



Tom Butler
Etheric Studies, (CC)2020
Seeking to Understand the Nature of Reality
ethericstudies.org

Etheric Studies Occasional Update 7

Tom Butler, June 2020

(Also at <https://mailchi.mp/f5d5ac0e685c/etheric-studies-occasional-update-7>)



Our cat named Sky ... just because.

Content

[Being Lucid](#)

[Characteristic Tests](#)

[Hyperlucidity \(Phantom Voices\)](#)

[My New Book](#)

[Essays](#)

[Sarah Estep's Books](#)

[Thank You](#)

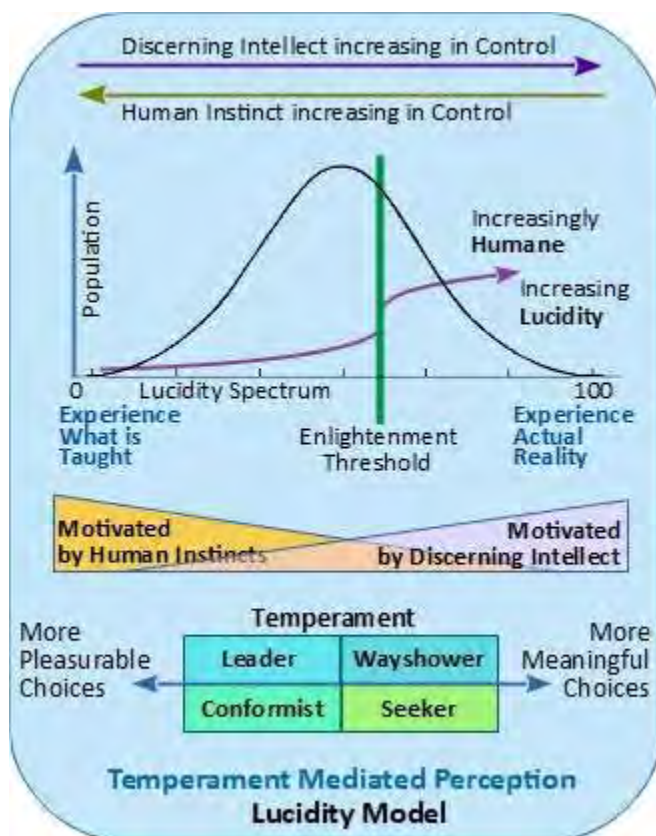
Contents of this document can be used under the Creative Commons (cc) [Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/)

Being Lucid

Lucidity is concerned with how accurately we see the world around us. The concept comes up often, and I usually need to explain that one is not lucid or un-lucid. There is a range of clarity from seeing the world as we are taught at one extreme to seeing the world as it actually is on the other. For convenience, I have begun referring to this range as the *Lucidity Spectrum*.

I have discussed these concepts in past updates. Here, I want to briefly explain my progress. As usual, it is important that you understand that I am not academically qualified to say if my conclusions make sense.

Regretfully, my work is never reviewed by people who are academically qualified. My logic in presenting this material to you is that the model has proven useful in my efforts to understand why people become seekers ... and why people do not become Humanists. Your comments, suggestions and questions are always welcome in the [ATransC Idea Exchange](#).



Temperament Mediated Perception Model

The Temperament Mediated Perception Model is diagramed here. It is based on the expectation that Dualism is largely correct. As you look it over, note that the left side represents perception based more on what we are taught and our human's instincts. The right side represents increasing lucidity.

Here, *Dualism* is used to mean that reality consists of a physical aspect and an etheric aspect. The alternative view is *Physicalism* in which it is held that the physical is all there is. Dualism becomes important when one asks if mind is produced by biological brain or if mind exists external to brain and brain acts as a transmitter-receiver for mind. If Dualism is correct, mind can be modeled as an independent life form.

This is not the same as the Hermetic Principle of Polarity in which it is explained that there are extremes such as white and black or hot and cold. And of course, the balance of the two.

Model Highlights

Discerning Intellect – We, as immortal personality, are entangled with our human avatar. That entanglement includes sharing the complex of functions involved in the development of perception and expression. I refer to that nonphysical part of our mind as the Attention Complex. It is the core of our unconscious mind. Worldview is the database which acts as a filter for perception.

Entanglement means we share worldview with our human. We contribute spiritual instincts and prior understanding. Our human contributes survival instincts. The rest is memory and what we have been taught during this lifetime. *Discerning Intellect* is the influence of our spiritual instincts and prior understanding on our decision making. *Discerning Intellect* is our spiritual nature overriding our human nature for daily decisions.

