

RELIGIONSPSYKOLOGI

LIGHT

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RELIGIONSPSYKOLOGI

- Hva er religionspsykologi?
- Hva er religion?
- Hva er spiritualitet?
- Hva er psykologi??

Er interessen for religion nedavgående eller ...?

- **USA:** Majority believe in God (95%)
86% believe God can be reached through prayers,
86% feel religion is "very important"
- 42% attend religious worship service weekly
- 67% are members of a religious body
(McCullough et al. 2000)
- **Western Europe:** Less religious
- American religiosity sits well with Asia, Africa and the rest of the Americas, that is
most of the rest of the planet (Bloom, 2012)

Norske undersøkelser

- 47% defined themselves as a Christian (Hognestad, 2004).

2004 - Survey, A-magasinet:

- 29 % believed in God or a divine entity,
- 23 % believed in a higher being without being sure of the quality of that being.
- 22 % were in doubt
- 26 % did not believe in God or higher powers at all.
- 2008 religion study – Aftenposten: 68% of Norwegians claim some type of belief in God (Danbolt et al., 2011)

Norske undersøkelser

(Danbolt, Møller, Lien & Hestad, 2011)

Studerte 31 pasienter med schizofreni spektrum lidelser, Sykehuset Innlandet, Hamar

- 75% Tror på Gud
- 78% Tror på liv etter døden
- 74% Opplevelse av guddommelig nærvær
- 42% Opplevelse av guddommelig ledelse
- 74% Tro er en støtte
- 13% Tro er en byrde

Eksistensielle tanker og religiøse erfaringer i psykose (Danbolt, 2012)

- Fordi schizofreni er en kulturavhengig lidelse, kan det være:
 - En terapeutisk utfordring å skille mellom hva som er sykt og hva som er ikke-sykt
 - Viktig å forstå den personlige betydningen av tro og livssyn

Normalitet, psykose eller et annet paradigme? (Danbolt, 2012)

- I samfunn der man ser verdien av åndelige erfaringer har folk med schizofreni-diagnose bedre prognose enn i vestlige samfunn (*Richard Warner, 1994*)
- "Our society's particular illiteracy in the area of spiritual experience contributes to the even greater **isolation** of the person with psychosis." (*Isabel Clarke, 2010, p.111*)

NORGE:

Vest-Europas minst religiøse nasjon (Gallup International, 2005)

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De minst religiøse land på kloden

ULF ANDENÆS
ROLF M. AAGAARD

SETT MED ANDRES ØYNE. I en tid med religionskonflikter skal vi merke oss Skandinavia, for der finner vi noen av de minst religiøse land på kloden, skriver en amerikansk sosiolog.

I STORE DELER av Skandinavia er religionens innflytelse i dag så svak at dette i seg selv er et tema for samfunnsforskerne, mener Phil

Oppdatert: 18.02.09 kl. 14:22 Publisert: 30.10.08 kl. 00:10

Renessanse for religion?

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Religionen er over oss - igjen

Harald Stanghelle - Politisk redaktør i Aftenposten

KOMMENTAR

Ny æra. I dag er det 20 år siden ayatollah Khomeini erklærte Salman Rushdie for dødsdømt. Det innvarslet en ny æra for de religiøse følelsenes plass i det verdslige samfunnsrommet.

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– I nær sagt alle landene hvor jeg er involvert, står tro helt sentralt. Vi har vanskelig å forstå det i Norge, fordi vi er at av de mest sekulære samfunnene i verden, sier miljø- og utviklingsminister Erik Solheim (SV). Foto: Lars O. Flydal.

Erik Solheim: Gud er tilbake

Gud spiller en stadig større rolle i samfunnet, mener miljø- og utviklingsministeren.

Ingjerd Våge

Publisert: 21. januar

ERIK SOLHEIM (2012)

- Tro mer vanlig.
- Han er ikke sikker på at det ville blitt slik for ti år siden. Det er i alle fall «lettere nå».– I det 20. århundre var det en utbredt tanke at **religionen ville dø ut i takt med vitenskaplig innsikt**. Men det har vist seg at religionen, i alle samfunn, er utrolig tilpassingsdyktig.
- At Gud er tilbake ser vi blant annet i den amerikanske presidentvalgkampen.
- I nær sagt **alle landene hvor jeg er involvert, står tro helt sentralt**. Vi har vanskelig å forstå det i Norge, fordi vi er et av de mest sekulære samfunnene i verden. Riktig nok er mange i Norge medlemmer av et kirkesamfunn, understreker Solheim, men for flere preger ikke troen **hverdagen** i stor grad.

