Brief description of the book

‘Am I Going Mad? ‘The Unsettling Phenomena of Spiritual Evolution’

Author: Marlyse Carroll

“Am I Going Mad is more than just informative, entertaining and inspiring. It is a must-read for anyone ready to integrate and self-actualize their spiritual existence - truly a physiological, psychological and spiritual masterpiece for the sake of human evolution.”

Dr John F. Demartini
(Best-selling author of The Breakthrough Experience)

Am I Going Mad? sheds light on the darker side of the spiritual path in a way that teases the imagination, touches the heart and stimulates the intellect.

This book explores the extraordinary spiritual experiences that often meet us at various stages of personal evolution. For a spiritual awakening is not all about love and light, far from it! Some of its phenomena can be very unsettling, to the point of being mistaken for depression, schizophrenia or other symptoms of mental illness.

The topics covered include transpersonal psychology, spirituality, shamanism, psychiatry and
contemporary physics. Enthralling true stories, humorous quotations and cartoons balance the scientific research and make for a lighter read.

As a result, the most commonly received feedback is “I couldn’t put it down”! Please check testimonials here. [http://amigoingmad.com.au/reviews/](http://amigoingmad.com.au/reviews/)

**Main message of ‘Am I Going Mad’**

✓ As we evolve spiritually, it is natural to have non-ordinary experiences.
✓ Spiritual phenomena are NOT symptoms of mental illness, even when they lead to states of imbalance.
✓ When understood and handled in an appropriate manner, spiritual crises lead to a higher quality of life.

**Author’s intentions**

1. To provide lay readers with a solid framework of references from which to explore their own experiences, fears and expectations.
2. To provide medical practitioners who are open to such viewpoints with clear distinctions they can use in their practice.

**Readership**

*Am I Going Mad* is of interest and benefit to most individuals, regardless of their age, gender, cultural background and life path, because the book touches on universal experiences.

✓ Anyone who has ever felt anxious, depressed, lonely or addicted to substances will gain a new perspective on their plight.
✓ Anyone who has ever had an unexplainable inner experience – from frightening to ecstatic – is sure to gain some understanding.
✓ And anyone consciously walking the spiritual path will also enjoy this book for the roadmap it provides.

This well-researched book, which is referenced throughout, also appeals to therapists interested in alternative medical paradigms.

**For more information, articles and stories**

please go to

Detailed Outline of the Book
‘Am I Going Mad?’

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This chapter sets the foundations for the rest of the book. Like all other chapters, it starts with the true story of a life event experienced by the author. This dramatic story is followed by theory that explains Carl Jung’s understanding of the psyche. Here and there, the author informally reappears with subjective, personal comments relating to psychology, philosophy and spirituality.

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Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry 42
  Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorder 44

After the story, this chapter presents a historical perspective on consciousness and mental health. Eastern and Western paradigms are explored, as are classical physics versus new (Quantum) physics.
The various topics are linked by conversational snippets of information and points of view, which allow for a smooth flow between concepts.

Chapter 3 Story – Heaven and Hell in a Mushroom  46

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Archetypal Encounters  65

Spiritual Emergence  66

This chapter includes two true stories that illustrate how unexpected spiritual experiences can lead to a peaceful awakening or to a state of crisis known as ‘spiritual emergency’. The archetypal nature of spiritual experiences is explained from a Jungian/transpersonal perspective. And the use of psychedelic drugs is discussed in a non-judgmental way.

Chapter 4 Story – The Rollercoaster Ride of Death and Rebirth  69

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Story: John’s Rebirths  84
Where does Rebirthing Lead?  88

This chapter focuses on altered states of consciousness, with their accompanying gifts and dangers. Breathwork/rebirthing, the subject of the two main stories, is well explained as a powerful healing tool.

Chapter 5 Story – Riding the Magic Carpet  90

Science and Spirituality  100
The Zero Point Field  101

The Chakra System  104

Kundalini  107
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Benefits  111
This chapter starts with a story of the most disturbing phenomena experienced by the author during her own spiritual awakening. These phenomena are then explained through cutting-edge scientific discoveries as well as ancient yogic knowledge.