Enlightenment – This term is used here to indicate the realization that there is more to reality than we are taught. It is not sudden understanding about what the *more* is. That comes from habitual examination of perception. Until a person understands that long-held truths may not be correct, the person’s behavior will always remain on the left side of the diagram. Enlightenment is the first step of seeking.

Actual – I use the term *actual* to signify what reality is rather than what we have been taught to think it is. For instance, prejudice is taught by family and community. It is enhanced by the human instinct to assure gene dominance. Realization that prejudice may be unreasonable can be thought of as enlightenment. Coming to understand why it is unreasonable and the true nature of the object of that prejudice is progression toward understanding the *actual* nature of reality.

Understanding – Our first encounter of something gives us a little understanding about its nature. Seldom, can we think we fully understand that something on first encounter. Thus, we say that understanding is relative. We converge on understanding the actual nature of that something with many encounters. We converge, only if we pay attention and decide to understand. Else, we remain on the left side of the diagram.

Human Instincts – Consider the picture of our cat. Look at his eyes and the expression on his face. When we consider our cat’s nature and our human’s nature—the fundamental components of those natures—we see that the only differences between cats and people are an opposing thumb and the ability to share history. We have virtually the same instincts. A [outdoor] cat pissing on a post to mark his territory [not my little darling] is the same sort of response to the cat’s prime imperative as a person being as presentable in public as possible. Both acts are intended to enhance gene dominance. (*Consider the basic, underlying causes and not the surface reasons.*)

When we act without considering the implications of that action, we may as well be letting my cat make the decision. It is the moderating influence of our entangled personality that enables us to act in a manner beyond what we are taught by bringing a more humanist perspective.

Avoid the logical error of thinking cats are different because they do not create things or drive a car. The expression of a biological organism is limited by its design. We have evolved civilization because of the design of our body. We can speak complex sounds, we can use tools, not only can we teach our young, but we can also record our knowledge so that it can be shared by future generations. I suspect that, had cats come equipped with a thumb and ability to teach its young complex ideas, given a few thousand years of compounding the results of those abilities, cats might well dominate the world.

There is nothing in the metaphysics that tells us cats and other animals cannot be avatars just as human are our avatar.

Choice – I use terminology from the [Katha Upanishad](#) to describe the choice between that which will further our human’s gene dominance and that which will further our spiritual progression. In the *Katha Upanishad*, the teacher explains to the student that making life decisions that feel good—meaning decisions that satisfy the human instinct for gene dominance—assures the person will remain on the wheel of life without progression.

Meaningful decisions are more altruistic, humanitarian, opportunities to gain understand, not always comfortable decision. Habitually making meaningful choices help us progress off of the wheel of life toward even greater opportunities to gain understanding.

Temperament - I have adapted the four [Briggs and Meyers personality types](#) to better suit the temperament model. It is worth taking the time to contemplate how I decided on the terms.

<u>TMP</u>		<u>Briggs and Meyers</u>
Wayshower (teacher, community)	similar to	Expressive (relationships, extrovert)
Seeker (personal potential, student)	similar to	Analytical (fact-based, introvert)
Leader (tribal chief, corporation)	similar to	Driver (fact-based, extravert)
Conformist (adherent, network)	similar to	Amiable (relationships, introvert)

Leader and *Conformist* are traits that seem to best fit how gene-dominance instincts would manifest in a person. *Wayshowers* would be more altruistic and *Seekers* tend to be more aware of the implications of their

actions. That awareness is not toward being better so much as it is toward being responsible for actions while living in accordance with current understanding.

I need to emphasize that the left side indicates more pleasurable choices, meaning more in agreement with what human instincts dictate. That does not mean very lucid seekers cannot become strong leaders, for instance. It means doing so will be accomplished in more humanistic ways.

The Middle Way

It has been my experience that seekers eventually become aware of the middle way. There are times to be angry or sad, aggressive, or passive. Moving to those perspectives is accomplished by the experienced seeker as a way of interacting with a situation in a humanistic, effective manner. Having expressed such extreme emotions, the seeker then consciously returns to the center.

The idea is to honestly interact but to do so without malice and without retaining a grudge. Perhaps that is the hidden lesson of the TMP Diagram. People on the far left of the spectrum tend to be victims of their primal urges. People on the right are there because they habitually examine their choices. That self-awareness, combined with a little wisdom, teaches the seeker to move about on the spectrum without sacrificing their progression. To become angry as a means to gain greater understanding or to help other learn, is an ability if it is knowingly accomplished without malice and residual anger.