Definisjon: Religion

- The word religion comes from latin **religio** and is usually translated as “**obligation**” or “**bond**”
- Oxford English dictionary: “the human recognition of superhuman controlling power, and especially of a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and worship.” (theistic)
(Fontana, 2003)

Definisjon: Religion

- “Religion is that which offers symbols and rituals in order to interpret the higher **meaning of life**” and “create a frame of reference for those phenomena of life we do not know anything about – the meaning of suffering, evil and death etc” (Geels & Wikström, 1999).

Definisjon: Religion

- Batson, Schoenrade, & Ventis (1993):
“Religion is whatever we as individuals do to come to grips personally with the questions that confronts us because we are aware that we and others like us are **alive** and that we will **die**” (p. 8).

3 principal factors that seem necessary ingredients in religion

- Belief in a spiritual dimension
- Observance of a set of spiritual rituals or practices (kirkegang, ritualer, bønn, meditasjon)
- Adherence to a doctrine of **ethical conduct** arising from spiritual teachings (moral/levereregler)

Definisjon spiritualitet

- To be spiritual implies a faith in a **hidden dimension**, a force and energy, and what we call *matter* is a manifestation, not the *cause* of this hidden, unseen dimension.
- P & M: define spirituality as “**a search for the sacred**”.

Definisjoner: spiritualitet versus religiøsitet

- Some writers: religion is institutional, dogmatic, and restrictive, whereas spirituality is personal, subjective and life-enhancing.
- Pargament & Mahoney (2005):
Religion in its classic sense is a broad individual and institutional domain that serves a variety of purposes, secular as well as sacred.
Spirituality represents the key and unique function of religion.

Religiousness versus Spirituality

- While religions aim to foster and nourish the spiritual life – and spirituality is often a salient aspect of religious participation – it is possible to adopt the **outward forms** of religious worship and doctrine **without** having a strong relationship to the transcendent.

Religiousness versus spirituality

- Some regard them as **indistinguishable**
- Others believe religiousness has specific **behavioral, social, doctrinal, and denominational** characteristics because it involves a system of worship and doctrine that is **shared within a group**

Religionspsykologi: A multi-level– interdisciplinary subject

- The task of psychology of religion is studying religion as **experience** and **behaviour** in the present and historical context.
- The focus is the study of the experience of a spiritual reality, how these experiences have come into being, the functions they have for the individual and the group, and the expressions they take.
- The study of psychological preconditions for the processes and dynamics implied, and the consequences or results of the religious experience and behaviour.

Religionspsykologi

- Interdisciplinary field
- Need knowledge of other relevant areas as **history, sociology, philosophy, theology, mythology & creative arts** (Fontana, 2003).

Religionspsykologi

- The psychology of religion does **not** discuss the question of truth or what moral code is the more superior.
- The psychology of religion is **trans-cultural** and tries to be "**neutral**" and apply "non-metaphysical" concepts when describing and explaining the psychological preconditions, processes and consequences.
- The interest is directed towards the dynamic interaction between personality factors, the need of a **existential** frame of reference, the demands of the situation and a given **culture**'s religious narratives, symbols, and iconography.

Religionspsykologi

Områder i religionspsykologien:

- Nevro-kognitiv
- Sosial/kultur/krysskulturell
- Dynamisk/klinisk
- Utviklingspsykologi
- Helsepsykologi

Holdninger blant psykologer

Have tendet to:

- 1) Ignore spirituality/religiosity
- 2) Consider spirituality as pathological
- 3) Treat spirituality as a process that can be reduced to more basic underlying psychological, social, & physiological functions

Er religion neglisjert i psykologiutdanningen?

(Reme et al., 2009)

- **78%** av norske psykologi studenter ønsker religion som tema i utdanningen
- **92%** mente at fokus på religiøs tro i utdanningen kan bidra til at psykologer bedre kan forstå mennesker med en annen kulturell og religiøs bakgrunn
- **93%** opplevde at det ikke var fokus på menneskers religiøse tro i utdanningen

Behov for religion i psykologiutdanningen?

- Internasjonale studier konkluderer at religion er viktig for pasientene, og at dette burde komme høyere på agendaen for behandlere.

(Huguelet et al. 2006; Borrás et al 2007).

