because of this developmental span of almost three decades, it is important to draw out the genealogy of the seasons from the development of Epstein's work.

#### **Period 1: 1986-1991**

##### **Self, No Self, and Early Waves**

The true uniqueness of network can be attributed to the wave response in the spine and body. The wave response is a visible undulating motion of the spinal structures, linked to specific frequency entrained spinal oscillators (rocking vertebrae) arising from precise force or touch applications to the spine (Senzon & Lemberger, 2009). The application is introduced in a phasic patterning sequence based on a specific analysis of the spinal integrity subsystems, which comprise the nervous system, the active and passive connective tissues (muscles, bones, ligaments), and the integrative functions of the emotional system (Epstein, 1996a). These spinal subsystems maintain thermodynamic stability by dissipating and redirecting energy states, from both intrinsic and extrinsic forces. The wave has been termed the somatopsychic wave or network wave (Epstein, 1991). The somatopsychic wave has been reproduced in tens of thousands of individuals. In its original form, this wave shared similar properties to a classic kundalini awakening. This early wave did not yet develop in relationship to emerging spinal self-organizing properties.

The philosophical roots of the seasons were established during this period. Epstein sought to understand the relationships between energy, intelligence, consciousness, and the wave phenomenon. In doing so, he incorporated humanistic and transpersonal models of consciousness, systems science, as well as the writings of D. D. and B. J. Palmer. The Palmers started the chiropractic profession, in which Epstein (1992b) was originally trained and educated.

Seasons thus have two important links to transpersonal medicine. The first is Epstein's (1992b) explicit use of theorists such as Grof, Maslow, Wilber, and Washburn. The second is the influence of the Palmers' philosophy of chiropractic on Epstein's (1986a, 1992b) early ideas, because chiropractic developed from the same psychological and somatic impulses as humanistic and transpersonal psychology (Albanese, 2007; Gaucher, 1993; Hanegraaff, 1998; Taylor, 1999). The Palmers influenced Epstein's focus on the ability of the central nervous system to act as a mediator for the inherent intelligence in matter itself, the processes of mind associated with life, and the expression of transcendent spiritual awakening, in relation to somatic interference to such expression in the spinal column (Epstein, 1992a, 1992b; Senzon, 2010a, 2011a).

Early on, Epstein attempted to understand the network wave and its associated entrainment to a spinal respiratory wave, which also emerged with the early application of his work, in order to bridge these disparate disciplines. Epstein (1992a) explicitly linked the concepts of spinal cord mediated armoring to stages of self-development. Drawing from Grof's (1975) concept of "condensed experiences" or "COEX systems," Epstein (1992a) proposed an early-stage model of consciousness based on unintegrated emotional and energetic experiences. He wrote, "In this Network model, the characteristic spinal patterns are associated with fixations of development of self, and resonate with the consciousness of the body-mind interference similar to Grof's concept of COEX" (p. 12). Epstein hypothesized that, without fully developing the self by integrating the various energetic and emotional aspects from various levels of the developmental strata in the body-mind, there could not be a transformation and integration of the self and the individual would not fully embody transcendent states.

Based on his anecdotal work with thousands of individuals, Epstein proposed the nervous system must

be highly flexible to allow for the dominant defensive self-patterns to dissipate so that the energy fluctuations of the transpersonal aspects of the self can be somatically expressed more coherently. The wave, now called the "somatopsychic wave," is coupled to a spinal respiratory wave. This seemed to achieve such results by integrating the "memory complex" through experiencing "facial, body, and spinal posture most likely associated with the original COEX" (Epstein, 1992b, p. 15). When such patterns of defensive armoring were self-regulated from the spinal cord system through the development of these waves, Epstein observed an embodied experience into what he interpreted as "the transcendent reality known as Theory Z by Maslow" (Epstein, 1992b, p. 17). Theory Z was defined as experiences characterized by individuals who use peak experiences to validate life; use being language; perceive sacredness in daily life; are motivated by values such as beauty, truth, and goodness; have a holistic worldview; are noncompetitive; easily transcend ego; and are creative.

Epstein developed his infinity model as an explicit attempt to draw from Washburn's "U-turn" approach to transcendence and Grof's incorporation of condensed experiences, which act as filters through which similar future experiences are integrated. Epstein wrote:

In the course of chiropractic adjustments of many thousands of individuals, two characteristic phenomena have developed which have resulted in considerable shifts in that individuals' sense of self and their spontaneous movement into, and beyond the transverbal and transpersonal self.

These two phenomena consistently appear to be associated with an awareness of individual identity and a definite contact with a "nonphysical" aspect of self (or non-self) whether it is considered a "spiritual" experience, an awareness of a vital energy or force, a "peace," or a profound awareness of a "truth," not generally experienced in Western society.

The incidence of these phenomena in a spinal system that is flexible and free of subluxations, appears to have profound influence on individuals' ability to discover, redefine, and surrender their sense of self. This appears to be associated with a subsequent re-ordering of personal identity on what appears to be a greater level of organized complexity.

This paper presents concepts of these phenomena I have called the respiratory and somatopsychic

waves, and integrates these processes into the models that seem to most closely parallel the process.

The relationship of the specific position and tension of the spinal structures to various states of consciousness appears very characteristic, and reproducible. Greater understanding of these phenomena, and these relationships may revolutionize the fields of psychology, psychiatry, chiropractic, and psychoneuroimmunology. (Epstein, 1992a, 1992b, p. 1)

Thus, Epstein (1992a) has explored the notion that the “self” is mediated through the integrity of body structures, which are integrated by the nervous system. The nervous system establishes a somatic sense of self-integrity by coupling the biofield (fields of energy around the body) with the fluctuations of energy in the body and also by allowing for the expression of the transcendent (Epstein, 1992b). This expression of the “non-self” through the self may be interfered with because of the tension, tone, and shape of the spinal column. Thus, consciousness and emotion are an embodied expression, which is affected by the ability of the nervous system to stay coherent with itself, the body, and the environment. Tension and tone of the spine may thus limit self-development into transcendent states and levels of being. This is consistent with Reich’s concept of armoring, which results from a perception of danger, and leads to a lessened expression of life in the tissues. It is an interference with the life-force or the innate consciousness by the conscious mind or the “educated consciousness” (Epstein, 1992a, p. 10).

This spinal mediated sense of self, when coupled with rhythmic respiratory processes and learned sensorimotor strategies linked to wavelike undulations of the spinal column, alters states of consciousness, dissipates tension, and releases armored patterns of the body/mind. Epstein initially proposed a stage model of phasic self-development based on defensive patterns of the body, which seemed to represent COEX systems, and the changes in consciousness were associated with the dissipation of these systems as the two waves developed.

In this initial stage-like model, Epstein proposed that healing is a fluctuation between self and non-self. Thus, the goal should not be the elimination of self or ego into a transcendent state but rather a type of integration. Epstein proposed that a reintegration of excluded aspects of consciousness and energy are the major drivers of development, as opposed to viewing development only

as being “associated with the emergence of latent or implicit forces” (Epstein, 1992b, p. 21) Thus, Epstein emphasized “self-transformation” over “self-expansion.” The self is thus integrated with the “non-self,” which leads to new levels of empowerment and a blending of mind and spirit. Epstein (1992b) compared his model to Washburn, Grof, and Jung in the sense of regressing and then using the potential from those alienated energy and consciousness aspects of self to ascend.

In Epstein’s model, self is not viewed merely psychologically but as an embodied expression of physiological processes, a union of each cell’s coherence. Thus, just as a loss of self can be a form of psychosis, Epstein (1992b) proposed that “healing is generally associated with ... functional psychosis of the tissues of the body” (p. 22). A flexible spine allows for a definition of self to emerge, and the dissipation of defense from the spine allows for an integration of a transcendent self.

#### **Period 2: 1991-1995**

##### **The 12 Stages of Healing**

Soon after describing his infinity model, Epstein developed another stage model, apart from network chiropractic. This new model, the twelve stages of healing, was based on a series of embodied somatic and respiratory practices (Epstein, 1994). Epstein noticed a pattern of motions, breath patterns, consciousness states, and personalized focused attention reported at various stages in the healing process, and created a system through embodied rhythms that were able to create changes in physiology and consciousness. These 12 stages are at the heart of each season and are described in part within this article. These exercises have since been advanced into the discipline of Somato Respiratory Integration, which explicitly utilizes the seasons (Epstein, 2009a, 2009b). The exercises associated with each stage were developed to foster dynamic relationships among individual body perception, rhythmic sensory motor experiences, and consciousness.

#### **Period 3: 1995-2007**

##### **Levels of Care and Self-Organizing Research**

Research on the health and wellness outcomes of network care was conducted at the University of California Irvine Medical School in the 1990s. The retrospective and longitudinal studies revealed predictable associations between individuals’ self-perceived wellness, their self-awareness of the network wave, and the respiratory wave (Blanks, 2009; Blanks et al., 1997; Blanks et al., 2001; Schuster et al., 2004).

