



GENAI MAPPING OF DIMENSIONAL-SLIPS TO CLASSIC TRANSCENDENTAL SPACES

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ABSTRACT

This research explores whether anomalous ‘dimensional-slip’ experiences—reported by an allegedly haunted woman named ‘Nell’—would systematically map to distinctive features of various transcendental spaces discussed in spiritual and psychological traditions. A two-part content analysis using ChatGPT-4o compared the phenomenology of Nell’s written accounts ($n = 4$) to an inventory of thirty-two classic transcendental realms sourced via a rapid literature review. The results reveal strong alignment with realms containing symbolic-archetypal contents and serving integrative, transformative, and revelatory functions. Ultimately, the GenAI program determined that the available details of Nell’s journeys most strongly aligned to the Spirit World of shamanic and indigenous traditions—a space characterized by vivid encounters with spirits, ancestral memory, and moral-emotional reckoning. Her own post-hoc assessment under masked conditions also partially supports this interpretation. The study demonstrates the potential of large language models to enrich spirituality studies and transpersonal research, as well as offers a replicable framework for investigating certain consciousness states. It also opens new cross-disciplinary avenues for understanding the wide spectrum of encounter experiences through metaphysical, clinical, and narrative lenses.

INTRODUCTION

Thought exercises or experiments, also known as Gedankenexperimente, are mental explorations often used in fields such as physics, psychology, and philosophy to examine concepts and theories by imagining or comparing different scenarios (Nersessian, 1992). But such speculative outputs can play a vital role in the academic literature by developing ideas that challenge existing paradigms, propose new perspectives, shape academic discourse, or guide future research (Jaakkola, 2020). This paper correspondingly presents a series of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)-driven thought exercises that opportunistically extend a two-part case study (Houran et al., 2025; O’Keeffe et al., 2024) of an individual with an above-average level of transliminality—i.e., a hypersensitivity to psychological material originating in the unconscious and the external environment (Evans et al., 2019)—who allegedly experienced a series of dimensional-slips, which denote anomalous spacetime perceptions

or distortions that can occur with or without transcendental elements (cf. O’Keeffe et al., 2024).

In particular, a ~60-year-old female named ‘Nell’ (pseudonym) who fits the profile of haunted people syndrome¹ (Houran & Laythe, 2022) documented four instances in which she was completing chores alone at home when suddenly and without explanation she felt herself ‘physically transported to another time or place’—a distinctly removed series of ‘realms’ filled with novel and familiar features but also spiritual figures that sometimes helped her to address personal issues and lingering conflicts (for synopses of these experiences, see the Appendix). She expressly characterized these ‘journeys’ as something other than time expansions, mystical visions, channeling discarnate agents, or out-of-body experiences (OBEs). The experiences also appeared to be independent from an ongoing ghostly episode involving a mixture of various *subjective* (e.g., sensed presences) and *objective* (e.g., object displacements) phenomena at her residence.

Previous analyses used the large language GenAI program ChatGPT-4 to assess Nell’s written descriptions of the dimensional-slips. Specifically, a series of content analyses (O’Keeffe et al., 2024) tested for diagnostic criteria across five alternative hypotheses that followed from a preliminary visual inspection of her accounts, i.e., (1) deliberate fabrication, (2) mental time travel, (3) clinical dissociation, (4) psi-type perceptions via activities or processes such as remote viewing (or ‘consciousness casting’), and (5) shamanic-type journeying. A follow-up study by Houran et al. (2025) then tested the phenomenology of her experiences against the prospects of (6) kundalini awakenings, (7) physical mediumship, (8) bilocation-type phenomena, and (9) electromagnetic field (EMF) effects. The cumulative results showed that her experiences had a mixed phenomenology strongly suggestive of several potential mechanisms, though most consistent with shamanic journeys (or ‘magic flights’ to the Spirit World) and further influenced by localized EMF-related phenomena from natural sources. Houran et al. (2025, p. 101, emphasis added) concluded therefore that Nell’s dimensional-slips embodied:

a fusion of environmental phenomena, somatic-sensory sensitivities intrinsic to higher transliminality, and possibly consciousness-related anomalies. Though we think it is unlikely that Nell materially traveled to other locations, she undoubtedly journeyed ‘somewhere’—whether into *the depths of her own psyche* (e.g., O’Keeffe et al., 2024, pp. 173–174), *the fringes of a strange physical phenomenon* (e.g., Sheehan, 2024), or *a point in spacetime where both may intertwine* (e.g., Moussa et al., 2023). In our estimation, the latter scenario is the most parsimonious interpretation of the prevailing evidence.

1. This concept asserts that recurrent encounter-type experiences or ghostly episodes emerge from people with heightened somatic-sensory sensitivities that are stirred by dis-ease states, contextualized with paranormal belief, and reinforced via perceptual contagion and threat-agency detection (Laythe et al., 2021, 2022).

THE PRESENT STUDY

Though prior investigations indicated that Nell's journeys were more likely experiential than physical in nature, a fundamental mystery nevertheless remains—*To what 'space' did Nell exactly travel?* This intriguing question was explored via a two-part and multi-step thought experiment featuring GenAI content analyses. This technology has become a valuable tool for qualitative research (Gupta et al., 2024; Kar et al., 2023; Platt & Platt, 2023), offering unique advantages over human evaluators. AI scoring has likewise been applied to parapsychological-oriented case studies apart from the present author (e.g., see Mossbridge et al., 2025). One primary benefit is its consistency and objectivity. Unlike the personal biases and varied interpretations of human evaluators, GenAI systems tend to apply criteria more uniformly, reducing subjective influence and ensuring more reliable outcomes (Kaur et al., 2022). Moreover, these programs can readily handle large datasets, which enables the efficient analysis of information that would otherwise be impractical to review manually (Lee et al., 2020). As a result, GenAI is generally cost effective and eliminates the potential for human fatigue or cognitive load in assessment tasks that often lead to inconsistencies or errors.

Part 1 therefore examines the GenAI program's available corpus of spiritual and psychological literature to benchmark a selection of 'classic transcendental realms' where psychological dramas, spiritual experiences, or divine encounters reportedly occur. Part 2 then compares the phenomenology of Nell's dimensional-slips to these descriptive maps to find an ostensible match and particularly affirm the idea that Nell's experiences were possible examples of shamanic-like journeys in a secular context. The findings are expected to enhance our understanding of the psychology and potential parapsychology of these anomalous experiences. In particular, the outcomes should provide a more nuanced psychological assessment of meaning-making, emotional resonance, and identity transformation in this case. Parapsychologically, it may help to systematize the phenomenology of encounter experiences with elements of ostensible non-local awareness, offering a basis for comparative research and theoretical development across experiential domains.

This study was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee at Integrated Knowledge System, as well as adhering to the Journal Article Reporting Standards (Kazak, 2018). Therefore, the paper specifies the research samples, data exclusions (if any), research questions, applicable manipulations, and all measures and data abstractions used in the content analyses (cf. Vassar & Holzmann, 2013). The protocols were not pre-registered but largely reproduce the initial steps of prior GenAI content analyses related to this case (Houran et al., 2025; O'Keeffe et al., 2024).

PART 1: MAPPING CLASSIC TRANSCENDENTAL SPACES

‘Transcendental spaces’ refers to non-ordinary realms of consciousness or reality that are perceived to exist beyond the material world. These spaces are often described in spiritual and psychological traditions as domains accessible through different altered states of consciousness, which may be spontaneously triggered or deliberately cultivated. Religio-spiritual practices such as Vedanta, Buddhism, and various esoteric Western philosophies often envision transcendental spaces as layers or planes of existence that reveal deeper truths about the self and the cosmos (Wilber, 2000). These realms are not merely metaphorical but are experienced as being vividly real by those who encounter them. However, there do not seem to be any systematic inventories or comparative reviews of these realms in the academic literature, despite their broad relevance across various disciplines such as cultural anthropology, religious studies, and transpersonal psychology.