Religiøs Erfaring

Spørsmål

- Er mennesket et religiøst/spirituelt vesen?
- Kan religiøsitet/spiritualitet forklares av psykologiske prosesser/mekanismer?
- Eller krever det et distinkt forklaringsnivå?
- Fokus på "Det Hellige"

Pargament, K. (2002). Is Religion Nothing But ...? Explaining Religion versus Explaining Religion away. *Psychological Inquiry*, 13(3), 239-244.

- I agree that religion is, by definition, unique, for it has a singular point of reference, **the sacred**.
- Empirical studies suggest that religion is a **unique** source of motivation and values, a **unique** form of coping, and a unique source of distress (p. 239).
- Social scientists should learn more about the connections between religion and health and well-being, not to explain religion away, but to gain a more complete understanding of religion and human nature more generally.

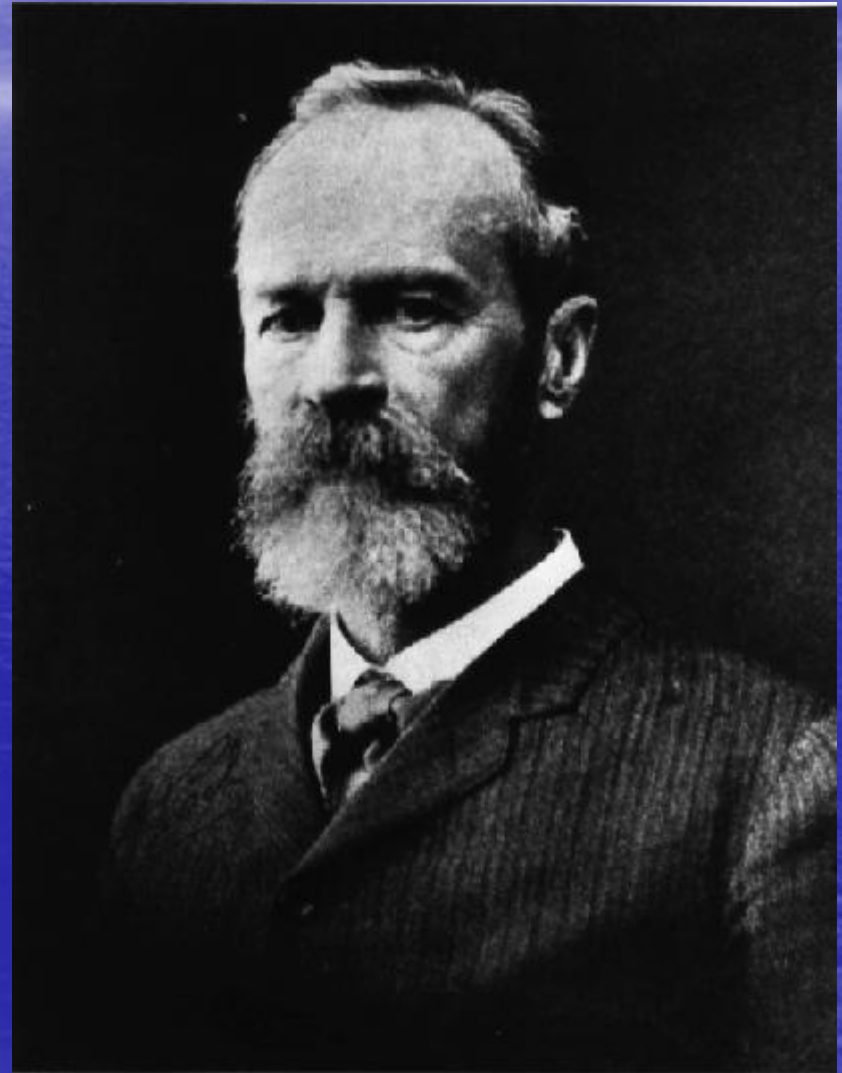
Religion & Vitenskap

- Richard Dawkins (2006)
The God delusion
- Francis Collins (2007)
The language of God
- Rupert Sheldrake (2012)
The Science delusion

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

William James
(1842-1910)

*Varieties of Religious
Experience (1902/2002)*



RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

William James

- The Twice-born
- The Dark Night of the Soul
- Mystical Experiences
- Saintliness
- "By their **fruits** shall you know them"
(Matthew 7: 20)

William James

(1902/2002)

