

TOWARD AN EVIDENCE-BASED SPIRITUALITY: SOME GLIMPSES OF AN EVOLVING VISION

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ABSTRACT

In my recent book *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal is Bringing Science and Spirit Together*, I have argued that great psychological damage is done by a scientific mindset of Dismissive Materialism, which automatically condemns all spirituality as stupid and neurotic, and that consideration of actual scientific evidence shows that it is reasonable to be *both* scientific *and* spiritual in one's orientation to life. My focus now is on how we can begin to develop an evidence-based (or at least evidence-enriched) spirituality for the twenty-first century. Such a spirituality should be practically effective in enriching people's lives as well as consistent with current and evolving scientific knowledge. After a brief review of the scientific evidence showing that humans sometimes possess the kinds of qualities we would expect in a spiritual being, I then discuss the nature of knowledge acquisition and refinement, showing its compatibility with essential science. Next, I sketch eight examples of possible research directions for building knowledge for an evidence-based spirituality, and briefly discuss irrational levels of resistance to such an enterprise.

Keywords: Spirituality, parapsychology, subtle energies, telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, psychokinesis, psychic healing, science, scientism, materialism, dismissive materialism, bias, religion, evidence-based spirituality, evidence-enriched spirituality, projection, transference, ISSSEEM, ITP, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, philosophy, physicalism, progress, enlightenment