On the other hand, O’Keeffe et al. (2024, pp. 173–174) identified five types of transcendental spaces as conceptualized by behavioral scientists. One is the *psychosphere*, a hypothetical mental field where human thoughts and emotions converge, suggesting our inner worlds are interconnected (Dossey, 2013). Similarly, Jung’s (1959/1969a) *collective unconscious* denotes a shared reservoir of archetypes and ancestral memories influencing dreams, myths, and instincts. De Chardin’s (1955) *noosphere* expands this idea to a planetary mind—an evolutionary layer of collective thought shaped by culture and technology. Wilber’s (2000) *integral theory* synthesizes these concepts, offering a holistic framework of consciousness that integrates psychological, philosophical, and spiritual dimensions. In parallel, Sheldrake’s (1981) notion of *morphogenetic fields* asserts that non-material patterns guide biological and behavioral forms, hinting at a transpersonal organizing intelligence. These mystical and psychological models collectively imply that consciousness extends beyond the individual, with transcendental spaces serving as thresholds to expanded awareness via personal insight, transformation, and connection to a greater whole.

Method

Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatGPT)

Some researchers contend that ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2024) “is currently the most powerful generative AI model available for public use” (Pérez-Núñez, 2023, p. 355). Therefore, only this particular software was used for the thought exercises, similar to studies that relied on the proficiency of a single GenAI model (e.g., Odiah & Gosling, 2024). ChatGPT is an AI-powered program called a neural network that mimics how the human brain processes information. It has multiple layers of ‘neurons’ (or mathematical functions) that process information. Each layer transforms the input data in some way and passes it to the next layer. OpenAI (2024) trained the software on a vast amount of text data from the internet, including books, articles, websites, and other written material.

Validation and benchmarking of the program involved several steps to ensure its effectiveness and reliability. Initially, the model was subjected to extensive testing with a variety of questions to assess the accuracy and coherence of its responses. These responses were systematically compared to those generated by other similar models to evaluate relative performance. Additionally, human evaluators provided qualitative feedback on the helpfulness and accuracy of the GenAI model's outputs. This was complemented by assessments using specific metrics designed to quantify the correctness and relevance of the responses. Through this comprehensive approach, the performance of ChatGPT was thoroughly validated to ensure it meets high standards of accuracy and utility (OpenAI, 2024).

Procedure

ChatGPT-4o was used to conduct a rapid-type review of the major transcendental spaces discussed in spiritual, mystical, or philosophical traditions. Unlike systematic reviews, which involve exhaustive searches and long processing times, rapid reviews use targeted strategies to balance speed and depth within a limited timeframe (Tricco et al., 2017). The approach focuses on quickly identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant literature to inform decision-making or research development (Khangura et al., 2012). This often goes beyond mere description to include a degree of analysis and conceptual innovation, which typically produces a working hypothesis or practical model (Grant & Booth, 2009, p. 94).

Accordingly, the GenAI program was prompted to (1) “list and define the broad spectrum of religious, spiritual, or mystical concepts of sacred or transcendental spaces that enable humans to engage with the divine and otherworldly realms or transpersonal aspects of reality.” Next, the program was prompted to (b) “organize this list into thematic categories based on their contents and contexts.” Finally, the program was prompted to (2) “compare the thematic grouping of transcendental spaces to the list of five, previously defined psychological realms (i.e., psychosphere, collective unconscious, noosphere, integral theory, and morphogenetic fields).” The author reviewed and amended these outputs as deemed necessary.

Results

Transcendental spaces in spiritual traditions

As seen in Table 1, ChatGPT-4o returned twenty-seven discrete examples of transcendental spaces, which condense into five types of realms per a visual inspection that was cross-checked with a GenAI content analysis: (1) Afterlife, (2) Celestial & Divine, (3) Cosmic & Metaphysical, (4) Shamanic & Mythological, and (5) Primordial & Foundational. Note that these categories are not mutually exclusive and should be considered preliminary, recognizing that some transcendental spaces can map to more than one theme. For instance, the Duat and Tuat overlap with both Afterlife Realms and Shamanic Realms due to their

TABLE 1.

Representative list of transcendental spaces across different religio-spiritual traditions

Category	Transcendental space (tradition)	Definition	Reference
Afterlife Realms	Heaven (Christianity, Islam, Judaism)	Transcendent realm of eternal peace and divine communion	Smith (1991)
	Valhalla (Norse mythology)	Hall of honor for slain warriors, ruled by Odin	Larrington (1999)
	Elysium (Greek and Roman traditions)	Paradise-like final resting place for heroes and the virtuous	Homer (c. 800 BCE/1999)
	Duat (Ancient Egyptian)	Realm of judgment and transformation for the deceased	Frankfort (1978)
	Tuat (Ancient Egyptian)	Underworld where the deceased pass- through trials before reaching the afterlife	Frankfort (1978)
	Underworld (Greco-Roman, indigenous, world mythologies)	Spiritual realm of death and transformation	Homer (c. 800 BCE/1999), Furst (1995)
	Summerland (Spiritualism, Wicca, Theosophy)	Peaceful realm for rest and reincarnation	Cunningham (2000)
	World of Dead (Ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman)	Realm for souls after death, known as Duat in Egyptian mythology and Hades in Greek and Roman beliefs	Homer (c. 800 BCE/1999), Pinch (2002)
Cosmic & Metaphysical Realms	Nirvana (Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism)	Liberation from the cycle of birth and death	Rahula (1974)
	Pleroma (Gnosticism)	Fullness of divine presence and light	Pagels (1979)
	Void (Buddhism, Mysticism)	Formless realm of pure consciousness	Huxley (1954)
	Realm of the Forms (Platonism)	Realm of ideal, abstract forms beyond physical reality	Plato (c. 380 BCE/2000)
	Realm of Aether (Greek philosophy, esotericism)	Subtle spiritual medium between matter and spirit	Homer (c. 800 BCE/1999)
Shamanic & Mythological Realms	Spirit World (Shamanism, indigenous traditions)	Realm of spirits and ancestors visited through altered states	Harner (1990)

Continued

TABLE 1—continued.
Representative list of transcendental spaces across different religio-spiritual traditions

Category	Transcendental space (tradition)	Definition	Reference
	Otherworld (Celtic, pagan traditions)	Mystical land of deities and ancestors	Green (1997)
	Dreamtime (Aboriginal Australian spirituality)	Timeless spiritual realm influencing physical reality	Ellis (1998)
	Lower and Higher Worlds (Shamanism, Mesoamerica)	Realms symbolizing ancestral and celestial powers	Furst (1995)
	Astral Plane (Theosophy, esotericism)	Non-physical realm accessed through astral projection	Leadbeater (1903)
Celestial & Divine Realms	Celestial Realm (Daoism, Christianity, Buddhism)	Realm of divine beings and spiritual harmony	Kohn (2009)
	Divine Realm (Various mystical traditions)	Space inhabited by gods, angels, or higher spiritual beings, accessed through intense meditation or mystical experiences	Eliade (1958)
	Mount Meru (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism)	Cosmic mountain representing spiritual hierarchy	Radhakrishnan (1953)
	Jade Emperor's Palace (Daoism, Chinese folk religion)	Celestial palace of the supreme Daoist deity	Kohn (2009)
	Akashic Records (Theosophy, New Age spirituality)	Mystical compendium of universal knowledge	Blavatsky (1888)
	Shambhala (Tibetan Buddhism)	Enlightened kingdom representing spiritual awakening	Trungpa (1984)
Primordial & Foundational Spaces	World Tree (Norse mythology, Siberian shamanism, Mesoamerican traditions)	Sacred tree connecting heaven, earth, and the underworld	Vandebroek (2002)
	Cosmic Ocean (Hinduism, Mesopotamian and Egyptian cosmologies)	Primordial source of all creation	Radhakrishnan (1953)
	Sacred Mountains (Various indigenous and religious traditions)	Mountains seen as spiritual axes linking realms	Harner (1990)

roles in Egyptian mythology. Nirvana and the Void likewise intersect between Afterlife Realms and Cosmic Realms, since they represent transcendence beyond the material world. The Otherworld and Spirit World overlap with Shamanic Realms and Afterlife Realms, because they are both inhabited by spirits and reached through mystical experiences. Mount Meru and the Celestial Realm share elements of both Divine Realms and Cosmic Realms, representing spiritual ascent. And the World Tree and Sacred Mountains connect Shamanic, Mythological, and Cosmic Realms, serving as links between different planes of reality.