- Religion is “the most important of all human functions”
- Religious experience:
Our deepest **source** of **morality**
- For å forstå fenomenet
må vi studere det **ekstreme**

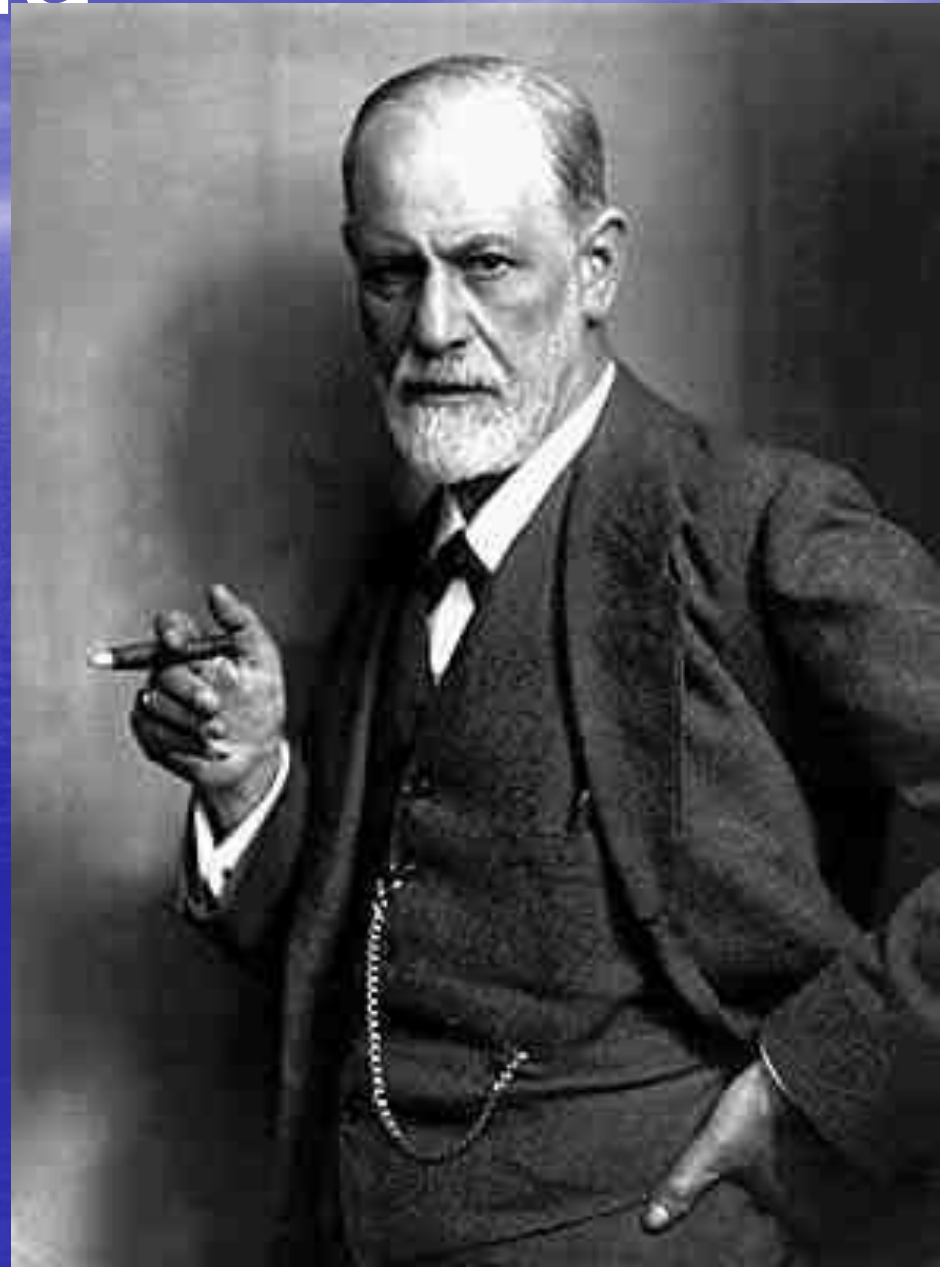
William James

(1902/2002)

- Religion: “the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine”
- There is “one great partition which divides the religious field. On the one side of it lies **institutional**, on the other **personal religion**”
- In personal religion “The relation goes direct from heart to heart, from soul to soul, between man and his maker” (p. 28-30).