This cognitive awareness of the wave processes in the body along with the research were central factors in developing network chiropractic into its current evolution, Network Spinal Analysis (NSA) with discrete levels of care protocols. The NSA levels of care were important markers in the development of the seasons in that they began to striate NSA care to allow a sequenced development of spinal and consciousness structures (Epstein, 1996a, 2004c). For the first time in the history of NSA care, there was a specific congruent path of development to both enhance spinal self-perception and develop unique strategies toward the non-self through the development of the spinal wave and the transformations of consciousness associated with that development.

The self-awareness of the wave process was used to further refine the wave itself in the body and spine. Over time, the wave was conditioned to be associated with specific spinal integrity and efficient energy use in the somatic structures. This related to self-organizing strategies and cognitive awareness, furthering a refinement of spinal movements into specific oscillations, which have been observed to relate to changes in consciousness states, higher levels of self-perceived wellness, and greater connection to one's self, including spiritual depths.

Empirical studies of the electrophysiological mechanisms of the wave in the connective tissues at the University of Southern California and other universities, which started in the mid-1990s and continues today, demonstrate that the network wave has properties of a central pattern generator (CPG; Jonckheere, 2009; Jonckheere, Bohacek, & Lohsoonthorn, 2000; Jonckheere & Lohsoonthorn, 2004; Jonckheere, Lohsoonthorn, & Boone, 2003; Jonckheere, Lohsoonthorn, & Mahajan, 2005; Jonckheere et al., 2010). CPGs are neural networks that create rhythmic movement patterns without specific sensory feedback. The most modeled CPG for the spine involves gait; however, this network (somatopsychic) wave is postulated to be the second known CPG of the spine (Jonckheere et al., 2010). This neurophysiological research also demonstrates that as the wave progresses through each level of care, the central nervous system becomes more highly organized (Jonckheere, 2009).

#### **Period 4: 2007-Present**

##### **Reorganizational Healing**

In 2007, the Seasons of Wellbeing was presented as one of the three elements of Reorganizational Healing (Epstein, 2007). Genealogically, it is apparent that its

roots go back to Epstein's early attempts to understand the relationships between heightened spiritual experiences and embodied sensory motor strategies. By seeking to understand these profound relationships from an integral perspective, which includes culture, society, self, and body/behavior (Epstein, 2004b; Epstein & Senzon, 2004; Wilber, 1995), as well as the continued refinement of the wave through the evolution of the network protocols (Epstein, 1995/2005, 1996a, 1996b, 2001, 2002, 2004b, 2004c, 2008), Somato Respiratory Integration (SRI; Epstein, 2008, 2009a, 2009b), and an emerging energetic discipline (Epstein, 2006, 2009c; Epstein & Senzon, 2004) that also emerged from Epstein's work, the seasons were articulated.

##### **The Seasons**

By incorporating a seasonal approach to the timing and rhythm of change, especially in relation to transpersonal dimensions, transpersonal approaches to medicine may be enhanced in dynamic ways. When timing is developed by using seasons as a metaphor, new ways to access deeper processes related to human development, arrested development, psychodynamic growth, behavior change, optimal wellbeing, and awakening may unfold (Epstein, 2009b; Epstein et al., 2009; Senzon, 2011b; Senzon et al., 2011). This also may play an important role in the individual's ability to find meaning in diseases, health crises, and illness (Epstein et al., 2009; Jobst, Shostak, & Whitehouse, 1999; Senzon, 2010b).

A seasonal approach also may contribute to the emerging field of transpersonal medicine by assisting individuals to integrate transpersonal states into daily life more effectively. As noted above, transpersonal approaches to medicine often seek to assist individuals in accessing the transpersonal in order to develop greater depth and meaning as part of their healing process. Transpersonal medical approaches also seek to assist individuals who are already accessing such dimensions to integrate them into life more effectively. Seasons may add to these approaches by helping to distinguish the difference between accessing and integrating.

Furthermore, practitioners may navigate such territory more effectively by utilizing resources associated with each season in a systematic way, thus drawing resources from the Season of Integrate. As noted above, living from a season means that the individual's focus and life circumstances habituate toward a particular season; for example, living from the Season of Integrate involves

the conscious integration of each season congruent with the right timing for the current moment. This may help the practitioner to embody whatever season the client or patient is living from while also acting as an embodied pacer for the client's own transformation and awakening.

The seasons grew from years of observations of individuals moving through the change process in teaching practitioners (Epstein, 1986a, 1996b, 2004a, 2007, 2008, 2009b, 2009c), healing retreats (Epstein, 2009c), case studies (Behrendt, 1998; Jonkheere et al., 2010; Kidoo, 2001; Miller & Redmond, 1998; Pauli, 2006; Pauli, 2007; Senzon, 2003), empirical data on related biological transformations (Jonkheere et al., 2010) and retrospective and longitudinal studies (Blanks et al., 1997; Blanks et al., 2001). Future research studies are planned to document the seasons and examine their efficacy independently, alongside other models of change, as well as within the reorganizational paradigm (Epstein et al., 2009).

Each season (Table 1, page XX) has several stages (Epstein, 2009b; Epstein et al., 2009; Senzon et al., 2011). When utilized at the right time, each of the stages unfolds. The first step in assisting individuals to utilize seasons is to help them to determine in which season they are currently living. The key for an individual to actualize each season is to learn what the season is about and then take on the embodied state of consciousness associated with that season.

### **Changing with the Seasons**

It is useful at this point to describe a few well known methods of behavior change so that one might then better explore the uniqueness of the seasons and how they might add to the literature. Many methods are available to assist individuals to create behavioral change, including Behaviorist Models (Ajzen, 1985), the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1977), the Health Belief Model (Rosenstock, Strecher, & Becker, 1988), Social Cognitive Theory (SCT; Bandura, 1999), the Transtheoretical Model (TTM; DiClemente & Prochaska, 1982), and Motivational Interviewing (MI; Miller, 1983). Taking these last three as examples—SCT, TTM, and MI—the reader will begin to understand how seasons may contribute to change theories and practices either as an adjunct or a meta-model. These three models were chosen because they are well described in the literature and utilized in many disciplines focused on helping individuals to change. More complex models, relating not just to specific behavior change

but also to psychodynamic growth (Ingersoll & Zeitler, 2010; Vaillant, 1994), the development of complexity in consciousness (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), sense of self (Cook-Greuter, 2005), and cognition (Aurobindo, 2005a; Commons, Richards, & Armon, 1984; Piaget, 1997), will be addressed in a separate article.

SCT, developed from Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1997) and Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), combines self-efficacy (or one's belief that one can make the behavior change), with new skills, and outcome expectancies, whereby the individual expects a positive outcome due to the new behaviors. SCT blends cognition and behavior to assist the individual to create change. Believing one can create the change and understanding what to do are the keys. SCT also looks at environmental factors and how they blend with the personal factors. SCT relies on self-control, self-modification, self-rewards, and goal setting (Baranowski, Cullen, Nicklas, Thompson, & Baranowski, 2003).

TTM, also known as the Stages of Change (SOC), is one of the most well-known approaches to behavior change (DiClemente & Prochaska, 1982; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983; Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992; Prochaska, Wright, & Velicer, 2008; Velicer, Prochaska, & Redding, 2006). TTM focuses initially on the individual's readiness to change, assesses for motivation and self-efficacy, and then applies various processes of change (experiential or behavioral; Prochaska et al., 2008). The TTM examines where the individual might be in the process of change based on five stages: precontemplative, contemplative, preparation, action, or maintenance. Several studies have shown TTM's promise (Lippke, Nigg, & Maddock, 2007; Lippke, 2006; Velicer et al., 2006; Velicer, Redding, Sun, & Prochaska, 2007; Velicer, Redding, Anatchkova, Fava & Prochaska, 2007). TTM also has been criticized in terms of the accuracy of its stages and the predictability of the model (Bowles, 2006; Herzog, Abrams, Emmons, Linnan, & Shadel, 1999; Schwarzer, 2008; Sutton, 2005; West, 2005), and West (2005) has even called for it to be put to rest.

MI (Miller, 1983) is a patient-centered approach that works well with SCT and TTM. MI is designed to assist the individual to overcome ambivalence through non-directive counseling (Rogers, 1951). The goal is to help the client develop motivation, especially clients who are ambivalent or reluctant toward behavior change (Rubak, Sandbæk, Lauritzen, & Christensen, 2005).



Weinstein, Rothman, and Sutton (Weinstein, Rothman, & Sutton, 1998), proposed that models such as SCT and MI are continuum models, while models like TTM are stage models. Continuum models situate the individual within the context of the behavior change and their intention to change. Stage models have discrete stages that are qualitatively distinct with categories that can be ordered. There also should be specific barriers within each stage and between stages. Herzog (2008) contended that the SOC does not meet Weinstein et al.'s (1998) criteria for a stage model due to "inadequate study designs and poor model specification" (p. 554) and suggested that TTM has crowded out and preempted stage model development for the past 25 years. The seasons can be used as a new stage model that meets Weinstein et al.'s (1998) criteria.

Other promising stage models have developed. For example, Schwarzer (2008) proposed the Health Action Process Approach, which purports to overcome the dilemmas of continuum models by dealing with the intention-behavior gap. This is accomplished by defining motivational processes that are pre- and post-intentional motivation factors leading to intention and then action. Others have created new models (Bowles, 2006) or combined several approaches to influence specific areas of behavior change based on the individual (Baranowski et al., 2003; Elder, Ayala, & Harris, 1999).