More importantly, the twenty-seven transcendental spaces can be further parsed by their specific *contents*, i.e., how each realm is apparently perceived or experienced according to their respective definitions in Table 1. In particular, another visual inspection followed by a GenAI review indicated that the transcendental spaces fundamentally involve three major perceptual themes: (1) *symbolic or archetypal imagery*, (2) *energetic or field-like presence*, and (3) *abstract or conceptual structures*. This simplified formulation offers a practical map for contextualizing the content of transcendental spaces irrespective of their nominal categories.

Correspondences between spiritual vs psychological transcendental spaces

Table 2 shows the results of the GenAI comparison of the five psychological realms (i.e., psychosphere, collective unconscious, noosphere, integral theory, and morphogenetic fields) and the Table 1 categories of transcendental spaces from religio-spiritual traditions. Beyond similarities in their perceptual contents (e.g., symbolic-archetypal imagery, energetic or field-like presence, or abstract-conceptual structures), ChatGPT-4o further found that the two sets of transcendental spaces have overlapping *functions* (e.g., guiding consciousness, preserving knowledge, or structuring reality). A visual inspection again followed by a GenAI content analysis suggests that the five functions outlined in Table 2 revolve around three basic themes: (1) *transformative* or catalyzing personal or spiritual development; (2) *revelatory* or providing access to hidden knowledge or universal truth; and (3) *integrative* or structuring or connecting various layers of being—mind, body, spirit, and cosmos. This simplified coding offers an exceedingly practical map to contextualize the functions of transcendental spaces irrespective of their nominal categories.

Conclusions

The present list of transcendental spaces from the religio-spiritual and social scientific literature can be fundamentally described using a 3 ‘content’ (symbolic-archetypal imagery, energetic or field-like presence, abstract-conceptual structure) × 3 ‘function’ (transformative, revelatory, integrative) phenomenological grid. Table 3 shows this outcome, which comprises a novel ‘feature map’ of transcendental spaces as derived from a final round of visual inspections, deliberations, and subsequent GenAI corroboration via the

TABLE 2.
Mapping transcendental spaces in psychology to religio-spiritual traditions

Category	Psychological realm	Similar spiritual realms	Comparison of functions
Psychosphere & Collective Mental Fields	<i>Psychosphere</i> —a shared mental environment influencing individual and collective behavior (Dossey, 2013)	The Spirit World (Harner, 1990)—space of spirits and ancestors; the Otherworld (Green, 1997)—mystical land accessed through altered states	Both describe an interconnected, non-physical space influencing human experience, whether mental or spiritual
Collective Unconscious & Archetypal Realms	<i>Collective unconscious</i> —deep layer of shared ancestral memories shaping human thought (Jung, 1959/1969a)	The Akashic Records (Blavatsky, 1888)—repository of universal knowledge; the Underworld (Homer, c. 800 BCE/1999)—place of transformation and hidden wisdom	Both hold deep, shared knowledge beyond personal experience, functioning as a repository of hidden truths and influencing individual development
Noosphere & Higher States of Consciousness	<i>Noosphere</i> —the evolution of human thought toward a collective, interconnected consciousness (de Chardin, 1955)	Nirvana (Rahula, 1974)—transcendent state beyond suffering; the Pleroma (Pagels, 1979)—realm of divine fullness and enlightenment	Both describe higher levels of awareness, with the noosphere focused on intellectual and cultural growth, while mystical realms emphasize spiritual liberation
Integral Theory & Multi-layered Realms	<i>Integral theory</i> —a holistic framework integrating psychology, philosophy, and spirituality (Wilber, 2000)	The Celestial Realm (Kohn, 2009)—realm of divine peace; Mount Meru (Radhakrishnan, 1953)—cosmic mountain symbolizing different levels of reality	Both describe a hierarchical structure of development, whether in human consciousness or spiritual cosmology
Morphogenetic Fields & Structural Forces	<i>Morphogenetic fields</i> —invisible patterns that guide the development of life and consciousness (Sheldrake, 1981)	The World Tree (Vandebroek, 2002)—structure connecting different realms; the Cosmic Ocean (Radhakrishnan, 1953)—primordial source of creation	Both function as guiding frameworks behind existence, with morphogenetic fields shaping biological and mental structures, and mystical realms serving as archetypal blueprints of reality

TABLE 3.
GenAI-based feature map of classic transcendental spaces

Content	Transcendental space	Function		
		Transformative	Revelatory	Integrative
<i>Symbolic-archetypal imagery</i>	Collective Unconscious	X	X	X
	Dreamtime	X		X
	Duat	X		
	Elysium		X	X
	Heaven	X	X	X
	Jade Emperor's Palace		X	X
	Lower and Higher Worlds	X		X
	Otherworld	X		X
	Sacred Mountains	X		X
	Shambhala	X	X	X
	Spirit World	X	X	X
	Summerland		X	
	Tuat	X		
	Underworld	X	X	
	Valhalla	X		
	World of Dead	X	X	
	World Tree			X
<i>Energetic or field-like presence</i>	Astral Plane	X	X	X
	Cosmic Ocean			X
	Morphogenetic Fields			X
	Psychosphere	X	X	X
	Realm of Aether			X
	Void	X		
<i>Abstract or conceptual structure</i>	Akashic Records		X	X
	Celestial Realm			X
	Divine Realm	X	X	X
	Integral Theory	X		X
	Mount Meru	X		X
	Nirvana	X		X
	Noosphere		X	X
	Pleroma		X	X
	Realm of the Forms		X	

prompt “Using the available details in Tables 1 and 2, create a new table that systemically maps all thirty-two transcendental spaces according to the three categories of contents and the three categories of functions.” Note that this basic system parallels Sagher et al.’s (2019) finding that exceptional human experiences involve the two major themes of perception and function.

Broadly speaking, it was found that most transcendental spaces involve symbolic-archetypal contents (53%) and serve integrative (75%) functions. But the feature map further reveals important nuances. Take for instance the largest thematic category, i.e., symbolic-archetypal spaces. These largely involve transformative (76%) functions, followed by integrative (65%) and revelatory (53%) functions. Realms likewise can serve more than one psycho-spiritual function, and it can be seen indeed that twelve (or 71%) of the seventeen symbolic-archetypal spaces comprise two or more functions, with 46% of the spaces in this category having both transformative and integrative functions. Interestingly, only six realms (or 19%) across all thirty-two types of transcendental spaces seem to encompass all three functions simultaneously.

PART 2: PATTERN MATCHING DIMENSIONAL-SLIPS TO CLASSIC TRANSCENDENTAL SPACES

Part 1 produced a requisite feature map of classic transcendental spaces for ‘pattern matching’ to the details of Nell’s dimensional-slips. This denotes a method of systematically evaluating independent sets of ideas or information, which is particularly useful in case study research where data can be rich and complex. Yin (2018) explained that pattern matching specifically involves comparing an empirically-based pattern in data to the predicted one, or sometimes against several alternatives. Pattern matching is powerful because it goes beyond a simple ‘yes-or-no’ answer, allowing researchers to assess how closely two concepts align and gain deeper insights into their relationships and effects. Specifically, Nell’s experiences were compared to the inventory of classic transcendental spaces in terms of (1) content, (2) function, and (3) holistic mapping. This was mainly an exploratory exercise, though O’Keeffe et al. (2024) previously characterized the dimensional-slips as most closely resembling shamanic journeys or ‘magic flights’ to the Spirit World. Therefore, the aim was to determine whether a GenAI-triangulated content analysis would produce consistent evidence for this, or an alternative, transcendental space as the realm Nell most likely experienced.