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

*An Illusion and
Its Future*
(1927)



FREUD

FORSVARSMEKANISMER

- REGRESSION & KOMPENSATION

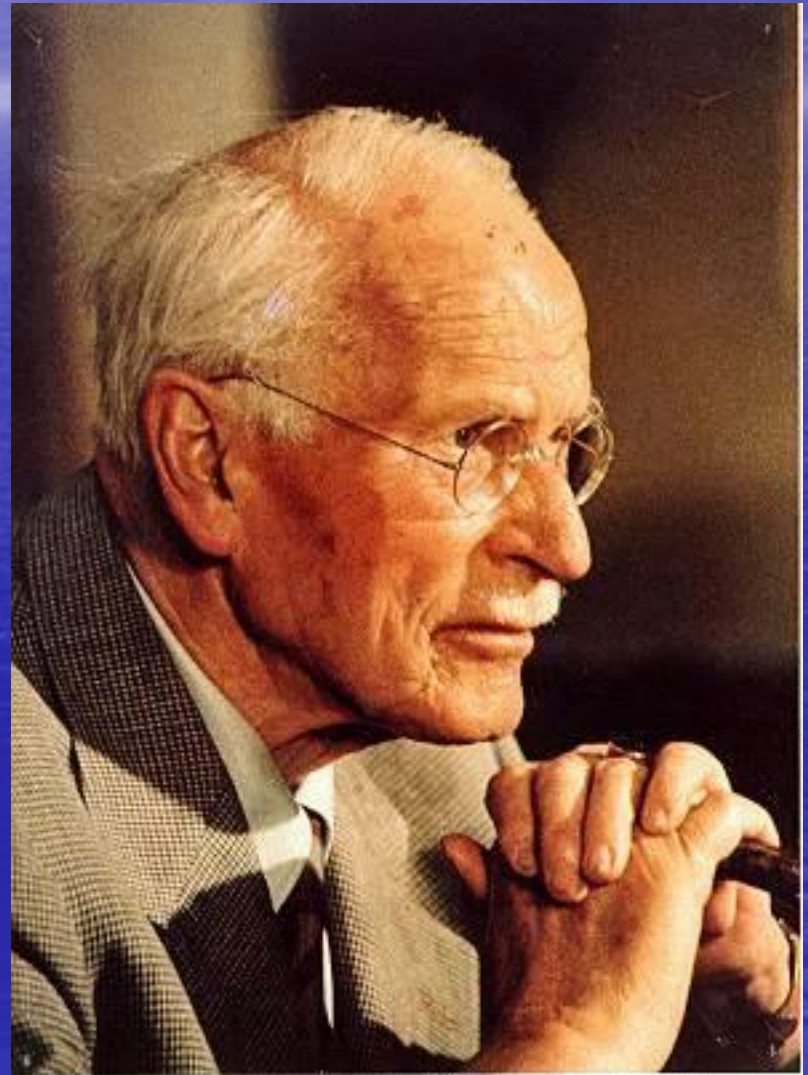
Religion:

- Kompensation for den tapte allmektige faren.
- Har samme funksjon som drømmen/dagdrømmen.
- Kollektiv **infantil** kompensasjon.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Carl Gustav Jung
(1875–1961)

Psychology and Religion
(1938/1950)



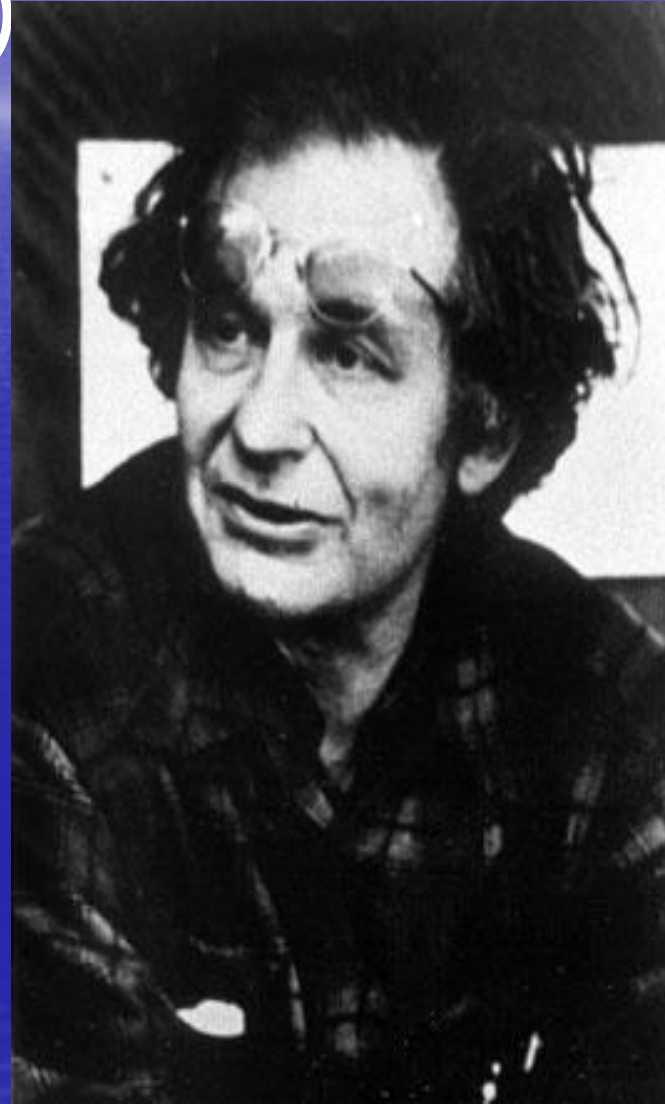
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Jung