Chapter 6 Story – One Thousand Stones 113

Ego-states 118

Meditation 120

Spiritual Benefits 123

Brainwave Frequencies 124

The Spiritual Journey 127

The Inner Journey Continues 128

Practical Strategies 129

Profound Spiritual Experiences 131

After another beautiful story set in India, we now explore meditation, what it is and how it works on all four levels of our humanness - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. The practical strategies and real-life experiences shared in this chapter are relevant to both new and experienced meditators.

Chapter 7 Story – Michael 135

Friends, Lovers and Enemies 138

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Anima and Animus 140

The Four Archetypal Stages of Life 143

Spiritual Crises 146

The Lost Submarine Syndrome 148

Regression in the Service of Transcendence 149

Nothing Ever Happened! 151

Practical Use of Numinous Encounters 152

Through Jungian psychology, we find out here how self-awareness impacts on the quality of our relationships and life choices. We also explore the darker side of spiritual evolution, including states of crises that are often misdiagnosed as symptoms of mental illness.

Chapter 8 Story – Is a Soul always blue? 154

Light after Life 159

The Human Energy Field 161

Story: Beyond my Skin 164

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Steps for Self-Transformation  171

This chapter starts with the story of Kathleen’s death, which takes us to a fascinating field of research - a Russian medical study of the energy fields emitted by dead bodies. The understanding of the human body-mind-soul connection then leads readers to the integration phase of spiritual emergency. Practical steps are also provided, with an intention to help readers along their personal and spiritual journey.

Chapter 9 Story – The Queen Ant  176

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The Shamanic Crisis  197

In this chapter, we interweave ancient wisdom and cutting-edge scientific research relating to quantum physics and brain functioning. Together, these threads create an overall picture that makes sense from every angle. The ‘Queen Ant’ story is particularly powerful too.

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States of Possession  210

Love  212
Photons and Love  213
Story: Dancing with the Beloved  218

This chapter starts with another great story followed by philosophical speculations on death. Moving from parallel universes to quantum physics, we then delve deeper into our exploration of life & death, love & light, science & spirituality. The chapter closes with another story of a life-changing spiritual experience.

Chapter 11 Story – When Iron Birds fly and Horses have Wheels 222
In this chapter, many pieces of the spiritual jigsaw puzzle come together. True stories, mysticism, new physics and Western medicine all contribute to an expanded understanding of the psyche, its challenges and infinite potential. Further distinctions between spiritual emergency and symptoms of mental illness are addressed.

Chapter 12 Story – The Guru and the Mirror 246

The Dance of Ego and Self 250
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Offensive Spirituality: Ego-Inflation 252

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  Enlightenment 255
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  The Genie Within 261
  Story: The New Car 264

Conclusion 267

Once again linking entertaining true stories with Eastern and Western knowledge, the author keeps expanding on her model of consciousness. The new material introduced in this chapter links everything learnt so far. As a result of their expanded awareness, readers can now expect a more joyful journey to higher states of consciousness, leading to a more loving global consciousness.

Epilogue Story – The Key 270

Enjoy the Journey! 275
As a temporary farewell between author and reader, ‘The Key’ is another inspiring true story that will make your heart and soul sing!

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Marlyse Carroll - Author’s Bio

Born in the French part of Switzerland I moved to Australia, my soul country, in 1971 and have never looked back.

With regards to ‘Am I Going Mad’, the major turning point happened in 1992-93, when I had a succession of spiritual experiences that blasted my mind and shook my world to its core.

Suddenly, I needed answers that I couldn’t find anywhere... not as a package anyway. Even though I had studied Eastern philosophies, meditated and practised yoga for several years, I didn't understand what was happening to me.

So I immersed myself in further studies relating to psychology, spiritual emergence, Kundalini, shamanism, new physics, breathwork therapy and more... Various teachers gave me invaluable pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of spiritual evolution.

Eventually, these pieces started to create an exciting picture in which I found my life mission: 'To make a difference, have fun and help others follow their heart too'.

As well as training in various forms of energy work, I became a meditation teacher, workshop facilitator and hypnotherapist.