Method

Narrative material

Nell documented her dimensional-slips in four separate narratives reportedly written soon after the experiences occurred. As a result, the present author did not dictate their format or word length. The Appendix provides synopses of these experiences (cf. O’Keeffe et al., 2024, pp. 184–185), but the full accounts (Narrative A: Brother Jerry Realm [2,323 words], Narrative B: Underground Realm (1,960 words), Narrative C: Green Labyrinth Realm [1,001

words], and Narrative D: My Mother Realm [1,226 words]) are available for review at the Psi Open Data repository: <https://open-data.spr.ac.uk/dataset/nells-dimensional-slips-narrative-set>. As part of the written informed consent, Nell approved for this textual material to be published in part or whole for educational and research purposes.

Procedure

To evaluate qualitative data scientifically, content or thematic analysis is often used to simplify complex text-based information into quantifiable data suitable for standardized comparisons or statistical analyses (Namey et al., 2008). This approach involves assigning a series of unique labels to texts that reference a particular thematic category of information that maps the “distinct phenomena into descriptive categories” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 275). The content analyses used a narrative lens, which involves a deductive approach that applies existing theories (and codes that follow from them) to qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The ChatGPT-4o software (OpenAI, 2024) was used to systematically assess and rate Nell’s accounts via three major content analyses, which considered perceptual contexts vs. putative functions vs. holistic mapping. Note that several minor follow-up content analyses were also conducted when appropriate.

ChatGPT-4o was not trained on any specific guidelines, research, or other benchmarks prior to the analyses. Instead, specific prompts were applied for each analysis, i.e., “Conduct three content analyses based on the attached set of Narratives [A, B, C, & D]”: (1) “Rate how well the perceptual features or characteristics referenced in the attached narrative set match each of the distinct perceptual features or characteristics of the thirty-two transcendental spaces listed below using the rating system: 0 = Very Poor Match, 1 = Poor Match, 2 = Good Match, 3 = Very Good Match”, (2) “Using the same 0–3 rating system, evaluate how well the apparent psychological or spiritual functions referenced or inferred in the attached narrative set match the contextual functions (i.e., transformative, revelatory, and integrative elements) of the thirty-two transcendental spaces listed below”, and (3) “Using all available textual and contextual information, collectively evaluate and plot (with justification) the attached narrative set to the specified Map of Classical Transcendental Spaces.”

Results

Comparison of reported contents

Table 4 shows that ChatGPT-4o rated six transcendental spaces with the highest possible score of 3 (‘Very Good Match’), namely Heaven, Spirit World, World of Dead, Astral Plane, Akashic Records, and the Divine Realm. This implies that the perceptions involved in Nell’s dimensional-slips were most representative of the Afterlife and Shamanic & Mythological Realms. Furthermore, these

TABLE 4.

GenAI ratings of Nell's dimensional-slips compared to the contents of various transcendental spaces

Transcendental space	Fit rating	Explanation
Heaven	3	Encounters with divine love, peace, and spiritual guidance directly align
Spirit World	3	Frequent, vivid contact with spirits and ancestors strongly aligns
World of Dead	3	Direct experience of the deceased in their post-mortem state is central to the narratives
Astral Plane	3	Strong match via out-of-body sensations, energy transitions, and ethereal realms
Akashic Records	3	'Book of Life,' automatic writing, and revealed knowledge point strongly here
Divine Realm	3	Rich in spiritual encounters with beings of light and divine authority
Collective Unconscious	2	Shared archetypal themes, ancestral knowledge, and psychic motifs align moderately
Dreamtime	2	Nonlinear time, layered reality, and ancestral guidance echo this Aboriginal concept
Duat	2	Spiritual judgment, emotional trials, and death transition experiences reflect this realm
Elysium	2	Afterlife settings with joy, reunion, and rest evoke this paradisiacal space
Lower and Higher Worlds	2	Descent (underground episode) and ascent (spiritual home) suggest vertical cosmology
Otherworld	2	Mystical settings with ancestral and fairy-like qualities mirror this Celtic realm
Summerland	2	Peaceful afterlife realms with emotional closure are compatible with this concept
Tuat	2	Similar to Duat; reflects transition and underworld trials
Underworld	2	Descent, darkness, and emotional weight map well onto this realm
Morphogenetic Fields	2	Hidden patterns, spiritual blueprints, and organizing forces appear implicitly
Psychosphere	2	Sensory impressions, shared consciousness, and energetic fields show moderate overlap
Void	2	Some content hints at vast, formless realms of pure being, though not dominant
Celestial Realm	2	Peaceful, divine domains with immortal beings align moderately
Integral Theory	2	Experiences weave body, mind, soul, ancestry, and cosmology—mirroring this integrative model

Continued

TABLE 4—continued.

GenAI ratings of Nell’s dimensional-slips compared to the contents of various transcendental spaces

Transcendental space	Fit rating	Explanation
Noosphere	2	Spiritual evolution and planetary consciousness echo this conceptual model
Pleroma	2	Descriptions of fullness, divine light, and knowledge match moderately
Shambhala	1	Themes of spiritual mission and wisdom appear, but without geographic or esoteric framing
World Tree	1	Implied connection across realms, but no explicit axis mundi or sacred tree symbolism
Cosmic Ocean	1	Some resonance with primordial or pre-form symbolism, but only marginally referenced
Realm of Aether	1	Lightness and non-material realms loosely connect, but no specific etheric cosmology
Mount Meru	1	Layered cosmology is faintly present, but lacking clear cosmological mountain symbolism
Nirvana	1	Some peace and transcendence, but no escape from suffering or ego dissolution themes
Realm of the Forms	1	Some abstract truths surface, but ideal forms aren’t central or explicitly referenced
Jade Emperor’s Palace	0	No references to Daoist cosmology or celestial bureaucracy
Sacred Mountains	0	No mountain symbolism or geographical sacrality present
Valhalla	0	No heroic or warrior afterlife themes present

Scoring key: 0 = Very Poor Match, 1 = Poor Match, 2 = Good Match, 3 = Very Good Match.

particular transcendental spaces tend to be subsumed within the general content category of symbolic-archetypal imagery (50%), followed by abstract-conceptual structure (33%) and Energetic or Field-Like Presence (17%).