- Man can make no progress with himself unless he becomes very much better acquainted with his own nature.
- Such knowledge will grow only when psychologists and other students of human nature take into account the full range of human experience, including the experience of God.

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987)

- The Ethic of Justice



KOHLBERG: Stage 7

Why be moral?

- Stage 7 – a level (form) based on a different type of logic
- Stage 7 is an intuitive and higher stage than stage 6, higher because it offers a way of answering the questions that is not answered in Stage 6 (Why be moral?)

KOHLBERG: Stage 7

Why be moral?

“To answer this question I have to do no less than **save your souls**...

To answer why be moral is to tell you **the meaning of life**, to give you **faith**” (Kohlberg, 1970)

KOHLBERG: Stage 7

- **Why faith?** Because “Why be moral?” is not a question that moral philosophy can answer. It is ultimately a **religious or metaphysical question**, not a moral one...
- The only ultimately meaningful answer to the “Why be moral” question is an answer to the question **Why live?**

KOHLBERG: Stage 7

Central Characteristics

- Involve experience of a nonegoistic or **nondualistic** variety.
- The essence is “the sense of being a part of the whole of life and the adoption of a **cosmic**, as opposed to a **universal** humanistic (Stage 6) perspective.

Spinoza (2002)

Etikk

Why first love God?

Pleasure, power and wealth cannot give complete satisfaction of desire.

Hva kan sette meg i stand til i evighet å glede meg over en vedvarende og høyeste lykke?

Spinoza (2002)

Etikk

- We can only attain a stronger and more stable state of self if we attain a stronger and more stable love of something eternal and infinite.
- Vår redning, lykke eller frihet består i en vedvarende og evig kjærlighet til Gud, eller i Guds kjærlighet til menneskene (som er ett og det samme).
- This knowledge and love of God is a form of an eternal union, og “det finnes ikke noe i naturen som er motsatt denne forstående kjærligheten, eller som kan fjerne den” (Spinoza, 2002, p. 262).

Spinoza (2002)

Etikk

- We must **stop acting and shift figure and ground** by focusing our experience on the larger reality which is usually the background of our activities (e.g., physical nature).
- This figure/ground shift involves **identification with the cosmic or infinite perspective** and value life from that standpoint. Such knowledge and love of nature is a form of union, in which our mind is part of a larger, eternal whole.

Religiøs Erfaring: Hva Vet vi Nå?

- Positivt relatert til:

Resiliens (Masten, 2007)

Omsorg/Prososial utvikling

Trivsel & selv-tillit (Lerner et al., 2006)

Religiøs Erfaring: Hva Vet vi Nå?

- Beskyttelsesfaktor mot:

Narkotika/alkohol bruk

Tidlig sex/svangerskap

Kriminalitet

Religiøs Erfaring: Positive Prosesser

- Nettverk med omsorg
- Lærer omsorg for andre
- Diskusjoner om moral
- Knyttet til en høyere makt
- Utvikler indre styrke & coping

DO RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY INFLUENCE HEALTH? Oman & Thoresen (2005)

Meta-analysis, 40 samples:

Religious involvement related to Longevity

8-year longitudinal study with 20,000 adults:

7 years difference

Controlled: SES, health status,
health behaviors, & social ties.