What usually is assessed for in these models is whether people are motivated (MI), contemplating or ready to change (TTM), or believe they can change (SCT). Our approach is unique because it first assesses for the client's seasonality. This is different from readiness for change because we are first discerning the client's current locality (seasonally) and then in the sense of MI or MI's roots in Roger's non-directive counseling (Rogers, 1951), accepting their location in the journey. Season can be determined as a prerequisite to the assessment of other change models. Thus, seasons might be considered a meta-model that integrates the usefulness of other models potentiating further progression in depth and scope.

Other contributions that seasons make to current models are simplicity, an emphasis on transformation to higher baselines of living over maintenance, and acceptance of transpersonal dimensions. Approachability and ease to communicate is an essential aspect to any change model. More and more health care providers are counseling lifestyle modification to patients (DiClemente et al., 2010; Elder

et al., 1999). Simplicity also is ideal for practitioners who emphasize the integration of transformation and transpersonal states. This is likely to be highly valued by practitioners who seek to assist individuals to integrate those states into daily life. The ability to assess and communicate about the timing or rhythm of change, or seasonality, may offer a great deal to the existing models.

### **Season of Discover**

**M**ost patients arrive at the medical practitioner or therapist ripe for the Season of Discover (Discover). The hallmark of this season is suffering and disconnection, polarity, and frustration. Even when individuals are seeking authentic transformation or awakening as part of their healing, it is essential to determine whether aspects of the Season of Discover have been fully integrated. This means that any aspects of the defenses and avoidance strategies that have not been fully integrated should be observed and embodied. For example, is the individual acting as if they are suffering, using polarity language, or seemingly stuck in an old pattern? For individuals to engage actively with Discover, a discovery process must begin.

People do so much to avoid the true depth of suffering that, instead of deeply feeling the painful emotions in the body/mind associated with health and life crises and challenges, they experience or dwell on a concept of suffering. Thus, many individuals rely on thoughts to protect themselves from painful emotions and distance themselves from the body-sense associated with suffering. Feeling the suffering in an embodied way is the start of Discover. In Discover, what must be discovered is the nature of avoidance in the individual's body and life. These are often pre-rational responses associated with fear and disconnection. This feeling/awareness (discovery) in and of itself may lead to a greater amount of available energy for healing, reorganization, and movement into a subsequent season.

### **Discover etiology**

The Season of Discover is evident when isolated parts of the body/mind are split off from consciousness at some point during the life span. There is a separation or pre-rational need to avoid, retreat, or flee, rather than advance. This type of body/mind disconnect has been documented in several related fields (Aposhyan, 2004; Grof, 1975; Levine, 1997; Reich, 1972; Wilber, 2000). In the Season of Discover, individuals can learn how repressing, avoiding, or fixating various aspects of the body/mind has led to life's current trajectory. This

**Table 1.**  
Practitioner and Client Experiences in the Four Seasons of Wellbeing

Season of Wellbeing	Stage of Healing	Common Client Questions	Common Emotions and Expressions Experienced by Client	Common Countertransferential Questions Experienced by Practitioners
INTEGRATE DISCOVER	One Suffering Separateness	Why me? or Why not me? What is wrong with me? Why does this happen to me? Why does this not end?	Helplessness, loss, despair, peace, reassurance	How can I fix this?
	Two Polarities and Rhythms Attachment/ Projection	What is the cause of this? Who was wrong/right? Who can fix/get rid of this? What is the best or worst ____? Why did he/she do this to me? What is the pattern here?	Anger, hunger, happiness, identification, energy	How can I reduce this? What is wrong with this patient?
	Three Stuck in a Perspective Frustration	Why can't I make the breakthrough? Why do I keep doing this? Why am I stuck? Why am I so blocked? Why can't I solve this now?	Frustration, peaceful waiting	What is wrong with me? Why is this not working? Where is this coming from?
	Four Reclaiming Our Power Courage	What can I do to never disempower myself again? How can I express more of my courage now?	Inner strength, determination, courage, power	
	Five Merging with the Illusion Merging Beyond the Wall	What else is going on? What is really happening here? How can I face this now? What is really on the other side?	Curiosity, anticipation, temporary confusion, sense of knowing more	
	Six Preparation for Resolution	What can I do to really be ready? How can I better prepare myself? What must I do now, next?	Determination, resolve, flexibility, excitement of something big and new	How can I help this practice member get to the other side?
	Seven Resolution	How can I resolve this? How can I conduct an inventory and express that which is beyond defense? How can I move beyond the need of outdated energy/patterns?	Excitement, focus, strength, resolution, peace,	How can she really be more ready to be her authentic self? How can he resolve the energy and intensity associated with defense strategies?

Season of Wellbeing	Stage of Healing	Common Client Questions	Common Emotions and Expressions Experienced by Client	Common Countertransferential Questions Experienced by Practitioners
<b>AWAKEN</b>	Eight	Emptiness in Connectedness	<p>How can I embrace the space?</p> <p>Where is the guiding rhythm?</p> <p>How can I hold the space?</p> <p>How can I expand the gratitude?</p> <p>How can I even more suspend the temporal hold on the experience?</p>	Peace, stillness, rhythmic connection, gratitude for connection
	Nine	Light/Love Beyond the Form	<p>What is the energy/love telling me?</p> <p>Where is the connection within spirit?</p> <p>How can I express the love more?</p> <p>How can I grow the gratitude?</p> <p>How can I feel the real energy behind the form?</p>	Gratitude for love and for the energy of life, joy, passion, heightened perception of joy, gratitude, beauty
	Ten	Ascent	<p>What gift has been given to me?</p> <p>How can I receive and embody the light I am?</p> <p>How can I express my soul and the One love?</p>	Witnessing from beyond the soul, exhilaration, joy, awe, gratitude, oneness
	Eleven	Descent (Service)	<p>How do I give my gifts in joy and gratitude?</p> <p>Where is the joy, love, gratitude, gift?</p> <p>How can I sponsor the sharing of my abundance?</p> <p>How can I even more condition the space that I am and around me with magical moments?</p> <p>How can I even more create a legacy of love?</p>	<p>Gratitude, acceptance of core paradoxes, humor, courage, humility, grace, strength, passion, determination</p> <p>How blessed am I to be able to be present in the awakening of this soul?</p> <p>How can I bring love and focus to this awakening process?</p>
	Twelve	Community	<p>How can I receive others/ circumstances with gratitude as gifts?</p> <p>Where is the gift in this?</p> <p>How can we be each other's wisdom/medicine?</p> <p>How can I even more celebrate the diversity within the Oneness and the Oneness within the Diversity?</p>	<p>Coming home, acceptance of others as fellow souls or travelers, passion for synchronicity, total spectrum with foundation in benevolence and gratitude and conscious experience</p> <p>Where are the strategies unfolding with the greatest grace?</p> <p>Where do I need to contact to remind him of who he is?</p> <p>Is the love or natural essence expressing in all places?</p>

discovery process also relates to the person's relationships with others and the world. In Discover, the foreground of awareness centers on a crisis, circumstance, problem, painful event, or sensation. There is a relationship with the current pain and past "charges." Thus, Discover is easily noted during the intake for new patients through linguistic cues, even if the individual seems to access the transpersonal dimensions.

### **Discover stages**

The Season of Discover is experienced through three stages: suffering/disconnection, polarity, and an experience of stuckness or frustration. This can relate to any aspect of the body, heart, mind, soul, or spirit. Indications span from physical symptoms to individual emotions and thoughts, which may include anything from illness to emotional, psychological, and spiritual challenges, to relationships and even life focus. By assisting a patient to embody the applicable stage of Discover fully, a more fulfilling healing encounter may be possible. This is because authentic depths may be accessed in a relatively short time span.

The stages of Discover are a foundation upon which any work with seasons rests. Also, in our experience, aspects of these stages often are missed when the emphasis of care is in transpersonal dimensions. For these reasons, we explore the stages of Discover in greater detail as they hold an important key to the doorway toward the transpersonal.

### **Discover: Suffering/disconnection**

Discover begins by acknowledging the sensation or awareness associated with disconnection, separateness, aloneness, and the attending feeling that nothing works. This is a felt sense, rather than a thought process. It is precognitive, as there is not even an object of concern. There is just the overwhelming experience that nothing works, that one cannot "get through" the experience. By just being with their pain and acknowledging the suffering (rather than focusing solely on the "fix" or "rescue"), very often the patients' healing is triggered. Once individuals realize that they are suffering or disconnected, and can experience it, then they are better able to move to the next stage in the Season of Discover.

### **Discover: Polarity**

The second stage of Discover has to do with embodied polarity, attachment, and projection. At this stage in the healing process, people look outside of themselves for a source of the problem, as the fix or answer. The individual also may look to blame others for

the current situation. In our experience, if patients do not arrive in deep suffering, they are likely to arrive at the medical practitioner in polarity. Such people are often in search of the external solution, which will "save" them.

This "magical genie effect" often is a distraction from the real emotion or energy associated with the disconnected aspects of the body/mind and generally is a strategy to avoid the embodied experience of the suffering from the first stage of Discover. Without acknowledging and honestly feeling the energetic emotional component of the disconnection, the polar "charge" is still there. Healing and development may thus become stymied.