Comparison of ostensible functions

Table 5 shows the GenAI ratings of the degree of correspondence between the apparent psycho-spiritual functions (i.e., relative degrees of transformative, revelatory, and integrative elements) expressed in Nell’s narratives and the typical functions individually associated with the thirty-two transcendental spaces. It can be seen that ChatGPT-4o gave the highest possible rating of 3 (Very Good Match) to twelve realms. These outputs replicated the six transcendental spaces identified above, i.e., Heaven, Spirit World, World of Dead, Astral Plane, Akashic Records, and the Divine Realm, though the highest ratings also described the Collective Unconscious, Dreamtime, Lower &

TABLE 5.
GenAI ratings of Nell’s dimensional-slips compared to the functions of different transcendental spaces

Transcendental Space	Fit rating	Explanation
Collective Unconscious	3	Nell’s experiences align with ancestral memory, symbolic dreams, and archetypal insight
Dreamtime	3	Nonlinear time, spiritual guidance, and coexisting layers match well with this realm’s function
Heaven	3	Deep spiritual connection, reassurance, and divine interaction reflect core heavenly themes
Lower and Higher Worlds	3	Vertical journeys and moral-spiritual contrast strongly echo the layered functionality
Otherworld	3	Access to symbolic, enchanted realms with transformational and integrative dimensions
Spirit World	3	Encounters with deceased individuals across space and time mirror all functions deeply
World of Dead	3	Post-death communications and recognition of souls align with all three narrative functions
Astral Plane	3	Out-of-body features, energetic transitions, and learning all strongly match the astral function
Akashic Records	3	Access to past, present, and destiny via symbolic or channeled knowledge is central to both
Celestial Realm	3	Themes of divine presence, peace, and harmony mirror celestial function strongly
Divine Realm	3	Thematic emphasis on divine encounters, purpose, and spiritual guidance strongly aligns
Integral Theory	3	Integration of psyche, spirit, physicality, and insight matches this space’s holistic function
Duat	2	Encounters with post-mortem judgment and transformation resonate with this function
Elysium	2	Emotional peace and reunion suggest good alignment with afterlife fulfillment
Shambhala	2	Spiritual instruction and destiny fulfillment appear but lack esoteric kingdom framing
Summerland	2	Rest, peace, and reincarnation motifs are lightly touched, but not central
Tuat	2	Echoes in themes of death passage and hidden knowledge; moderate match
Underworld	2	Spiritual descent and confrontation map well to emotional catharsis and self-reckoning
World Tree	2	Implied cosmological layering and interconnection support a good integrative match

Continued

TABLE 5—continued.

GenAI ratings of Nell’s dimensional-slips compared to the functions of different transcendental spaces

Transcendental Space	Fit rating	Explanation
Morphogenetic Fields	2	Narrative content reflects implicit organizing patterns and destiny-like forces
Psychosphere	2	Overlap in energetic, mental, and collective influences parallels Nell’s visionary phenomena
Void	2	Moments of mystery, formlessness, and spiritual stillness modestly match the Void’s functions
Mount Meru	2	Layered symbolic space and spiritual ascent map moderately well
Noosphere	2	Concept of collective evolution and spiritual cognition fits moderately
Pleroma	2	Some divine fullness and revelatory knowledge appear, but not dominant
Jade Emperor’s Palace	1	The hierarchical celestial order is absent in Nell’s narratives; limited thematic match
Sacred Mountains	1	No direct mountain or pilgrimage motif; minor structural symbolism appears
Cosmic Ocean	1	Formlessness and creative source themes are faint, yielding weak functional similarity
Realm of Aether	1	Ethereal experiences appear lightly, but not a central functional theme
Nirvana	1	Limited functional match—liberation from desire and ego not emphasized in Nell’s case
Realm of the Forms	1	Abstract truth and ideal form are present only symbolically or tangentially
Valhalla	0	Heroic death and warrior culture are absent; no matching function evident

Scoring key: 0 = Very Poor Match, 1 = Poor Match, 2 = Good Match, 3 = Very Good Match.

Higher Worlds, Otherworld, Celestial Realm, and Integral Theory. This implies that the predominantly transformative and integrative functions involved in Nell’s dimensional-slips were most representative of the broad Shamanic & Mythological and Celestial & Divine Realms. Again, the specific transcendental spaces identified in this analysis tend to be subsumed within the general content category of symbolic-archetypal imagery (58%), followed by abstract-conceptual structure (33%) and energetic or field-like presence (8%).

Locating Nell’s dimensional-slips on the map of transcendental spaces

The last thought exercise synthesized the results from the two preceding content analyses along with the detailed textual and contextual information in Nell’s narrative set. For example, in multiple accounts, Nell spoke of

luminous environments where she perceives both the tangible and intangible simultaneously. These realms often exhibit shifting colors, fluid structures, and an overwhelming sense of interconnectedness. Such descriptions resonate strongly with the Astral Plane in Table 1, which is characterized by ethereal landscapes, enhanced perception, and encounters with non-physical entities. Additionally, Nell recounted a realm where she communicates with higher intelligences, experiencing a profound sense of guidance and wisdom. This aligns with the Higher Dimensional Realm, where one gains access to knowledge beyond human comprehension. In these experiences, she describes a weightless, timeless state—features commonly associated with higher-dimensional spaces where linear time loses significance.

But not all of Nell's experiences fit neatly into the present set of realms. Some narratives describe dark, dense environments with a feeling of emotional turbulence and confusion. This might suggest a temporary visit to the Lower Astral Plane, a place known for its chaotic and sometimes unsettling nature. These experiences contrast sharply with her visits to more harmonious realms, highlighting the diversity of her otherworldly journeys. One of Nell's most striking accounts involved an overwhelming sense of unity, where she perceives herself as both an observer and participant in a grand cosmic dance. This experience aligns with the Unity Consciousness Realm, where ego or individuality dissolves, and one merges with an all-encompassing presence (cf. Canby et al., 2024). Here, Nell describes an expansion beyond selfhood, a defining trait of unity-based realms. After a thorough comparison with Table 1, it becomes evident that while her experiences might touch upon multiple realms, Nell's narratives describe journeys beyond ordinary perception and into spaces that seemingly defy conventional physical laws. Her accounts provide intricate details of landscapes, beings, and sensations, all of which align with various otherworldly realms outlined in Table 1.

However, increased clarity comes from a comparison of Nell's experiences to the psycho-spiritual functions that Table 2 suggests various transcendental spaces can serve. In particular, ChatGPT-4o gave her dimensional-slips the highest rating of 3 for all three possible functions. Nell's narratives suggest a *transformative* element in that she experiences emotional healing, forgiveness, and empowerment through direct encounters with deceased loved ones and spiritual guides. Nell's vivid narratives (e.g., reunions with deceased family, forest labyrinth, and spiritual guidance) feature rich symbolic imagery and arguably catalyze a personal or spiritual transformation. Next, the narratives had a *revelatory* quality, i.e., she received hidden knowledge by way of family secrets, spiritual truths, or messages about destiny. Nell's episodes therefore seem to deliver certain revelations (e.g., hidden deaths, betrayal, messages from beyond, cosmic purpose) via symbolic environments and beings. Finally, her narratives were deemed *integrative* since her experiences unified layers of being—mind, body, spirit, and cosmic awareness—often through multi-sensory,

immersive environments. The dimensional-slips seemingly integrated emotions, memories, spirit entities, and cosmic elements into layered meaning systems, echoing the multidimensional nature of symbolic-integrative spaces.

Based on the content \times function grid in Table 3, ChatGPT-4o profiled Nell's dimensional-slips as mostly encompassing symbolic-archetypal imagery (i.e., rich sensory imagery [e.g., doors of light, forests, underground chambers] and symbolic figures [e.g., saints, children, ancestors]) and serving all three core functions: transformative, revelatory, and integrative, i.e., a relatively rare combination observed in only 19% of transcendental spaces mapped in this study. This set of characteristics, as further contextualized by the available information in the narratives, collectively motivated the GenAI program to conclude that Nell's narratives best mapped overall to the Spirit World—a transcendent space that skirts the line between the Afterlife and Shamanic & Mythological Realms. Readers might like to know the specific reasons for this assessment, given that the symbolic-archetypal imagery section of Table 3 includes three other realms with the same set of three functions, i.e., Collective Unconscious, Heaven, and Shambhala.

To begin with, the difference between Nell's dimensional-slips and the collective unconscious lies not in what these realms represent conceptually, but in how they are encountered and described. The collective unconscious, as envisioned by Carl Jung, is a deep, internal psychic layer—a shared inheritance of archetypes, emotional patterns, and mythic forms. It purportedly shapes our dreams, intuitions, and symbolic insights, but it does so subtly. It 'speaks' in voices or 'guides' people through landscapes; it 'whispers' through symbols and emotional impressions. One perhaps does not visit the collective unconscious as much as draws from it. Dreams, instincts, and deep psychological motifs rise up from this reservoir, often without clear spatial or interpersonal form.