(Hummer, Rogers, Nam, & Ellison, 1999)

RELIGION & HEALTH

- Protection against crime, delinquency, drug abuse & violence
- 1,000+ published studies, mostly positive
- Why is religion often ignored as a health-related variable?

MEDIATING FACTORS

Causal Mechanisms

1. LIFE STYLE HEALTH BEHAVIORS:

- Discourage smoking & heavy drinking
- Encourage exercise, positive health practices

RESEARCH EVIDENCE:

- Persons attending religious services - more exercise, less smoking & heavy drinking.
- Less risky sexual behaviour

QUESTION

- Do religious involvement encourage better health behaviors
- OR
Are people with better health behaviors more likely to become religious?

MEDIATING FACTORS

Causal Mechanisms

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES:

- improved mental health
- more positive psychological states:
joy, hope & compassion,
- reduced “allostatic load”
- enhanced immune competence.

RESEARCH EVIDENCE:

- Much evidence for improved mental health

MEDIATING FACTORS

Causal Mechanisms

3. COPING

- Effective ways of dealing with stressful events
- improved health thru reductions in maladaptive health behaviors
- improvements in psychological states

RESEARCH EVIDENCE

- Coping Style:
 - “Collaborative” (God as a partner), better than “Deferring” (passive) or “self-directive”

NEW POTENTIAL MEDIATING FACTORS

SERVICE TO OTHERS

- Reduced self-focus & stress reactivity
- Increased social support
- Volunteer work: greater longevity & improved self-rated health
- Peer helping among patients: reduced depression
- Increased confidence & self-esteem

NEW POTENTIAL MEDIATING FACTORS

DISTANT HEALING

- Being prayed for by others (Powell et al., 2003, *American Psychologist*)
- Distant mental influence:
*"It may be that our challenge is to find doctors or other healthcare providers who are **not** using some form of psychic healing"*

NEW POTENTIAL MEDIATING FACTORS

MEDITATION

Neurological studies (Davidson et al., 2003):

Meditation alter prefrontal brain processes

- increased activity in **left** prefrontal cortex area & reduced activity in **right** area
- increased immune competence
- less cortisol and more positive emotions

FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

- Develop & evaluate therapeutic methods that address religious struggles in therapy
- **MEDITATION** (Wachholtz & Pargament, 2008)
Mantra: God loves me I am loved
Spiritual meditation linked to greater anxiety reduction, greater well-being & pain tolerance than **secular meditation** or **relaxation**.
- Spiritual meditation can improve patients' quality of life without the financial expense & negative side effects of pain medication

RELIGIOSITY, POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY & WELL-BEING RESEARCH

Religion: Positive Effects:

- General happiness
- Satisfaction with life
- Meaning & Purpose
- Longevity

- **Most Important Factors** (Argyle, 1999):
 - Social support – love & community
 - *"Closeness to God"*
 - *"Existential certainty"*

RELIGION IN CHILDREN: EFFECTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

Religion: Negatively related to:

- Psychotic symptoms
- Depression
- Anxiety

RELIGION IN ADOLESCENCE: EFFECTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

Positive effects on:

- Academic performance
- Well-being
- Self-esteem
- Motivation toward civic involvement
- Healthy lifestyles

Protection against:

- Depression & anxiety
- Suicide
- Promiscuous sex, early pregnancy
- Drug or alcohol abuse

CULTURAL INFLUENCES IN THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION & MENTAL HEALTH

- Beliefs in spirit possession & ghosts are common in many parts of the world
- Different types of **psychotherapeutic techniques** needed within different cultures or with patients of different religious beliefs
- KARMA, spiritual healing, the bar/bar mitzvah (Pargament et al., 2002)
- MUST CONSIDER PERSON, PLACE, & TIME
- NEED CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF RELIGION ON MENTAL HEALTH

- Reinforce deluded beliefs (persecution)
- Increase guilt & worry
- Mystical experiences versus psychotic behaviour
- Sudden religious conversion:
Weak ego, pathological symptoms, anxiety
- Rigid: Bigotry, homophobia & intolerance
"By their fruits shall you know them"

Religiosity & pro-social behavior

History shows us:

1. Religiously rooted moral positions have been used to justify acts of terrorism, wars, torture, and genocide.
2. “The best fruits of religious experience are the best things that history has to show ... The highest flights of charity, devotion, trust, patience, bravery to which the wings of human nature have spread themselves have been flown for religious ideals.” (James, p. 203).