With this polarity, only one aspect of the current health or life experience is acceptable to the individual. This is essentially a separation from the rhythm of life because of the way the individual has avoided or repressed energy, sensations, and/or emotions. People may have conditioned their very "self" to view such aspects of the body/mind as unacceptable. This is a disconnection from a more complete, authentic, and embodied experience. An inability to consciously feel such energy, sensations, and emotions may develop as a type of pre-rational defense mechanism whereas the individual has learned to "expect" pain from life experiences.

The practitioner's role at this point is to assist individuals to observe the polarity or rhythm, which may be as simple as noticing symptomatic rhythmicity, circumstances related to similar past experiences, and most importantly, the ability to connect with biological and respiratory rhythms. Practitioners drawing from this polarity aspect of the timing of patient care may avoid inadvertently returning the person to a previous state. Assisting individuals to move forward on the healing journey by embodying their own sacred rhythms of wholeness is at the heart of this stage of Discover. (When coupled with the transpersonal dimension later, by accessing the resources of the season of Integrate, which generally includes the conscious utilization of other seasons to achieve a determined "seasonal" state or outcome, individuals may connect to wider rhythms of thought, soul, and spiritual dimensions of their being.) As individuals become aware of this dynamic of polarity and disconnection in the season of Discover, they may realize there's a process going on and then move to the next stage.

### **Discover: Stuck**

The third stage is being stuck in a perspective and also recognizing the stuck cognitively, emotionally,

and physiologically. The individual now gets to the point of realizing a powerless state of “stuckness.” Sometimes patients enter the office of a medical practitioner already consciously in this stage of Discover. This is characterized by language of frustration and/or an embodied sense of “being here before,” and not wanting to revisit this same pattern of health or life crisis in the future. If such is the case, it is important to assess the first two stages of Discover to see if there is any more energetic/emotional leverage available to more fully connect the individual to the fullness of “stuck.”

The new self-awareness of the stuckness leads to a threshold of development in the embodied self-system. The awareness of being stuck, even if transient, points to the emergence of the next season on the horizon. At this point, it is necessary for stuck individuals to build the tension and the associated frustration that has been hidden in the background and bring it to the foreground. This is accomplished by merging with the emotional pre-rational self, accessing the energy and information stored as frustration, and using it as a source of energy to set a new dynamic trajectory from the previous pattern of the body/mind. This creates enough emotional and energetic leverage to move the individual into the Season of Transform. This also may include the development of an embodied egoic structure or self-sense, as an entryway into the Season of Transform.

The practitioner’s goal is not to help reduce the experience of being stuck. Instead, as with all stages and seasons, full association with the depth of the stage is the liberation. The practitioner can coach the individual to embody the frustration fully at not moving forward, feel the emotion of never moving past this crisis, or other appropriate ways to “push the edge.” The person thus can connect fully with the energy, sensation, emotion, and thoughts of being stuck. The tension focused within the system through the experience of being stuck and feeling unable to move forward at this time while accepting the timing of this state is necessary to act as threshold for the next season.

#### **Discover continuum**

One easy way for practitioners to utilize the Season of Discover in patient care is to view Discover as a continuum. On one side of the continuum is the pain individuals have caused themselves as well as those they care about through fear, indecision, and reaction. By not being focused in a sustainable direction and by reactive avoidance, the individual gravitates to the pain

and polarity. At the other end of the Season of Discover, the pain builds to the realization that the individual is stuck. It becomes clear to the person that new resources involving more mature focus and claiming of autonomy are required. This may lead to a reconnection with the separated parts or experience, as the individual begins to proactively seek a way to break the pattern instead of running away from or suppressing the experience. As this occurs in an authentic and embodied way, the ability to move forward emerges.

#### **Discover Dx**

Discover is the season in which most health providers and advocates for behavior change will find their clients at the start of the change process or health/life crisis. By understanding this and applying the appropriate methodology at the right time, the change advocate may synchronize more easily with the patient or client. The advocate may develop an even better understanding of just where the client is at on the map of the seasons. We have made a few important observations about patients who are in the Season of Discover: they tend to gravitate to specific emotions, body postures, and linguistic patterns.

Often, clients in Discover have determined that, whatever the health or life crisis may be, “it is not my fault,” and they may resort to looking for someone else to blame. When this no longer satisfies, clients may deny or anesthetize themselves from the awareness of pain. This last strategy involves physiologic rewiring and destruction of sensory motor strategies related to the experience of that which is avoided. Ultimately, in Discover, clients may regress into apathy or emotions that do not have enough energy associated with them to move into Transform.

Physiologically, the movements of clients in Discover are reactive. The body armor involves marked hyper flexion-extension and/or lateral bending of the spine and axial skeleton. This is classic “fight or flight” posturing. This posture maintains a tone of defense deeply rooted in the autonomic nervous system. Movements may be angular or sharp. Arms and legs may be flared out as part of the torque associated with defense, or contracted with arms into the body, neck forward, or hands in a fist position, which is common for the flexion associated with defense. The structure of the body may be off-centered.

The individual’s sense of self may be very small and focused on egocentricity. This self-sense may couple to

emotions of fear, doubt, hopelessness, anger, frustration, and sorrow. Emotions that may be absent or not readily available in such cases are generally related to courage, tenacity, victory, gratitude, empathy, curiosity, and joy. The related body postures or behaviors characteristic of these states may also be absent.

By paying attention to key words or attitudes being used, the practitioner may determine or approximate the individual's season. Language may indicate one of the three stages of Discover: "helpless" for the suffering stage, blame or polarity language for the second stage, and "stuck" or "frustrated" for the third stage. Table 1 explores some common language, questions, and emotions through the seasons for a patient or client, as well as for the practitioner.

For practitioners utilizing transpersonal approaches to medicine, it is important to notice when a patient who is clearly embracing transpersonal dimensions may benefit by first embodying Discover. For example, a client experiencing many of the transpersonal or post-rational sensations, visions, forms of awareness, or language—who also has fear or anger, depression or anxiety, or body movements, postures or actions reflective of Discover—would best be served in the Season of Discover. The client may have aspects of the Season of Awaken, or may be immersed in transpersonal or altered states in the midst of Discover. This is important, as the client may actually be experiencing a transpersonal state as a defensive avoidance or protective mechanism. The person may even alternate between the two seasons of Discover and Awaken. In either case, being present through awareness and acknowledgement of the rhythm in Discover, the client may create the pathway to a more sustainable and effortless embodiment of Awaken.

### **Season of Transform**

The frustration at the end of Discover and the experience that there is no place to go but deliberately forward begins the Season of Transform (Transform) for the individual. There is a profound shift for the individual in Transform. A new need may develop to direct the energy that was stored as defenses. An associated life-awareness also may develop into a more personally chosen constructive direction through which to focus energy and life. This often includes radical and proactive actions, some form of breakthrough, and finally a resolution of the old life system driven through the focus of a clear compelling larger future.

For the transpersonal practitioner, Transform is

a very important season to assist clients as they develop through it. Transform lays the foundation for a more integrated ability to access and live in awakened states in daily practice. It also may enable individuals to access new depths in the face of health or life challenges.

In the Season of Transform, individuals often become self-directed toward creating new distinctions, developing courage to take new forward moving actions, setting boundaries and defining a sense of self: physically, emotionally, psychosocially, and spiritually (Epstein, 2004b; Epstein & Senzon, 2004; Lemberger, 2010). General wellbeing in Transform is often associated with a well-developed and congruent sense of self in relationships, work, and life focus.

### **Transform etiology**

In Transform, the individual is willing to fully feel and associate with the pain (physical, emotional, mental, spiritual), which developed as a consequence of being disconnected. Avoidance of pain is no longer a driver for the individual, who is now willing to do what is necessary or experience whatever pain is needed for the stuck pattern, life circumstance, or even health crisis, to never happen again. This, although not always rational, is determined by the inner calculation that it appears the gain in the future will exceed any current or past pain. The awareness of gain emerges as a sense of action takes hold.

One of the characteristics of Transform is an awareness of an embodied self-sense developing. Individuals may more easily choose to be in charge of their own lives. This may result in a greater willingness to experience the "shadow," or the disowned and fragmented aspects of the self-system. It also may allow the individual to confront the distinctions between the content mind, which relates to rules and order, and the context mind, which relates more to synthesis and the big-picture. This new insight pierces the individual's unconsciously accepted stories. New authentic, embodied, and creative, interpretations of the self may then emerge. In Transform, a compelling vision or map of an expanded reality linked to more energetic and forward moving emotions such as courage, tenacity, curiosity, enthusiasm, and determination combine to advance the individual in the face of life's greatest challenges: health, illness, transformation, or whatever the confrontation may be.

### **Transform stages**

At the beginning of the Season of Transform, individuals set boundaries and move across a line to self-

autonomy and claiming themselves. They are empowered and willing to face fear. This process leads to individuals' ability to merge beyond the illusion of separateness from experience and self. Energy that previously was used to react in defense now becomes available for individuals. In addition to accessing this previously stored energy, new resources of energy are created through focusing the mind and consciously developing coherence with action. Eventually, this moves them toward resolution of the hunger to sustain a specific sense of self that creates and organizes their own reality.

