

A JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION: A LIVED EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS OF AN ONLINE POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM IN TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY

AN INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study is an inquiry into a lived experience of transformation of students in an online postgraduate course of Consciousness, Spirituality and Transpersonal Psychology run by the Alef Trust in collaboration with Middlesex University in London. The research was carried out using intuitive inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011), a reflective process based around five iterative cycles of interpretation, which builds on both intellectual rigour and intuitive ways of knowing. Seven participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview, five of them also engaged in drawing a mandala symbolically capturing their learning journeys, which further enriched the researcher's insights. The data were analysed and presented using Moustakas' (1990) heuristic approach, which aims to understand, describe and explore the meaning of an experience, while personally involving the researcher. The themes presented as a composite depiction were then compared to the researcher's initial understanding of the topic prior to data collection. Consequently, this process translated itself into an expanded interpretation. It involved two new lenses: the *readiness to be transformed* and *duration of engagement in transformative learning* as conditions for a transformative experience to occur on the course. It also involved four refined lenses: the course being experienced as a *path to continuous self-transformation*, *transformative learning* being experienced as a *process of letting go and letting come* as well as *generative of shifts in being and doing*, and *transformative education as a set-up cultivating these shifts in being and doing*. The conclusion of the study was three-fold. First, it concluded that there are many transformative elements of the course to be honoured. These include altruistic and supportive approach of the faculty as well as the wider community, collaborative forms learning and a mix of modules challenging the mind and modules that are more experiential. Second, it also suggested directions in which the course could develop. These revolve particularly around creating more space for experiential modules and fostering collaborative learning across all course modules. Finally, the study became a transformative vehicle in its own accord for both the researcher and the participants.

SELECT REFERENCES

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