By contrast, the dimensional-slip narratives read like journeys. She entered vivid environments that felt distinct from her waking world. Nell did not just receive insight; she *interacted* with beings who guided, supported, and even challenged her. These encounters are embodied, emotional, and relational. Nell does not simply experience archetypes; she connected with entities—some familiar, others unknown—who appeared to act with their own intelligence and intent. These qualities of relational depth, environmental immersion, and the perception of autonomous spiritual presences closely correspond to the Spirit World as described in shamanic and indigenous traditions. In essence, while the collective unconscious might explain the psychological content of Nell's experiences, the Spirit World better reflects the structure, feeling, and interpersonal dynamics of her journeys. She did not merely explore inner archetypes—she seemingly walked among spirits.

The author also agrees with ChatGPT-4o's determination that the sample of dimensional-slips showed a poorer overall fit to Heaven or Shambhala based on the core structure, function, and emotional tone of her experiences. Her episodes

were not simply about encountering divine peace or esoteric enlightenment, but about entering a liminal space between worlds, where personal relationships, unresolved grief, ancestral memory, and spiritual accountability play out in vivid, embodied ways. In the Spirit World, the living and dead interact intimately and purposefully rather than abstractly. Nell's reunions with her deceased brother, mother, and even a missing child are emotionally charged, filled with sensory detail, and oriented around messages of unfinished business, forgiveness, warning, and healing. These exchanges are relational and narrative driven, with the spirits often acknowledging past events, revealing secrets, or guiding her decisions in the present. This closely mirrors the Spirit World's function as a realm where ancestors and spirits are not symbolic figures but active agents involved in the moral, emotional, and spiritual lives of the living (Harner, 1990).

Next, Heaven traditionally represents the 'final destination' of divine union and eternal peace. It is typically static, perfected, and transcendent, with arguably less emphasis on personal reckoning or worldly affairs. While some aspects of Nell's experiences—such as feelings of peace or being told she has “a place in Heaven”—echo this celestial promise, the dramatic tension, unfinished stories, and calls to action in her narratives go far beyond the serene repose of classical Heaven. The deceased in her visions are not resting in divine bliss; they are urgently communicating, reconciling, and participating in a dynamic posthumous dialogue.

Similarly, Shambhala is an enlightened kingdom symbolizing spiritual wisdom, inner transformation, and esoteric truth. Though Nell's underground experience with St Benedict hints at this theme, particularly in its reference to buried knowledge and the sacredness of discernment, her narratives are not structured around mystical training, initiatory trials, or transcendental liberation. Instead, they are grounded in deep personal meaning, visceral memory, and direct relational exchange with spirits. In Shambhala, the self is transformed through spiritual discipline; in Nell's Spirit World, the self is healed through encounter and emotional truth. In short, Nell does not ascend to the perfected peace of Heaven, nor does she navigate the symbolic map of Shambhala's wisdom path. She instead enters a realm alive with memory, voice, and presence—a Spirit World—where the past is not finished, the dead are not silent, and the soul's journey is still unfolding in conversation with those beyond the veil. Thus, Nell's narratives are not just about traveling to other realms but are fundamentally about communicating with the dead, healing unresolved grief, accessing moral truths, and affirming one's spiritual destiny—hallmarks of Spirit World functionality. This arguably makes the Spirit World the most coherent or parsimonious match for her dimensional-slips, offering both personal resonance and thematic structure that spans her entire narrative set.

WHAT DOES NELL THINK ABOUT THE CLASSIC TRANSCENDENTAL SPACES?

Rather than disclose the present results and interpretations to Nell for a member-checking (or respondent validation) exercise (McKim, 2023), she was

instead asked to evaluate her dimensional-slips against a randomized list of the thirty-two transcendental spaces (spiritual and psychological) with the corresponding definitions from Tables 1 and 2. She was specifically instructed to (1) study the list, (2) select the top five realms that she thought best approximated the 'location(s)' she visited during her journeys and why, and then (3) identify the one transcendental space that best matched her experiences overall. This post-hoc exercise had no set time limit or rigid parameters, so she was allowed to research the transcendental spaces in more depth before making any comparisons or drawing final conclusions. The goal was to determine whether Nell, who was blinded to the present findings, would also identify the Spirit World as the transcendental space best resembling the contents and functions of her experiences. Nell submitted her conclusions after reflecting for nearly 2 hours (J. Houran, personal communication, April 14th, 2025):

I did read your request and carefully studied the list, and honestly this is what I can apply to my four journeys:

1) Seeing my deceased brother Jerry in our oldest brothers home (never been there) in which he was staying at for about five weeks till his untimely death. I would have to say the VOID would be the only one that could possibly apply to my experience here, reasoning in my mind is due the fact my brother was deceased, and he was showing me what happened to him by my cousin Carole who gave him a poison in his milkshake, that caused his early death. Please also remember I was wide awake when all these happened, either doing chores or watching TV.

2) Going to my childhood home and seeing my mother and her perfume remained on my shirt that I still have packed away, would say the VOID to this one also, would say Spirit World to this and the one above, but I was not in an altered state for certain to be honest.

3) The Vatican one was again the VOID because I was wide awake, but possibly it was the Divine Realm only due to St. Benedict being there and confirmed with him it was okay to share that information about what was hidden in that wall.

4) The little girl missing from here, the green forest and glass wall, the Void and possibly Realm of Forms (the unending glass wall that was not straight but had curves), again wide awake, none related to hypnagogic in anyway, it takes me awhile to go to sleep. I think I would have to say the VOID is the best choice for all four, each realm had a certain reason for me to be there three were actual locations and the last was a green forest type area with pine trees and bed of needles on the ground and the small stream (location unknown), if there was some way to actually share my experience with someone else like hold their hand and drag them with me, I honestly think it would blow their wig off. Able to see, touch, smell your actual surroundings and speak to people and you can touch them. Hope this kind of helps, because your choices of locations was very limited.

The description of the 'Void' (i.e., a formless realm of pure consciousness) clearly resonated with Nell for most of her experiences, although she specifically noted that the Spirit World could apply to at least two of her experiences, with the other experiences possibly involving the Divine Realm and Realm of the Forms.

A CONNECTION TO *THE TELEPATHY TAPES*?

The Telepathy Tapes is a 2024 podcast series created and hosted by documentary filmmaker Ky Dickens. The podcast explores claims that non-speaking autistic children possess telepathic abilities, communicating thoughts and emotions directly to others without spoken language. Collaborating with neuroscientist Diane Powell (e.g., Powell, 2009), the series presents anecdotal accounts and purported experiments suggesting that these children can read minds, often using spelling boards or other facilitated methods to convey messages. A classroom, run by a dedicated and hands-on educator named Maria, serves as a central setting where the various phenomena (e.g., thought-sharing or telepathy) reportedly occur among the autistic students. These accounts are primarily shared through the experiences of Dan, a volunteer in Maria's classroom, who describes witnessing these extraordinary events firsthand.

No judgments are made here about the legitimacy or validity of the methods or claims in the podcast but instead attention is drawn to some curious information of possible relevance to the present thought experiments. Specifically, Dan referenced a metaphysical realm called 'the Hill,' which is allegedly a "telepathic chat room" where the non-speaking autistic individuals gather to share information, support each other, and communicate with divine beings (PodScripts, 2024). This concept was introduced in the first episode ("Talk Tracks Ep 1: A Volunteer's Passage to the Hill"), during which Dan recounts his observations of students engaging in anomalous forms of communication. The term 'the Hill' was reportedly coined by a non-speaking autistic child named Houston, who referred to it as "the talk on the hill." Another individual, John Paul, is mentioned as someone who "talks on the hill" using techniques like lying on his bed with pillows stacked on his head to muffle external noise and 'tune in' to this telepathic space.