### **Transform self**

In the Season of Discover, there was little to no developed somatic sense of self due to the predominance of pre-rational defense physiology and the avoidance of the experience of being wrong or accepting fault. In Transform, there is acceptance of the co-created mechanisms of defense and of the concepts mediated by the self. A new awareness emerges, that someone led to this moment and moves forward into new and proactive territory. Hence, with the rational thinker, there is the birth and increasing complexity of thought and constellations of thoughts with its focus on being a somebody. This is a more complex solution to experiencing the unworthiness of being a nobody, which was avoided in Discover. Thus, it is in Transform that an individual transforms relationships not only with themselves, but also with cultural expectations, and with an increasingly larger circle of what and who matters or needs to be defended. With the development of the self co-emerges the concept of linear time, which advances and against which progress is measured.

Embodying a unique sense that change is a constant presence in life, individuals can truly break through the block at the core self and move into a new or deeper season in life. Massive change, conscious choice, progress, and a deep level of resolution become self-directed mandates. In Transform, it is not the individual or the mind that transforms. It is the individual's rules, stories, relationships, orientations, and outworn maps of reality that transform. We meet our mapmaker and create a different, more awakened map.

### **Transform and transpersonal**

Transform is an important season for individuals seeking more connection to the transpersonal on a spectrum from a life or health crisis to a spiritual emergence. It is a season of introspective acuity and action. It is here that an individual's structures, plans,

and progress must match emotions, focus, thoughts, perceptions, meanings, and behaviors in order to produce the desired result. This is the season of creation of a somatic self, one that directs action and creates clear boundaries because of the newly and fortified sense of self. This is the same force that, in Awaken, will be matured through the experience of the transpersonal to unify prior forms, behaviors, and perceptions. In Transform, individuals have more authentic access to their human complexity, conflicts, paradoxes, progress, and a way to reclaim and define their sense of self in profound and sustainable fashions.

The experience of survival of the individual that occurs in Discover grows into the safety of the sense of self in Transform. As an individual moves toward deeper and richer goals, relationships with self and others transform. A congruent sense of self expands and becomes more pliable and porous. This sets the stage for the emergence or development of the next season: Awaken. The wisdom of Engler's (1984) dictum "you have to be somebody before you can be nobody" is most obvious as the self fully emerges in Transform, setting the stage for a more authentic Awaken. True transformation of one's being occurs through conscious awakening of the transpersonal, or trans-self in Awaken.

### **Transform Dx**

The practitioner can determine a client who is living in Transform based on body posture, linguistics, emotions, actions taken, and the baseline of energy available for deliberate action. Transform emotions and actions create forward, deliberate motion toward a preconceived and associated goal; toward progress. Individuals' postures are often erect and their gaits are centered. There may even be an inner directed movement that is perceptible to an observer. For such people, behaviors, thoughts, phrases, and linguistics are deliberate and empowered. Actions generally involve greater levels of risk, associations, responsibilities, and change. In Transform, individuals consciously choose the hero's journey, inviting a worthy adversary (the past pain), be it external or internal, to shape their authentic form and vision. Such people generally have a sense of knowing who they are and what they are capable of. This is a vital step to creating the container to expand and accommodate the transpersonal as part of this process as the strong self arises.

For practitioners assisting individuals to incorporate the transpersonal dimensions into their lives,

the world of a self meets the world of no-self or of the ever-wider self. There arises a transition from struggle to freedom with true liberation, here to there to everywhere, effort to effortless, doing to being, exclusionary to inclusionary, hunger to satiety. Transform is what is needed as a preface for the awakened individual to truly embody. The Season of Transform prepares the vessel to be able to integrate the Season of Awaken and the transpersonal into a fuller and broader expression of human existence.

### **Season of Awaken**

Very few behavior or lifestyle change models or methods are geared toward assisting individuals to live in the Season of Awaken (Dupuy & Morelli, 2007; Hunt, 2009; Jackson, 2006; Murphy & Leonard, 1995; Wilber, 2006). At this point, the sense of self expands to include more individuals and relationships, and a sense of deep gratitude begins to develop. The experience of being rather than doing begins to take the foreground of awareness. This is the beginning of the Season of Awaken. It occurs as the strategies sustaining a defended sense of self no longer have energetic support, and are replaced by a more highly organized and efficient entrainment with the heart rhythm and the subtle energetics of love.

The Season of Awaken is organized by the consciousness states associated with soul and Spirit, and carries the attributes of these forces for organization of the individual's transpersonal space. At the resolution of Transform, an experience of effortlessness and knowing takes the foreground of awareness in the rhythms of life.

As emptiness and gratitude are experienced, a new center of gravity is established in Awaken. Emptiness is palpably distinct from the void that needed to be avoided, filled, or separated from in Discover. It also is distinct from the discomfort felt in-between actions in Transform. In Awaken, emptiness is an openness of possibility and potential. This openness may develop into the experience of the organizing energy of life and spirit, the gifts we each bring, love as the ground of creation, and opening to oneness. Awaken is the expression of the post-rational or developed transpersonal state.

### **Awaken stages**

Emptiness is the baseline for the Season of Awaken. From that baseline of being, individuals may be more able to experience the light and energy beyond the form of events and the experience of life. They are able to access and connect with the threads of energetic creation

and realize light is their essence. A greater realization of a connection to all beings in the fabric of life leads individuals to recognition of the gifts and services they have to share with humanity and ultimately to people's connection in community.

We use the term individuals when describing the Season of Awaken so that the reader may have a reference to the experience being described. However, in the Season of Awaken, individuals become more than just individual selves. They experientially become part of a greater matrix of life, with actions, body, and energetic states that are all congruent and co-emergent with this awareness (Senzon et al., 2011). The so-called individuals in Awaken are really individual cells in the greater organism called the kosmos or an even wider deeper view; they are just the kosmos as oneness. We use kosmos with a "k" in the same sense that Wilber has done so, to include not only the physical cosmos, but also the interior depths (Wilber, 1995).

### **Awaken Dx**

In Awaken, people often experience lightness, gratitude, and a generous feeling to contribute to the world. Awaken often is marked by altered states of consciousness centered and a lack of ego. Similar states have been described in a host of literature from spiritual (Aurobindo, 2005b; Wilber, 2006) to scholarly writings (Combs, 2009; Commons & Richards, 2003; Commons et al., 1984; Cook-Greuter, 1990), but rarely in this specific seasonal context. Underhill (1911/1961), in her classic text on mysticism, closely captured this type of shift from Transform to Awaken.

The body structure in Awaken is fluid. The chest rises upward and outward with a greater extension of the spine evident. There is an upward lift or separation of the space between the clavicle and the first two ribs. For these people, behaviors, thoughts, phrases, and linguistics are conscious, yet expansive. The voice may become more resonant, fuller and may even be quieter, closer to a whisper. The speaking tempo may become slower and more deliberate, yet not always of the mind. In conversation, longer pauses can be experienced, as thoughts are things that float in and out of awareness, rather than being the constant chaotic stream in Discover or in constellations in Transform.

Language and linguistic patterns in Awaken reach into the transpersonal as the self dissolves. Focus changes from a first person singular to a first person plural and becomes infused with language of gifts to



give and share with the world. Personal responsibility is communicated not just in actions, but global outcomes of actions and their importance in the lives of others.

There is a very distinct difference between temporary states of experience and embodying the Awaken level of being (Wilber, 2006). States of Awaken often are cultivated to assist people to create change. That is different from individuals' developing through Transform and into Awaken (Dupuy & Morelli, 2007). An example of this is Alcoholics Anonymous' use of connecting with a "higher power" (Wilson, 2002). This type of shift is aimed at a form of maintenance, which is maintaining sobriety. Maintenance, such as the maintenance level in the classic trans-theoretical model of change (Prochaska et al., 2008), does not truly embody Transform and thus not Awaken. This type of maintenance is directed at creating a controlled state, which is not intended to change and remains within a narrow range of deviance. It is different because the Season of Awaken is associated with sharing, radiating, acknowledging, accepting, or filling space consciously with love.

When Awaken is lived after the individual embodies Discover and Transform, the true depth of the Season of Integrate may emerge. For practitioners incorporating the transpersonal dimensions, this is an essential transition personally and professionally because it may allow for a new opening to the possibilities inherent in each individual's actuality. This means that limitations that were holding the individual back from a more authentic and embodied integrated awakening may be overcome and utilized.

#### **Season of Integrate**

The Season of Integrate is a consciously chosen and participative season. The experience of Integrate allows for a non-linear, dynamic, and coherent experience of life and behavior change (Lemberger, 2010; Renisow & Page, 2008; Renisow & Vaughan, 2006). Integrate nests the Seasons of Discover, Transform, and Awaken, as each season transcends and includes the prior season to create a holarchical model of life experience (Fig. 1; Koestler, 1969; Wilber, 1995). A holarchy is a nested hierarchy, whereby each new level transcends and includes the prior level. Integrate sees the value of each season and tailors the optimization of the experience with the resources of each season.