Becoming Lucid

None of this is of value if it is not actionable. In case you have not recognized the urge, our etheric self is compelled to gain understanding through lifetime experiences. Responding to that compulsion tends to settle the mind and bring peace to life. Resisting or ignoring the urge tends to leave us unsettled, as if we have missed our calling. I do not mean this in a mystical way. In practice, we are spiritual beings experiencing a human lifetime for a reason. Behaving as if that is true is a liberating perspective.

My meditation was interrupted the other day with this:

Lucidity

Your eyes show you the world

Your mind shows you reality

Learn to know the difference

The motto on my website is

Believe what you wish but understand the implications of what you believe.

Some of us habitually take a moment to consider the implications of our beliefs, thoughts and actions. Most of us do not. The difference is profound.

I explored the idea of lucidity and what we can do to become more lucid in the [Becoming Lucid](#) Essay. As I have described it, the bottom line of the Temperament Mediated Perception Model is that, if you understand the concepts illustrated in the diagram and seek to habitually apply them in your daily decision making—the thoughts you have, the words you speak, your actions—your perception of what is true will begin to converge on the actual nature of reality.

It is also necessary to suspend judgement. Once our inner Judge makes a decision about ... anything ... it is reluctant to change its mind. Since that decision comes before our outer Experiencer is aware there is a decision to be made, it is our habitual examination of those decisions that teaches our Judge what we expect to experience.

For what it is worth, I am always available for questions, ideas and discussion on the [Idea Exchange](#).

Characteristic Tests

There are hundreds of examples of visual and audible Instrumental TransCommunication (ITC) on the Internet, especially in social media. As Co-director of the ATransC, I often feel negligent for not commenting on each, if only to encourage the practitioner. Of course, time is a factor, but the truth is that I am reluctant to support examples unless I feel reasonably confident about the practitioner and the technique. For that, I need to know more than is usually available.

Here are some of the questions I consider when I examine an example. Perhaps practitioners can use this list to better display their work.

Visual ITC

1. **Technique** - Do I understand how the example was collected? It is important to understand how a technique might produce paranormal-like features as naturally occurring artifacts.
2. **Consistency** - Is the example consistent with other examples collected using the same or similar technique? Each technique has a *look and feel* that is a signature of the technique.
3. **Editing** - Has enough of the target feature and original material been included in the example? Sometimes careful editing will make something very ordinary look paranormal. If the example is modified for clarity, is the raw form also presented? Has the editing been disclosed? Is it obscured, as with a cloth over the face, or is it actual transformation?
4. **Definition** - Does the example show evidence of less well-developed features. Visual ITC examples often have a holographic-like appearance. For instance, a face might be partially obscured by the ear of a different, poorly formed face while the background might have an outline of one or more much smaller faces. In faking examples, such effects are seldom convincingly included.
5. **Transform** - Are the features formed in the expected regions of optical noise? If the face is drawn in by someone, it will likely be in a way that we would not expect with transform phenomena.
6. **Reputation** - Do I know the practitioner? If I have no prior experience with the person, I feel obliged to be a little more discerning.

I hardly ever even bother to examine examples that are clearly opportunistic such as cloud formations or knots in trees. Reflections in windows are almost impossible to seriously consider without knowing more about what in the scene is being reflected.

The only orb examples I consider are ones that are clearly not light reflected from shiny objects, sun flares, camera moving or particulates in the air.

Audio ITC

In the draft Best Practice, [Characteristic Test for EVP](#), I have identified some of the more definitive characteristics I look for in Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) examples. Using the format for visual ITC

1. **Technique** - Do I understand how the example was collected? It is important to understand how a technique might produce naturally occurring artifacts that appear to be paranormal.
2. **Consistency** - Is the example consistent with other examples collected using the same or similar technique? Each technique has a characteristic sound that is a signature of the technique. Fragments of speech delivered with a staccato pace is typical of radio-sweep. Random selection of pre-recorded speech tends to produce nonsensical phrases. When examined in an audio management program, transform EVP tends to sound more like a poor simulation of live voice.
3. **Editing** - Has enough of the EVP and surrounding sound stream been included in the example? Sometimes careful editing will make something very ordinary sound paranormal. If the example is modified for clarity, is the raw form also presented? Has the editing been disclosed?

