

Special Issue

Spiritual Development over the Lifespan

Message from the Guest Editors

The World Faith Traditions embrace joy, illumination, as well as suffering and loss on the road to spiritual awareness. The birth of a child, a transcendent realization of oneness or unity, a sacred moment or visitation, and pure joy in an embodied moment of connection lead to spiritual awakening and deepening. Similarly, a significant body of early thinkers and faith traditions describe a period of darkness and suffering as opportunity for spiritual growth and transcendence. This type of period of spiritual growth and development has been seen in terms such as the dark night of the soul or the encounter with the shadow self. In both Eastern and Western religious texts, this theme of trials and tribulations preceding transcendence and spiritual awakening is prevalent. In this Special Issue, we seek to scientifically and empirically explore this process of spiritual development that has been accepted as metaphysical truth in many religions, spiritual traditions, and cultures.

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Deadline for manuscript submissions

closed (15 October 2020)



Religions

an Open Access Journal
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Impact Factor 0.7
CiteScore 1.3



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Message from the Editorial Board

Fresh developments in the disciplines that consistently make significant contributions to our understanding of religious personality, authority, devotion, and community – disciplines ranging from psychology, sociology, and anthropology to history, art history, philosophy, literary criticism, and political science – fuel general, as well as scholarly, interest in the world's religions.

Religions is inviting innovative and comparative contributions. Please consider *Religions* as an exceptional, exciting enterprise ready to reward your trust, attention, and participation.

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