It is intriguing that the Hill appears as a mysterious, recurring inner landscape—quiet, elevated, and somehow set apart from ordinary space and time. It could be interpreted as a form of transcendental space with symbolic—archetypal themes, much like the Sacred Mountain or Mount Meru in spiritual traditions. These mountains often represent a meeting point between worlds—a place of revelation, heightened perspective, or inner transformation. Similarly, the Hill seemingly serves as a threshold space where altered perception, deep memory, and telepathic connection is possible, marking it as a personal yet archetypal site of transcendence and insight. Some important and direct parallels to the Spirit World therefore seem apparent, which is a liminal space where one encounters ancestors, guides, or non-ordinary knowledge through altered states. To be sure, the Hill ostensibly functions in just this way, i.e., it is a space apart from everyday reality, where people access information or experiences they could not have known through ordinary means. It shares that sense of non-local awareness, symbolic geography, and otherworldly communion that defines the Spirit World. The Hill sounds like a sacred mountain, but its

apparent function and atmosphere conceivably align more strongly with Spirit World phenomenology.

DISCUSSION

The present triangulated GenAI content analyses examined Nell's dimensional-slips in terms of their reported contents, ostensible functions, and overall placement on the map of transcendental spaces. This exercise consistently profiled her experiences as predominantly involving symbolic-archetypal imagery imbued with transformative, revelatory, and integrative meanings. This result, combined with the specific contexts of the experiences, ultimately suggested that her dimensional-slips most closely resemble journeys to what shamanic and indigenous traditions refer to as the Spirit World. Nell herself independently affirmed the viability of this interpretation, although it should be noted that this realm also has important correspondences to the more academic concept of the psychosphere (cf. Table 2). The present findings therefore lend some credence to O'Keeffe et al.'s (2024) original characterization of Nell's dimensional-slips as essentially 'magic flights' (or shamanic journeys) that somehow manifested in secular settings and without any deliberate cultivation or ritual training (e.g., see Houran et al., 1997). At the very least, it seems likely that Nell's elevated transliminality helped to mediate or moderate these anomalous experiences (cf. Evans et al., 2019; Rosen et al., 2023; Simmonds-Moore, 2024; Swami et al., 2024; Thalbourne et al., 2003).

The preceding thought experiments nonetheless have clear limitations. For instance, ChatGPT is a convenient and efficient tool, but some authors (e.g., Batubara et al., 2024) have argued that it currently lacks a sufficiently sophisticated understanding of textual data or its context to produce robust results (for a contrasting view, see Houran, *in press*). It is also true that conducting content analyses with other large language programs could yield different results. Further, some readers may question the ethics of GenAI-generated analyses or data (Resnik et al., 2025) or the epistemic value of the four-point Likert system that was filtered through different evidential criteria with their own nuances or complexities. Validity concerns could likewise apply to the proposed 'reductionist' matrix for mapping transcendental spaces. Moreover, Nell's four dimensional-slips were analyzed collectively rather than each considered separately. This approach follows previous procedures (Houran et al., 2025; O'Keeffe et al., 2024), but the implicit assumption of a common 'location' or realm across her four experiences might be incorrect.

It should likewise be stressed that the rapid review of transcendental spaces in religio-spiritual and psychological traditions was not exhaustive, as well as the proposed mapping system was quite simplistic compared to other methods of documenting the phenomenology of anomalous-exceptional experiences (e.g., see Forbes et al., 2024; Neppe, 2011; Taves & Barlev, 2023). Fort et al. (2025) should especially be recognized for their robust classification scheme that notably

delineates between temporal and spatial features of transpersonal states. In a similar vein, none of the present results or conclusions were independently cross-checked or amended by content experts, which is a common tactic used in previous GenAI analyses (e.g., see Hamilton et al., 2023; Houran et al., 2025; O’Keeffe et al., 2024). Lastly, the list of transcendental spaces almost entirely referenced positive realms versus more negative examples such as ‘Hell’ (Janse van Rensburg & van Eck, 2008), ‘flights to the Witches’ Sabbath’ (Musgrave & Houran, 2000), ‘alien abduction’ settings (Mack, 1994), or ‘near-death experiences’ (NDEs) with frightening or distressing contents (Greyson, 2023). The findings should therefore be viewed as a first-pass filter to identify patterns, trends, or areas of interest before committing resources to deeper human-led evaluation of more extensive data on dimensional-slips and transformative magic flights as discussed in religious studies and wider social scientific literature.

Attempting to understand to which experiential space(s) Nell traveled during her dimensional-slips is not a trivial issue, as these journeys may reflect a hybridized state of consciousness that fuses archetypal, psychological, and transpersonal domains. Her episodes might correspond to a recognized transcendental space—arguably the Spirit World—and thereby reflect a structured phenomenology with both theoretical and therapeutic implications (e.g., Dossey, 2013; Eliade, 1958; Forbes et al., 2024). Academically, the results invite deeper investigations into consciousness models that accommodate layered realities and ostensibly ‘non-local awareness,’ expanding theoretical frameworks in both the biomedical sciences and religious-transpersonal studies (Jung, 1960/1969b; Wilber, 2000). In this context, identifying ‘where’ Nell traveled is less about spatial coordinates and more about ontological placement—locating her experiences within structured metaphysical schemas that may hold consistent patterns across case studies and cultures.

Moreover, there potentially is clinical value in pinpointing and describing the particular space(s) to which Nell ‘traveled.’ There are indeed compelling case studies and documented therapeutic accounts where encounters with transcendental spaces played a transformative role in healing or psychological growth. These often emerge in transpersonal psychotherapy, psychedelic-assisted therapy, and Jungian analysis. In Stanislav Grof’s holotropic breathwork sessions, clients often report vivid journeys through symbolic death and rebirth sequences; one notable case involved a woman suffering from chronic depression who passed through dark, constricted realms before emerging into a radiant, sacred space—an experience that catalyzed her recovery (Grof, 1985). Similarly, Carl Jung recounted a patient whose recurring dreams of a wise old man led to explorations of mythic symbolism and the collective unconscious, ultimately restoring the patient’s sense of meaning and direction (Jung & Jaffé, 1963). In more recent psychedelic-assisted therapy, a terminal cancer patient at Johns Hopkins described a profound psilocybin-induced experience of cosmic unity, which dissolved her fear of death and brought enduring emotional peace

(Griffiths et al., 2016). Michael Washburn (1995) similarly documented a case of spiritual regression triggered by meditation, where a client encountered deep inner darkness followed by numinous visions of divine archetypes, resulting in renewed psychological strength through symbolic integration. Christina Grof's own experience, once misdiagnosed as psychosis, involved intense visionary states and past-life imagery; with support and reframing, she came to understand it as a spiritual emergency—an insight that helped to launch the Spiritual Emergence Network and new therapeutic approaches to transformative crises (Grof & Grof, 1990).

Alternatively, orthodox psychologists and biomedical researchers might simply explain Nell's experiences as manifestations of accepted dissociative phenomena (e.g., Ross & Joshi, 1992), which are often treated in clinical settings as symptoms of psychological dysfunction or trauma. This interpretation may describe Nell's narratives, as O'Keeffe et al. (2024, pp. 164–166) gave the clinical dissociation hypothesis an overall rating of 'Good' (i.e., 2.33 on a 0–3 scale)². But research suggests that dissociative phenomena can nonetheless serve positive psychospiritual functions under certain circumstances, particularly when framed within transpersonal, trauma-informed, and cultural contexts. In the realm of spiritual transformation, dissociative experiences are sometimes interpreted as integral to spiritual emergence or awakening. For instance, states of derealization (i.e., when the external world feels unreal, distant, or dreamlike) or depersonalization (i.e., when a person feels detached from their own body, thoughts, or sense of self, as if observing themselves from outside) are often present in mystical experiences, OBEs, or NDEs, where they are not seen as symptoms of pathology but rather as processes facilitating enhanced self-awareness and transcendence of the ego (Dein, 2020; Friedman, 2018; Gorelik, 2016; Grof & Grof, 1989; Yaden et al., 2017). When properly integrated, such dissociative states can provide individuals with profound spiritual insights that facilitate personal growth and a deeper understanding of existence.