Religiosity & pro-social behavior

Research shows us:

1. Religion makes people nicer.

Faith and religious commitment is linked with pro-social attitudes & positive psychosocial adjustment (e.g., Good & Willoughby, 2006; Sallquist et al., 2010), and with helping behavior among humanitarians and social activists (Colby & Damon, 1992; Matsuba & Walker, 2004)

2. Religion does not make people nicer

Religiosity, especially certain forms of fundamentalism and orthodox adherence are linked with anti-social attitudes, discrimination, and prejudice (Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005).

Religious orientations

- *External*: Religion is used as a means to other ends such as social status, security and acceptance from others
- *Intrinsic* (commitment to religion as an end in itself)
- *Quest*: Reflects a readiness to face existential questions, acknowledge doubts and accept change in religious beliefs

Inner MOTIVATION!

Research Methods

- Definitional, psychometric and methodological issues are important (e.g., see Hood & Belzen, 2005; Hood et al., 2009)

- Explaining the propensity of religion for bringing out the extremes of **good and evil** in human behaviour remains a major challenge to psychological research.

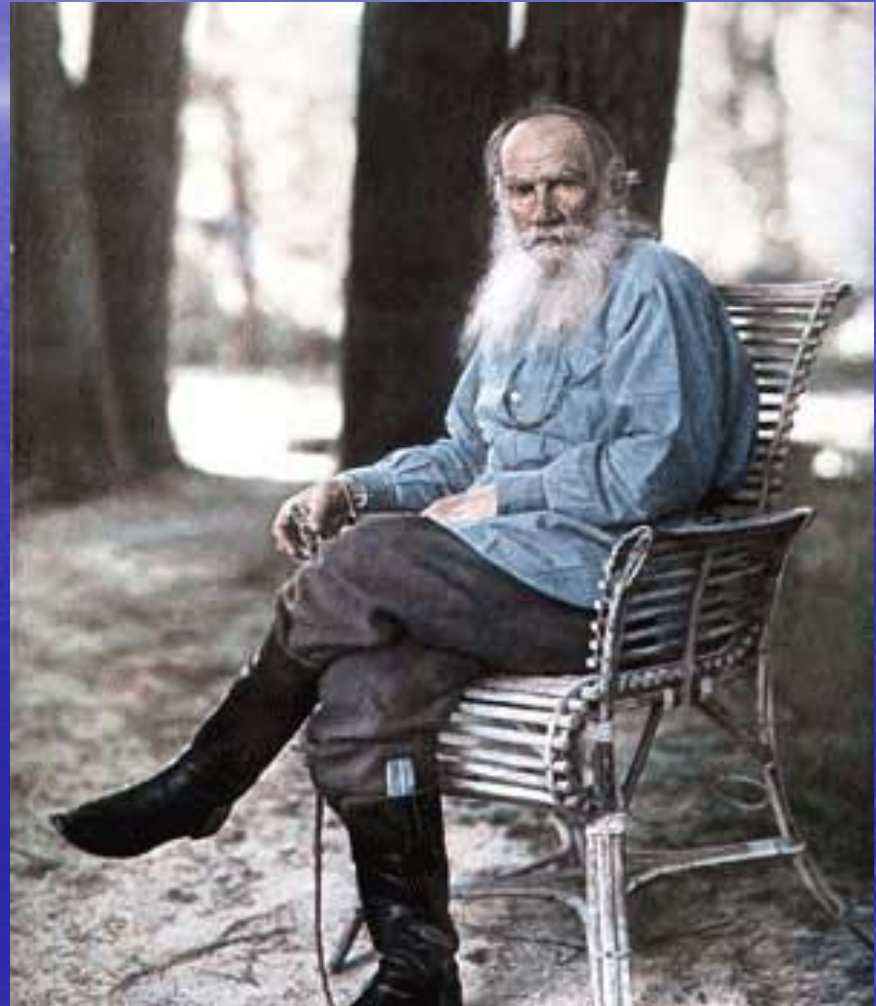
(Fontana, 2003).

RELIGIOUS DIMENSION OF COPING: THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE (Pargament, Ano, & Wachholtz, 2005)

- CRISIS & TRAGEDY – Religion often comes to foreground
- 9/11 - 90% turned to religion
(Schuster et al., 2001)
- PRAYER & FAITH

“Faith is what men live by”

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)



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