4. **Time sequence** – If the utterance is in response to a question (induced EVP), is the relationship between the EVP and practitioner’s question evident? If the utterance is about an event or a greeting (spontaneous EVP), is the relationship between that event made clear?
5. **Transform** - Are the features formed in the expected regions of the sound stream? The voice of transform EVP typically forms in relationship to chaotic noise. Transform EVP requires some amount of ambient noise.
6. **Reputation** - Do I know the practitioner? If I have no prior experience with the person, I feel obliged to be a little more discerning.

Without extenuating reasons, it is our practice to consider only transform EVP.

Not Rude, Just Careful

We have learned over the years that the fastest way to make someone mad at us is to say we think their example may not be paranormal. While people come to us to certify their example, we are suddenly nonbeliever, mean-spirited, stupid people when we do not agree with their assumptions. It seems that, being seen as an expert is conditioned on how well we please our audience.

We have made [a pledge](#) to always present truth to the best of our ability. If we cannot satisfy ourselves that a reported example is actually paranormal, we will resist bringing it to the public. An important exception to that rule is if we think there is a possibility someone who sees it will be able to provide more clarity. Even better, if we think that someone might reproduce the phenomena.

Hyperlucidity (Phantom Voices)

I define Hyperlucidity as a short-term change in behavior marked by the tendency to find phenomena everywhere despite considerable testimony to the contrary by peers. An all-too common version of this is what I am beginning to refer to as *Phantom Voices Syndrome*.

Take a look at the [EVP Online Phantom Voices](#) study. File 2 consists of a noise sound stream that is randomly interrupted with noise pulses in a speech-like cadence. It contains no EVP, yet nearly 28% of online respondents reported hearing voices in the file.

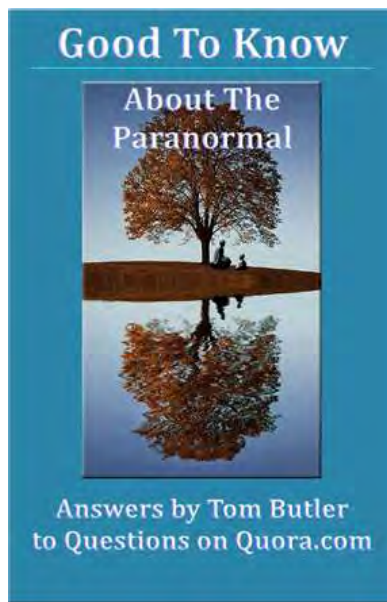
One of the most common circumstances in which people report hearing EVP that are not there is when they amplified a zero-level sound file recorded with a poorly grounded device. The ground-level signal always has a little radiofrequency or crosstalk contamination which, when amplified, begins to seem like speech. In some examples, actual radio broadcast speech can be heard. Using too much noise reduction can also produce a speech-like artifact.

When such artifacts and contaminations are heard and reported as EVP, I refer to that as the Phantom Voice Syndrome. It probably is not EVP. It is probably imagined.

My New Book

Many of you know that I have spent a lot of time answering questions about things paranormal on Quora.com. The first was the 2017 question: *“How accurate is EVP recordings?”*

I have been answering the questions because most of the other answers are simply wrong, anti-paranormal or misleading. Our community is still developing a culture that supports free discovery and meaningful sharing of ideas. It has been my vision that my answers might somehow aid in developing that culture.



As it turns out, I have answered many Quora.com questions. 240 of them have been compiled into my new book. Here is the text from the back cover of the paperback version:

Progression

When we begin our transition out of this lifetime, we will not wonder if we had been a good person or if we learned anything. We will wonder if we have gained understanding about our nature and the nature of the reality we inhabit.

A student's progress in ancient wisdom schools is typically measured with an initiation. Initiations involve a test, often posed as a challenge which must be answered before the student is allowed to pass through a passage to the next level.

It may go like this: *"You have been taught about the relationship between meaningful and pleasurable ways. You have been given the opportunity to contemplate these and examine their implication. Now I ask you to compare discriminating intelligence to morality."*

You see, the test is not about the lessons. It is about understanding gained by examining the implications of the lessons. In the end, understanding is that part of awareness that informs our next act.

The questions posed in this book are from Quora.com. They are not necessarily wise, but they offer opportunities to test understanding. I have included answers based on my understanding of our nature and the nature of the reality we inhabit. It is my intention that you might read them and gain a degree of understanding that can inform your next decision.

Details

The book is available as paperback and eBook, but [only from Amazon](#). I have priced both as low as Amazon will allow.