Integrate is the season in which individuals generally will find there are ways to get more depth from their own authenticity. This usually includes the

art of weaving aspects of different seasons. This highly flexible and adaptive season is about advancing one's resourcefulness for experience, change, and acceptance. For example, if individuals are living in Integrate and find they must start a new job or a new company or are faced with an illness or trauma, they can draw from the other seasons, perhaps by exploring the emotional charge (Discover) and using the energy from that charge to develop new sources of courage or action (Transform) to face the challenge, or even by embodying a beingness rooted to synchronicity (Awaken). The Season of Integrate developed alongside Wilber's Integral Theory, and is at times informed by Wilber's models, yet is independent (Senzon et al., 2011).

Integrate is thus needed to exist in the world with the pre-rational, rational, and post-rational as one. To move fully from Transform to Awaken, one has to bring a rational depth to the experience of the post-rational. Integrate allows individuals to go back and forth between these modes, which include the pre-rational experiences. Thus, for people to express fully the Season of Awaken, they need to be accountable to all of the seasons as an embodied rational experience. Thus, blending Awaken into the rational leads the individual into a deeper transformation. It takes extraordinary depth to be able to embody the post-rational in a rational culture. This integration of pre- and trans-rationality builds upon Wilber's pre/trans fallacy, which pointed out the common confusion between pre-rational and trans-rational states by establishing a holarchical structure (Wilber, 1981, 2006).

#### **Applying Seasons to Transpersonal Medicine.**

Seasons may be applied directly to Transpersonal Medicine in myriad ways. This section explores several of them, including the concept of transpersonal vigilance, an energetic and seasonal view of symptoms, and various approaches to putting seasons into practice.

#### **Transpersonal Vigilance**

The seasons may be used as a way to articulate a hierarchy of vigilance: pre-rational, rational, and post-rational or transpersonal vigilance. Vigilance generally is referred to as a defensive strategy associated with elevated sensory-motor acuity related to one's immediate environment. There is a lowered threshold of excitability relative to the information or communication systems relegated to self-protection. In its truest sense however, vigilance is about alertness and "watchfulness" regarding threats and obstacles from the surrounding environment.

When individuals draw upon the transpersonal dimensions of soul and spirit early in life as a survival mechanism, a deep access to these aspects of the self is established, associated with Awaken. This is similar to Wilber's (2000) notion of the frontal, subtle, and causal lines of development. The main difference is that transpersonal vigilance relates directly to defensive mechanisms, although later in life it may be developed into an authentic Awaken being-ness. This is important for the transpersonal practitioner, because individuals may appear to be in an awakened state as part of their daily experience, when in reality they are drawing upon such states as an adaptive strategy. People may actually be in Discover for survival or in Transform to protect the self or ego structures, and not actually in Awaken.

*Pre-rational vigilance* is associated with the Season of Discover and employs a lowered threshold of excitability of the survival instincts and their associated biologically and emotionally instinctive energies. These energies support people to move away from a significant and immediate threat. It is mediated by primal fear. The emotional energies and their associated states of consciousness help to create an immediate pre-rational emotional reaction. This creates a global change in behavior and sensory acuity. As people seek the source of the intruder or threat in order to run away, the physical senses are heightened.

The individual will physically move away from an anticipated yet threatening emotional state. People may even move into an emotional state that competes with the emotional avoidance. A hypersensitivity to this emotion in oneself and others may develop. People may seek the source of the emotion in order to avoid the experience associated with the threat.

*Rational vigilance* occurs in the Season of Transform. It includes a heightened acuity to thinking, either in content or context, to create a strategy or take action. Since this type of vigilance also is sustained to protect oneself from impending risk to survival, it reinforces the pre-rational awareness. This creates the need for safety, which is often a displaced survival mechanism. Such a survival mechanism is utilized to defend the concept and structure of the ego or self. The individual has a lower threshold for thought of oneself and of others, and is particularly attentive to situations and circumstances that conflict with rules, mores, values, concepts, and maps of reality imposed upon the individual.

Since the strategies of rational vigilance may require too much association with pain and personal responsibility, the individual who was wounded may resort to aspects of Awaken, which feel more soothing. This is generally an avoidance strategy and includes a high security alert of danger lurking in the transpersonal space.

*Transpersonal vigilance* relates to an awareness or defense strategy that is organized through the transpersonal space of soul. It is a type of post-rational vigilance. This form of vigilance utilizes transpersonal experience, and a multisensory, highly organized, subtle energetic awareness to guide the individual from harm on many levels, including harm to one's spiritual nature.

This may occur when individuals have had an early developmental challenge or trauma from which they needed to protect themselves. In such circumstances, they used aspects of the subtle energetic cues beyond the limitation of the senses alone. Such cues may even be triggered by subtle energetic fluctuations between people or within the individuals. Such ripples are a consequence of the resonance of the transpersonal space. This may be related to experiencing the informational field in shared or conditioned space. Such a field may reflect the memory of pre-rational or rational conflict or danger. Thus, the crisis inspires a transpersonal awareness as a central aspect of the defensive mechanisms of the self. The person may protect him or herself through synchronicity, a knowing whether another individual is safe, or even by the use of psychic faculties.

### **Healthy Expressions of Transpersonal Vigilance**

As mentioned before, transpersonal vigilance may be developed as a form of defense early in life but it can be developed into a healthy expression of the Season of Awaken later in life. This is when it may be used to protect the gifts individuals have to offer, act to avoid compromise to the experience of sharing love, or direct individuals toward a more evolved destiny or legacy. When truly experiencing Awaken, individuals notice a heightened sense of synchronicity and serendipity, part of which is this transpersonal vigilance acting to guide them through obstacles and challenges. This entrainment of cooperating fields of intelligence self-organizes the evolving kosmos and the individual as its expression.

Seasons may be used as a tool to create and develop transpersonal vigilance into a healthy expression of an embodied practice of the imminent divine. To do so, individuals utilize aspects of the awakened perception

or spiritual energies and their associated states as a partial state in the constant background of daily living.

Practitioners can use the seasons as a tool to determine the types and levels of vigilance a client or patient might be experiencing. If transpersonal vigilance is suspected as a defense mechanism from earlier developmental traumas or stressors, the practitioner may be able to assist the individual to develop this transrational defense mechanism into an authentic awareness. The healing associated with this type of “drawing-down” of transpersonal states would need to utilize strategies of Discover and Transform, and thus truly represents an integrative approach.

### **Symptoms, Arrested Development, and Seasonality**

Arrested development is a phenomenon shared by most adults in varying degrees; it has to do with any aspect of people’s development that did not fully develop. In the extreme, it could relate to severe psychopathology; in the mild case (as in most adults), one is just a bit out of balance (Ingersoll & Zeitler, 2010; Kegan, 1982). Often, these aspects involve an inability to connect to or complete specific feelings, emotions, sensations, and energies in the body/mind/spirit (Ingersoll & Zeitler, 2010; Wilber, 2000; Wilber, Patten, Leonard, & Morelli, 2008). When an aspect of the self or any emotion has responded in this way for any reason, it often appears later in life as a symptom. In this respect, a symptom is a call for greater awareness and change.

We view such an isolation of any aspect of the self-system as potential energy available to individuals when the time is right (Senzon et al., 2011). The right time is the optimal moment for individuals to gain new meaning, access inner depth, take appropriate action for their season, and ideally reorganize at a higher baseline of function and flourishing. The seasons are a way to know when that time is present. It is a time-sensitive threshold. When they are effectively harnessed, seasons can lead to the transpersonal.

Awareness of a need coupled with a new energy source is required in order for a system to grow or evolve. The seasons seek the timing of this. Seasons can be used as a method to make resources more available to further growth, health, development, and personal transformation.

Arrested development thus can be viewed as a way the body/mind/spirit has adapted to a stressor, embedding a charge, which comprises meaning, emotion, and energy as a seed for potential depth and

action. The seasons are designed to identify when these various aspects of the adaptation can be used as energies in an accessible form. When the season is supported, such pieces of the self can be accessed to transform one’s life, get new meaning, eventually awakened to higher levels of awareness, and finally, to integrate these new skills in order to grow and evolve.

### **Putting the Seasons into Practice**

Assisting individuals to gain greater depth and meaning from symptoms, health crises, and life transformations is one of the ways health practitioners may utilize seasons. As the map of health is expanded to include the territory of the transpersonal, perspectives and practice are likewise expanded. While this may already be fulfilled in practice for some practitioners, society is in need of a greater level of this embodiment of broader dimensions of being.

### **Discover Care**

In the Season of Discover, pain avoidance is the client’s primary motivation. In Discover, one seeks causation and blame. It must be the authority with consummate certainty and black-and-white answers that creates the structured, non-flexible treatment protocol. Patients see themselves as not accountable for their health or outcome, as all imposed change is painful. In Discover, there is not a strong self, regulating cognitive capacity. The individual patient is passive in Discover. The practitioner and treatment protocol is active and fear is often the motivation. Patient may avoid taking responsibility for their situation, and may look to blame or cast responsibility on some outside agent or cause, even if that agent is a disease process within themselves. Care in Discover requires a problem to be fixed. The symptom or disease to be treated is often associated with the attempt to avoid the experience of suffering.