In 1995, Michael Carroll & I co-founded The INNER PEACE Institute for Wellbeing, a non-sectarian educational organisation based in Melbourne, Australia. Forever learning and growing, we both taught at INNER PEACE until 2012, facilitating profound personal transformations through courses, experiential workshops and retreats.

Together, we also personally trained over two hundred professional teachers in meditation, spirituality and wellbeing.

In 2002, the International Council of Integrative Medicine (ICIM) noticed our work and honoured Michael and I for ‘outstanding professional service’.

I feel very blessed to have worked with thousands of individuals on the spiritual path over the past 18 years or so. Many shared their deepest insights and fears with me, a gift for which I’m deeply grateful.
They also encouraged me to put my stories and knowledge into the self-published book that became ‘Am I Going Mad? The Unsettling Phenomena of Spiritual Evolution’.

First released in August 2007, Am I Going Mad is now in its second edition. In March 2011, it became a best-seller for our distributors in Australia and New Zealand. And it will be available as a Kindle book sold on Amazon in the next few weeks (Nov/Dec 2013).

I’ve also co-authored three other books:

• 'Australia's Best Short Stories' (Segal, Inner Kiss Publishing, 2001)
• 'The Thought that Changed my Life Forever' (Guenette & Roberts, The Thought Publications Inc, 2013)

Right now, INNER PEACE is resting before transitioning into a new phase, a more global incarnation. As for Michael and I, we live on a beautiful country property near Melbourne, Australia. There, we enjoy a rural lifestyle filled with creative pursuits, fresh air, home-grown vegies, big dreams… and enough free time to keep us happy and healthy!

As for the biggest goal still on our bucket list, here it is: To fund a Foundation supporting people in spiritual crisis from the profits of Am I Going Mad? sales.

For more information on what I do, please check:

  o www.innerpeace.com.au
  o www.handpaintedsilkscarves.com.au

Genre and Complementary Titles

‘Am I Going Mad’ explores spiritual evolution – and most specifically spiritual crises - in unique ways.

To start with, it’s a ‘here’s why…’ book, not another ‘how to…’ manual. In other words, it puts the human experience at the core of the subject matter and draws the reader from the inside out. Hence its heart-felt appeal.

  Dr Stanislav Grof has approached spiritual emergency in a similar way. Yet ‘Am I Going Mad’ goes further because it draws information from topics other than breathwork and psychology.

Secondly, ‘Am I Going Mad’ doesn’t promote any beliefs or dogmas. It offers an in-depth and scientifically valid exploration of various viewpoints that include transpersonal psychology, physiology, shamanism and Quantum physics. Hence its intellectual appeal.

  Gregg Bradden, Valerie Hunt, Fred Wolf & Deepak Chopra, amongst other spiritually minded scientists, also draw parallels between new physics and consciousness. ‘Am I Going Mad’ is different because of its core subject (spiritual emergency) and of the other perspectives interlinked with quantum physics.

Thirdly, ‘Am I Going Mad’ sheds light on the main differences between symptoms of mental illness and symptoms of a spiritual crisis. Hence its practical appeal.

  I’m deeply indebted to Dr John E. Nelson for his wonderful book ‘Healing the Split’ (SUNY, 1994). This book offers an enlightened medical perspective on the subject of schizophrenia.
And finally, the format of ‘Am I Going Mad’ is unique because it interweaves 3 different strands: Each chapter starts with a true story that illustrates a personal experience. These stories are followed by enough theory to bring light on the topics at hand. And the writer reappears now and then, reflecting on each subject from her current subjective perspective.

Because the book is printed in two colours and three different fonts, the reader can easily identify each strand. Hence its user-friendly appeal.

Despite extensive research, I haven’t come across any other book that offers such a format.

‘Am I Going Mad’ can be used for entertainment, inspiration and education.

✓ It can be read from cover to cover…
✓ Or from story to story whilst skipping the theory.
✓ Spontaneous people open it at random and start reading wherever the book opens.
✓ And other readers use it as a reference manual.

Either way works.

Hence the universal appeal of 'Am I Going Mad? The Unsettling Phenomena of Spiritual Evolution'.