Please be aware that you do not need to buy the book to read my answers. All of my Quora answers are archived at <https://www.quora.com/profile/Tom-Butler-79>

Essays

Radical Conservatism

Abstract

Here, I argue that radical conservative factions in the USA have been methodically overriding social and constitutional norms to take control of the country. Rather than a simple conservative versus liberal argument, I seek to make the point that the path one follows is determined by whether the person is guided solely by human instincts or if those instincts are moderated by the person's spiritual nature.

Search for ET

Abstract

The first part of this essay includes an in-depth discussion of the nature of visual ITC. Emphasis is on transform phenomena that are collected as apparently paranormal features formed in visual noise. The more common characteristics are described, including some photographic examples. This introduction is used as preamble to describe the Extraterrestrial Visual Instrumental TransCommunication study (ET Visual ITC Study). The grading form and a brief introduction to the submissions are also provided. You, the reader, are asked to help with the study as a citizen scientist.

Becoming Lucid

Abstract

To be lucid is to sense reality as it actually is and not as we have been taught. Lucidity is the clarity of sensing that we develop as we gain in spiritual maturity. Thus, a seeker after wisdom is one who is becoming more lucid in understanding and perception.

Lucidity is not natural to a person, which is defined here as immortal personality entangled with a human avatar, because the human instincts dominate the relationship unless they are overridden by intention guided by discerning intellect. This is the oldest of ancient wisdom.

The relationship between our immortal self and our human avatar is described in this essay with suggestions for how to become more lucid.

Sarah Estep's Books

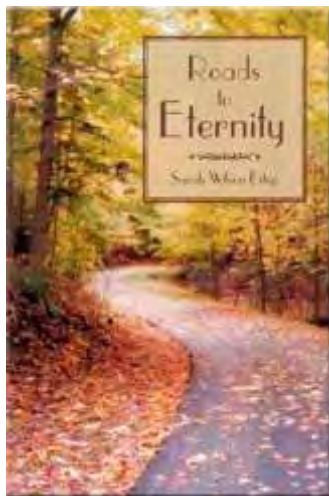
Sarah Estep started the American Association of Electronic Voice Phenomena (AA-EVP) in 1982. She wrote *Voices of Eternity* which was published in 1988. It provides important insight into the world of EVP in the very early days of discovery.

Sarah also wrote *Roads to Eternity* which was published in 2005. It continues Sarah's story of discovery.

Our paranormalist community has changed a lot since Sarah's days. As I witness this evolution, I can say with some certainty that it has not always been for the better. I speak of furthering our progression toward understanding and much of today's *truths* drag us back.

This is why I think it is so important to read Sarah's words. She was a pioneer in the ITC frontier. To this end, Sarah's daughter Becky Estep has given us permission to post both books Under the Resources/ATransC Books Tab on atransc.org. It is a free PDF downloads.

(The AA-EVP) is now the Association TransCommunication (ATransC.)



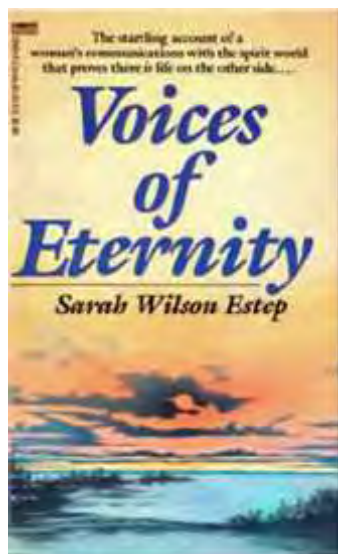
Sarah Estep's Roads to Eternity

“To read Sarah Wilson Estep’s Roads to Eternity is to travel a remarkable journey into the unseen world. At every adventurous step, at every exciting new discovery; the readers are assured that they are guided by a knowledgeable and experienced paranormal researcher, a pioneer in the field of Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP). Sarah Wilson Estep’s vast files of 25,000 recorded voices of the ‘Invisibles’—whether they represent themselves as spirits of the deceased, extraterrestrial entities, or multi-dimensional beings—will provide thrilling inspiration for the seeker and startling revelation for the skeptic.”

Brad Steiger

author of Things that Go Bump in the Night

[Here is the free PDF download](#)



Sarah Estep's Voices of Eternity

Review in Amazon by Beauty and Healing

5.0 out of 5 stars

Reviewed in the United States on September 19, 2015

Important for After Death Studies and Research. A Truly Amazing Book.