### **Transform Care**

Once clients move into Transform, they are motivated by the gap and need to move ahead and make progress, be accountable, and create a compelling future. In the Season of Transform, when a practitioner communicates with individuals solely about pain avoidance, there is a mismatch. Creating a care plan in Transform should include assisting clients to move toward what they want and having them participate more in the treatment (instead of just being treated). This may inspire compliance, not with the program of care as authoritarian rule or doctor’s orders, but because clients are fully associated with the goals for self-care and

<b>Table 2. Distinguishing Patient and Practice Member</b>	
<b>Patient</b>	<b>Practice Member</b>
Care is disease or pathology centered	Care is person centered
The doctor is the authority to be followed	The doctor and patient are in a dynamic relationship or partnership
Power is placed outside the individual	Power is placed in participation and partnership with the individual and doctor or pathology centered
Surrenders responsibility for himself, assigning it over to the care of the doctor.	Practitioner and practice member have a cooperative mutually responsible relationship.
The person is equal to the sum of his/her parts.	The person is greater than the sum of his/her parts and there are multi-dimensional factors influencing the individual

autonomy. The practitioner becomes a contributor, co-facilitator, or educator in Transform.

#### **Awaken Care**

In Awaken, gratitude and acceptance are guiding forces. In pure Awaken, external action often is minimal and highly energy efficient. Forward progression driven by the hunger of the ego and self to fortify and transform is no longer relevant. If individuals are solely accepting, they have no motivation to change. There is an apparent paradox between the Season of Transform where defensive structures seek to create and that of Awaken where all is seen as a gift and perfect the way it is. In Awaken the new experience is not so much a motivation driven by action, greater acceptance of the experience and finding way to bless it is what Awaken is about. This is an important reason why Discover or Awaken integrated with Transform must precede the Season of Awaken in client care. While acknowledging the Awaken states, a practitioner can help distinguish the timing of use of each of the seasons. In Awaken, a deeper exploration of the transpersonal can be explored and the experience of the current temporal relation to a trans-temporal lineage may manifest (Table 3, pg. XX). Since the self-driven

“thinker,” which is central to the season of Transform and develops as a defense structure, is no longer the mediator of experience, a new experience of life may emerge which transcends prior cultural conditioning.

In Awaken, clients are seeking care as a means to contribute to their spiritual development or deepening. This allows them to be better able to give gifts and love to the world, nurture legacy, and receive experiences, even uncomfortable ones as gifts. It also allows them to take just and inspired action and find acceptance of what has been and will be. Even in light of significant illness or disease, Awaken can bring a transpersonal connection to a timeless being-ness, which transcends the temporal manifestation for which care is being provided. The care or treatment administered is meant to recognize and celebrate life, and is intended to advance clients’ participation with humanity, the kosmos, and the ground of being. Learning happens as a function of celebration and receiving others as they are, including their own body, mind, and spirit, and also by sponsoring others in moving from wounds to gifts and from gifts to greater gifts.

In the context of Transpersonal Medicine, some individuals access transpersonal states (characteristic of

**Table 3.**

The key principles of the Seasons of Wellbeing with relationship to lessons, space and time

	<b>Discover</b>	<b>Transform</b>	<b>Awaken</b>	<b>Integrate</b>
Key Principles	<p>The Season of Discover is the place/time to understand and experience how we have learned to defend ourselves, removed from the world. We discern how in our lives we may have moved away from pain—physically, energetically and emotionally—and whether we still need to be doing this. In Discover, we learn how we have narrowed our perception, created feelings, isolated parts of our body or protected ourselves, fragmented or repressed experiences in response to circumstances at times in our life, past or present.</p> <p>We learn that while trying to protect ourselves from something we have deemed harmful or painful, we have ultimately associated, conditioned, and even imprisoned ourselves to the painful focus, which we initially had tried to avoid. We that we have disassociated from parts of our bodies and lives that are painful. We learn that we have narrowed our focus on something we have identified with as a cause or answer to our very present problem(s) or concerns.</p> <p>(where present problem(s) or concerns.</p>	<p>The Season of Transform is associated with personal ownership for having re-enacted and sustained defense strategies, lack of authentic expression, and for distancing ourselves from our own authentic nature. Here, we find the consciousness, energetic and life resources, action, and skills to transform ourselves. We transform our stories, rules, models, relationships, and goals.</p> <p>The focus in this season is on claiming or reclaiming sources of strength, courage, wisdom and insight. Definitive decisions and actions act as rituals for the expression of the wisdom of Transform - physically, structurally, emotionally, socially, and culturally. Our sphere of participation in our world increased to include the relationships and culture in which we live.</p>	<p>Awaken is about developing the power of gratitude, awe, amazement, love and benevolence through the experience of an unlimited source of spacious body, breath, energy and possibility. It is about the experience of the energy of human spirit and of Love.</p> <p>Awaken involves gaining wisdom through a transpersonal language that this energy has within our body and our senses. It is about claiming a new life and formulating new actions based upon an expanded and conscious awakened perspective of our interdependence and connection.</p>	<p>The Season of Integrate is a conscious weaving and selection of more than one season. You are in one season with the observer of another to achieve a greater depth of reorganization.</p> <p>The Season of Integrate allows an individual to create a greater depth of experience through elements of more than one season at a time while gaining the wisdom or gift of the previous season.</p>
Lessons/ Wisdom to be Learned	<p>Discovery of how we have run away from pain. In trying to avoid the pain we have caused more pain and suffering for self and others. In trying to avoid, there's a consequence of that. We discover the range between connection and disconnection. Learn that suffering is about avoidance. How we have identified with situations, events and people as the source of our pain or as our salvation.</p>	<p>Decisiveness must lead to action. Development of the self is through measured outcomes, readiness to change, taking action and coming to resolution with the need to maintain a single solid sense of self.</p>	<p>Acceptance of what has been and what is. Experience of the energetic fabric of reality, with the dissolution of the world of concepts as reality. Each of us have gifts to share and to remind one another of the oneness. Love and gratitude and serendipity are the basis of life.</p>	<p>We consciously choose the style and manner of perception, behavior and the structures of our life by having one season in our foreground while honoring the infusion of elements of a second season taken from our background and highlighting parts of the foreground with its attributes.</p>
Strategy of Defense	<p>We seek to prove we are not wrong and it is not our fault. We cannot take responsibility and blame circumstances, people and make excuses. We avoid that which is painful or react against it, but do not take proactive or responsible action. We avoid making decisions and live the consequence of others decisions/actions.</p>	<p>We develop a imaginary structure called the self which is a product of habits of focus, emotion and memory. We defend this self as if it is a real thing. We produce, create and manage with actions, stories, and maps of reality and the need to prove we are a unique somebody</p>	<p>Love and acceptance are most common means of dealing with momentary desire to defend. However there is no one there to have to defend. The presence of transpersonal vigilance develops</p>	<p>Integration minimizes need to defend as more resources are utilized and the proactive action organizes beyond need to unnecessarily defend.</p>
Time	<p>Time is an adversary as it is a limited resource and a source of our failure, suffering. We focus on the past pain and project it in the past and/or future.</p>	<p>Time is the currency of measuring progress, moving toward the future. The present is a time to action and personal association to behaviors. The sense of self, decisions, projects, plans and success are all linked to time.</p>	<p>Time becomes dynamic, multi-generational, or relatively eternal. Time can appear to the individual elongated or slowed, as if its influence is a changing river. Time may have retro-causal relationship.</p>	<p>Each season has its influence, intermixed. For example, One may blend the focus on past pain of discover with the future action needed to create new structures of transform.</p>

the Season of Awaken) to run from or avoid the painful disconnection of the body, mind, community, culture, universe or spirit. If that is the case, it is important to start with assisting individuals to bridge between the Season of Awaken (to which they are most likely escaping) with the Season of Discover (from which they are running). For example, individuals with significant wounding may use transpersonal, spiritual, or post-rational states as ways to escape from emotion, feeling states, or cognitive awareness. Those who may have disassociated, perhaps frozen in their self-development, or remain fused with a parent may use what appears to be aspects of Awaken or spiritual states as surrogates for the rational mind. This may manifest as an avoidance of the Season of Transform, with its attending autonomy, hunger for outcomes, and confrontation. When we explore the Season of Transform, such hallmarks are essential as healthy obstacles to further push against in the development and congruent evolution of a strong sense of self.

### **Integrating Care**

It is important for a practitioner to properly determine the appropriate season in which to meet each client. Each season has a different conversation, physical characteristic, motivation, actions needed, and relationship to change. The outcomes, values, relationship with the practitioner and office staff, and care utilized must also be able to change with seasons, as a patient moves from a powerless alienated place, through deliberate choice and action, and into a transpersonal space.

In helping to determine in what season to approach clients, the following questions will be helpful: What season does this individual seem to have as a baseline or center of gravity? Am I making this determination based upon the client's structures (body, stages, developmental levels, temporal/spatial orientations), behaviors (actions, gait, movements), or perceptions (sensations reported, the participating emotions, the stories about circumstances of life or reasons or excuses, or in general the meaning given)? How are clients feeling about how they are feeling? What is the lowest season that is showing indications that additional depth or awareness or participation is required or might be beneficial? What season does it appear the life circumstances and developmental demands of the individual is calling to be experienced and developed? Which aspect(s) would be appropriate to bring into awareness and participation for the client as a bridge to progress?