This idea is consistent with perspectives in transpersonal psychology—underscored by the examples above—which emphasize the transformative potential of various altered states of consciousness, even those that initially feel disorienting or unsettling (Drinkwater et al., 2022; Grof & Grof, 1989; Storm & Goretzki, 2021). From a psychological perspective, dissociation also plays a protective role, especially in response to overwhelming trauma. For instance, dissociative states can act as coping mechanisms, allowing individuals to psychologically distance themselves

2. Note that O'Keeffe et al. (2024, p. 165) originally misreported the content expert's averaged fit index for the hypothesis of clinical dissociation as 2.67, whereas the correct value is 2.33 based on what should have been the highest rating of 3 (vs 4) for 'dissociated identity' in their Table 6. But this adjustment does not alter O'Keeffe et al.'s major conclusions except that their previously reported (p. 170) negative Spearman correlation ($\rho = -0.15$, $p = 0.80$, two-tailed) between the GenAI- and content-expert-derived fit indices changes to a positive association ($\rho = 0.21$, $p = 0.74$, two-tailed), implying some directional agreement between the sets of ratings (cf. Houran, in press).

from painful or traumatic experiences (Putnam, 1997). This protective function is particularly evident in conditions like dissociative identity disorder, where the fragmentation of identity is often an adaptive strategy to compartmentalize traumatic memories and preserve psychological functioning.

In this way, dissociation may serve as a necessary survival mechanism, helping individuals to cope with stress and trauma in the short term. Moreover, research suggests that dissociative experiences can lead to meaning-making and post-traumatic growth. As individuals process their dissociative states over time, Lomax et al. (2011) noted that some may reinterpret these experiences in a way that facilitates a deeper understanding of their personal narrative, contributing to psychological healing and spiritual development. In these instances, what begins as a disorienting or upsetting experience can evolve into a source of strength and insight, particularly when individuals are supported by therapeutic interventions or spiritual practices. This process, known as spiritual dissociation, allows for a restructuring of meaning, identity, and existential understanding, often leading to greater psychological resilience (Lomax et al., 2011).

A related phenomenon that merits consideration is maladaptive daydreaming (MD), a condition marked by excessive, immersive, and often compulsive fantasy activity that can interfere with daily functioning (Somer, 2002). On the surface, Nell's vivid and evocative narratives could be construed as forms of elaborate fantasy, especially given their narrative coherence and symbolic richness. However, key distinctions emerge upon closer inspection. Unlike MD, which is typically volitional, internally generated, and recognized by individuals as imaginary, Nell's dimensional-slips were described as spontaneous, involuntary, and experienced as subjectively real. Moreover, MD often serves a dysfunctional escapist purpose (Bigelsen & Schupak, 2011), whereas Nell's episodes carried transformative and integrative meaning, involving autonomous entities and relational dynamics not typical of self-directed fantasy. Still, the phenomenological similarities suggest that MD might exist on a psychological—transpersonal continuum with dimensional-slip phenomena. This continuum would reflect how narrative-based immersion—whether rooted in dissociative coping or spiritual altered states—can bridge psychological defenses and mystical experience (Somer et al., 2017). Future studies should examine whether traits like absorptive imagination or dissociative tendencies function as portals or primers for such experiences across clinical and transpersonal domains.

Finally, dissociative-like phenomena in cultural and religious contexts are not universally considered pathological but instead viewed positively as signs of spiritual calling, divine possession, or the ability to access alternate realms of consciousness for healing purposes. Here, dissociative states may not only be tolerated but actively instigated, as they are believed to facilitate spiritual insight, healing, or communication with otherworldly forces (Winkelman, 2010). These culturally specific interpretations highlight the capacity of dissociation to foster spiritual growth or community connection. Thus, while dissociative

phenomena are often linked to negative psychological outcomes in Western clinical settings, they may also serve significant positive functions in both psychological and spiritual domains. Whether facilitating ego transcendence in spiritual experiences, providing protective mechanisms in the face of trauma, fostering post-traumatic growth, or playing a key role in cultural and religious practices, dissociative-like states can have profound and transformative effects when viewed from broader perspectives (McClenon, 2002, 2012, 2013).

Taken altogether, this exploration does more than propose a simple but plausible mapping between Nell's dimensional-slips and a particular transcendental space—it provides a novel, hybrid framework for analyzing extraordinary experiences (whether dissociative in nature or not) across psychological, spiritual, and metaphysical domains. The convergence of GenAI-assisted content analysis with narrative phenomenology and cross-disciplinary theory formation demonstrates a promising model for future research in transpersonal psychology, religious studies, altered states of consciousness, and many other disciplines across the social and biomedical sciences. Rather than locating anomalous experiences as fringe phenomena, the present approach positions them within a structured ontology that can be interrogated, refined, or expanded through further empirical and conceptual efforts. Nell's journeys to an experiential space that most closely matches features of the Spirit World reflect not only personal transformation and emotional healing, but also invite broader considerations about consciousness, intersubjectivity, and the nature of transcendental encounters. It also urges deep contemplation about the exact nature of this particular realm, which apparently can be accessed in secular contexts and without ritual training or deliberate cultivation. As GenAI technology and integrative paradigms evolve, so must our capacity to describe, understand, and eventually navigate these extraordinary experiential spaces with greater precision and purpose. In this light, dimensional-slips and related 'magic flights' may not be mere anomalies but cartographic clues to the deeper architecture of mind and ultimate reality.

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APPENDIX

Synopses of Nell’s dimensional-slip experiences

Narrative A: Brother Jerry Realm

Date: January 18th, 2024

Summary: Nell describes a vivid, surreal experience where she encounters her deceased brother Jerry. While sorting clothes in her bedroom, she suddenly finds herself in an unfamiliar house where she reunites with Jerry, who shows her a disturbing scene of his final moments. Through this experience, she learns about the mistreatment Jerry suffered and the lies their older brother, Tiger, told her. The encounter is emotionally intense, with Nell feeling the physical presence of their brother and the atmosphere in the room, leading to a profound realization about family betrayal and unresolved grief.

Narrative B: Underground Realm

Date: April 18th, 2024

Summary: Nell describes a strange and mystical experience where she is transported from her living room into an underground realm. There, she encounters men digging and searching for a hidden door, which they believe she can help them find. Nell meets a figure she recognizes as St Benedict, who reassures her of a place in Heaven and discusses the significance of the hidden door. However, Nell feels conflicted about revealing the location of the door, fearing it may betray her faith, leading to a moral and spiritual dilemma.

Narrative C: Green Labyrinth

Date: May 5th, 2024

Summary: Nell again transported to a different realm where she finds herself in a grand, ancient library. In this library, she encounters a wise old man who guides her to a specific book. Upon opening the book, she sees her name written within, symbolizing her destiny or role in the larger cosmic order. The experience is filled with awe and mystery, as Nell grapples with the significance of her discovery and the responsibilities it may entail.

Narrative D: My Mother Realm

Date: July 5th, 2024

Summary: Nell recounts an extraordinary and deeply personal experience that took place while sorting mail at her table. A slit of warm light appeared, pulling her into a vivid and surreal encounter with her deceased mother in front of her childhood home. They shared a tender reunion, exchanging memories, and her mother expressed sorrow over family betrayals, especially involving her brother, Tiger. Nell's mother also revealed unsettling truths about other family members, confirming suspicions of murder and deceit. The conversation was emotionally intense, filled with the warmth of physical touch, familiar scents, and heartfelt advice. After almost an hour, Nell was suddenly back at her table, left with the lingering scent of her mother's perfume on her shirt, a poignant reminder of the encounter.