EVP, or Electronic Voice Phenomena has been around for as long as recording equipment has existed, but Sara Wilson Estep, a teacher from Maryland, was one of the most prolific recorders and researchers ever. Picking up spirit voices on tape was something that occasionally occurred, but Estep made a daily study and habit of recording so that the sheer volume of voices is extraordinary. She collected literally thousands of voices, and in this book, she shares the messages from the tapes. Estep also chronicles the different innovations that she made during her years of perfecting her technique. While perhaps this isn't a literary masterpiece, it is an extremely

important document in the world of scientific research on life after death.

[Here is the free PDF download](#)

Thank You

In the last update, I concluded with “2020 promises to be an interesting year.” Remember the old curse “May you live in interesting times”? Well, here we are!

I also talked about a fork in the road as we turn toward restoring Constitutional Government or toward a Fascist Dictatorship. It was beginning to look like Fascism would win, but recently, military leaders have been making sounds like they will support Democracy.

Covid-19 has been a catalyst for change, I think, because the way Trump has responded has forced even his supporters to see him as his intolerable, ugly self.

This is a time for spiritual-minded people to express their humanism and reason. Silence is abdication of spiritual progression.

May you and your family be safe, healthy and live in a humanist Democracy.

Tom Butler

ATransC.org

EthericStudies.org

tombutler@ethericstudies.org

I speak but you give my words meaning



One of our first tasks when we assumed leadership of the American Association of Electronic Voice Phenomena (AA-EVP) was to write a book we could direct people to for guidance about ITC. At that time, there was not much available, and we wanted to make sure our members were given reasonably useful, supportable information. We wrote *There is No Death and There are No Dead* and published it under the AA-EVP Publishing imprint.

The book has received considerable praise as an introductory book. 100% of the proceeds have gone to support operations, outreach and research conducted by the Association.

[On Amazon](#)

AA-EVP member Martha Copeland wrote *I'm Still Here*. Martha was one of the founding members of the Big Circle. The book provides an important study of the way Martha coped with the untimely loss of her daughter, Cathy. Beyond the grief, *I'm Still Here* includes hints about how Cathy might have responded to death, the ways she did find to communicate after transition and how other members of the Big Circle helped Martha.

It is Martha's EVP of Cathy scolding her still physical dog Doja that gives us important proof that we survive physical death. [Listen to hear "Doja no."](#) [On Amazon](#)





More time became available for me to write after we changed the ATransC away from a member-supported organization. I am a theoretician by nature and speaking as a mystic, I see a world of patterns in the play of concepts, rather than as a “nuts and bolts” world.

It has been natural for me to see ITC as a pattern of interacting concepts. Again, as a mystic, it is as if the pattern is a self-organizing model in my mind’s eye that shows me how one phenomenon relates/compares to another.

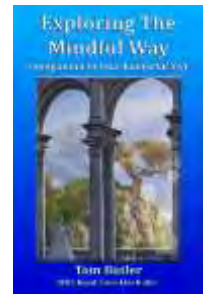
In my mind, the most important aspect of these phenomena is the way we are part of the dance ... not as humans, but as immortal personalities. It has been through ITC, especially EVP, that I have come to see our actual nature as a conduit for the formation of the speech and images of ITC in our physical devices.

Your Immortal Self represents an effort to explain our relationship with these phenomena, the nature of our actual self and how we might learn to be better ITC practitioners by being more successful seekers. The book begins with a comprehensive effort to define the Survival Hypothesis and establish verifiable proof.

For a small fee, the PDF version of this book is available on the [Lulu website](#). I like PDF for this book because it has so many internal links. It is easier to study using a PDF file. [On Amazon](#)

I have been told that *Your Immortal Self* is a difficult read. While I understand some of the concepts can be obscure, I wrote this in *Your Immortal Self*:

Not trying to understand this material because it is too complicated is unacceptable. There is an old Zen Buddhist saying: “Before enlightenment chop wood – carry water, after enlightenment chop wood – carry water.” One must do the work to understand. One must do the work to continue learning. Study the material and do not expect to understand all of it with one reading. Contemplate your worldview. Ask questions. Argue!



I write today to find ways to illustrate the principles described in *Your Immortal Self*, as they apply to particular situations. In doing so, I hoped to make the principles more approachable and help pave the way to spiritual maturity for my readers. *Exploring the Mindful Way* is a compilation of 21 such essays. [On Amazon](#)



ATransC Newsjournal Archive

Remember that all of the AA-EVP/ATransC newsletters are [available online](#). They represent an important resource for historians and researchers. We can send you a combined PDF of all the newsletters at your request.

Bill (Dutch) Weisensale’s Spirit Voices, published between 1980 and 1995, are also online