An example of creating an outcome informed by using a reorganizational approach by utilizing the knowledge of the Seasons is presented in Appendix 1.

### **A Transpersonal and Seasonal Approach to Care**

It is important to distinguish between an individual's truly living in the Season of Awaken and one who has awakened states but is living in the Season of Discover. Clients who have yet to move fully through the Season of Discover have not yet discovered their hunger to avoid pain. Such pain avoidance uses pre-rational survival strategies. Thus, individuals may not yet be able to break through the defense strategies of mind and ego. An effective and actual break through is associated more with the Season of Transform. Such clients would not likely develop the more evolved acuity characteristic of the Awaken season. Individuals may be able to access the spiritual and energetic states of consciousness, but this is distinct from being in the Season of Awaken.

States of consciousness often are temporary or unstable. When individuals experience only the state, it is common for them to identify with Awaken as part of the self. This often results in a value judgment that this experience is superior to some other option. Such value judgments are common when the non-merged experience of polarity characteristic of Discover is predominant. In Discover, people may even have the misconception that Awaken is a way to escape from being accountable, to hide out in altered states rather than confront what life is demanding and take the appropriate action. This is indicative of the Season of Awaken not being fully accessed. In such cases, Awaken states are used as a manner of avoiding emotions, which need to be fully experienced first in Discover.

By contrast, some clients will use aspects of the Season of Awaken as a tool to manifest their Transform agenda. In this case, the search for spiritual awakening is a means toward greater understanding or more certainty of the self. Utilizing the thought, rather than the spiritual, a rational understanding of love and acceptance is sought. Certainty, security, and understanding are tools of the rational mind. Love and acceptance, while one may feel they have a rational grasp of, transcend this and embody a sense of unknown or uncertainty. There is an incongruence of trying to understand a post- or trans-rational experience solely with the rational mind.

Thought and language are the currency of mind. In Transform, this currency is needed as the mind develops to communicate as separate individuals having

independent experiences. In Awaken, there is no need to use thought as the currency, as there is no longer a separate “you” or “me.” If we are part of the mutual experience then the need to understand or fortify the mind, and self-concept becomes irrelevant. The Season of Awaken transcends the purely rational experience of Transform. The currency of Awaken is love, acceptance, gratitude, and oneness.

### Discussion

We suggest the transpersonal practitioner develop skills to live from the Season of Integrate. Living from a season is when the center of gravity is in that season and the structures of the individual’s body/mind, behaviors and perceptions, stories and concepts are all congruent for that level. This may enable practitioners to navigate both the Season of Discover and Transform as embodied experiences, structures, and actions. This also may allow for a greater deepening of the Season of Awaken. In order to serve clients regardless of their current season, it is important that the practitioner blend both the season the client is expressing and another season in order to have rapport with the client and be able to guide the experience toward the desired outcome. This is the expression of Integrate. The practitioner may assist the individual to embody the season more fully through repetition of various modes such as linguistic patterns, Somato Respiratory Integration exercises, conscious behavior, and structural changes to develop the ability to have embodied cognition of the seasons and ultimately blend them together in the Season on Integrate.

The Season of Discover involves avoidance, reaction, and desire to move away from painful events to protect oneself. The transpersonal state can offer information and energy, which has a post-rational means of translating and experiencing beyond mind. Such states can occur in childhood as a tool to escape painful experiences and also may serve as a mechanism of transpersonal vigilance to create the Discover response. Additionally, it is common to use elements of the awakened state with minimal or a transparent depth as a means of avoiding the required personal responsibility, self-determination, and adversarial situations necessary for reassessment and growth in Transform.

Awaken states are an easy target for those who attempt to transcend or avoid the structures and involvement of the sense of self, social interactions, and the responsibilities associated with Discover or Transform. Awaken transcends and includes the previous

systems and leads to greater levels of social, mental, and egoic responsibility.

The target for the practitioner and eventually for the client is thus the Season of Integrate, in which the informational systems, fields, consciousness, and energetics of Awaken can be consciously applied in concert with the Seasons of Discover and Transform. In this way, the individual can use resources learned from the Season of Awaken that are available and focus these resources into the pre-rational Discover. Integration of the Seasons of Discover and Transform lead to a pre/post rational fusion and awareness. Integration of Discover and Transform leads to an integration of pre-rational or pre-personal and personal states. Integration of Transform and Awaken leads to the fusion of the personal/rational with the transpersonal/post-rational. This offers the transpersonal medical practitioner access to the precise states that will be associated with the most energy efficiency. Thus, the practitioner is better able to tailor personal clinical outcomes and relationships with clients. Blending Transform, Awaken, and Integrate creates a rational/post-rational experience.

For example, clients may have an experience of gratitude and light and love as a feeling, but take reactive and avoidance behaviors associated with the Season of Discover. Their body structure or life structures may be bound up in defense and not capable of supporting the awakened perception.

When individuals are one season away from the desired season, there can be pain. When the person is two seasons away, there is often suffering. This may even precipitate an emergency crisis: physically, emotionally, psychologically, or spiritually. This type of crisis is important to understand and to be able to assess as clients enter the transpersonal practitioner’s office. When we consciously blend the seasons in the Season of Integrate, we are never more than one season away from another. Thus, the practitioner may develop an even deeper ability to meet the clients where they are, empathize in an even richer way, and assist the client to expand in their own personal practice of embodying the transpersonal in practice, as well as in the practitioners themselves.

### Conclusion

Culture demands that pre- and post-rational experiencing, thinking, and being comply with the generally accepted rational culture. This relates directly to the Seasons of Wellbeing. The Season of Discover involves the pre-rational, Transform the rational, and

Awaken the post-rational. To assist in the emergence of a truly embodied and authentic humanity to actualize in the twenty-first century, it is important that both the pre- and post-rational aspects of the self-system be allowed to be experienced in their core nature.

The four Seasons of Wellbeing (Discover, Transform, Awaken, and Integrate) are a robust and approachable model to explain and understand personal change, human development, and personal transformation. In the context of a challenge in life, whether it be a health crisis, behavior or developmental change, or a broadening of growth, the Seasons of Wellbeing can be used to orient practitioners and individuals to just where they are on the journey and point toward where they could go, to further and deepen their humanity.

Each season provides a unique focus that can serve all individuals. The seasons present a map to assist individuals who wish to experience themselves more authentically, understand where they are in their healing or awakening journey, and wish to help bring their lives to a greater depth and range of the human experience.

### **Appendix**

#### **An Example of a Reorganizationally Informed Outcome Using the Seasons**

The following is an example of a man creating a reorganizationally informed outcome through utilizing the knowledge of the seasons in clinical and personal interactions.

A man had seen several professionals seeking treatment for his severe pain. He was a person of great financial accomplishment and was used to getting everything he focused upon. He prized his rational mind, although it was his unconscious competency of post-rational awareness that seemed to guide his greatest inspired actions and his relationships with associates.

His pain avoidance and disassociation was redirected into the Season of Transform, with a life mandate of “produce or die.” He avoided conscious contact with the transpersonal or post-rational. His back story or social and familial history involved situations, which were disassociated, leading to an intensity to be a “somebody” through accomplishment and Transform so that he could not be perceived as a nobody in Discover. His baseline state was Transform, while he maintained the motivation for Transform within disassociated Discover aspects. He also used some aspects of Awaken,

but without conscious awareness. From this incongruent experience of his seasons, a devolutionary fall from grace had occurred through the experience of pain. Pain was an expression of the lack self-regulatory processes needed to maintain his current embodied representations. From this lack of congruence, the lowest season requiring more depth and awareness had to express itself: Discover.

His main physical symptom was severe back pain. On the first visit, he was asked, “Have you ever just sat with the pain without the need to judge, blame, make it go away, or make it be something else?” This is an important question for a transpersonal medical practitioner or one seeking Reorganizational Healing or integral informed practice. The response was an incredulous look. It was then suggested that, since he had seen the most acclaimed doctors and hospitals to name and treat the pain and yet the pain remained (now becoming worse), his inability to connect with the pain created a greater intensity and an inability to resume life as usual. The pain was a call for reorganization, but he lacked the resources and awareness to negotiate this change. Perhaps the purpose of this pain was to create life as unusual, which would provide new energies, options, and resources. Tentatively, he agreed to care under these conditions, with the understanding that at times the disease or symptom is the cure.

After providing Somato Respiratory Integration exercises and a novel energetic application to awaken his energetic resources, he began laughing. He was then asked about his relationship to the pain, and to his surprise, and his wife’s, he remarked that it was irrelevant and that seeking new meaning in his life could now guide him. Acknowledging the underlying Discover mechanism had allowed him to create life change and healing that otherwise had been elusive. He was able to connect with pre-rational resources, thereby allowing him to draw upon post-rational meaning. He was able to find the disassociated parts required in order to make progress in areas he had neglected, namely his personal life and relationships. This is an example of integration of Transform with Discover. This was needed prior to being able to experience the next season calling him or perhaps his “front story,” the Season of Transform integrated with Awaken. He was then consciously able to use his being of Transform with its attending progress to be inspired and experience an expanded and more porous sense of self, inspired by Awaken in a wider range of his life and personal representations, including his personal relationships with this family and his body.



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