Part of the correlation of A and religion can be traced back to the behavioural and experiential dimension: certain beliefs or traditions regularly performed behaviour that is perceived as being extraordinarily meaningful.

A Personal Myth is based on a person’s Transcendence relevant content and personal meaning turns them into in order to find common elements. The synopsis resulted in the identification of comparing various kinds of religions—primal and contemporary, world religions and new religious movements—though not necessary elements of personal religiosity (cf. Bailey, 2001). The construct was developed by in line with the demand of several psychologists of religion, to differentiate between cognitive, behavioural and experiential dimensions of spirituality (Gluck, 1962; Wulf, 1997).

Myth, ritual and experience of transcendence are, of first, all structural forms. These structures are typically present in religions, but can be represented by varying contexts and associated with personal meaning. A combination of relevant personal and contextual meaning turns them into Personal Myths, Personal Rituals and Experience of Transcendence—implicit forms of religiosity.

70 percent of different religious and social groups, ages ranging from 17 to 70 were questioned about their personal myths, personal rituals and experiences of transcendence. Afterwards, interviews were recorded, which included a quality questionnaire. 56 people complied with that.

The three elements of Implicit Religion: Personal Myths, Personal Rituals, and Transcendence Experiences were analysed in relation to each other, the Big 5 (NEO-FFI) and the TCI character scales. The sample size of N = 56 is rather low. On the other hand, depth and validity of qualitative data as well as the relatively heterogeneous participants, are advantages of that hand. Furthermore, a questionnaire on Implicit Religion (FIRE) is presently being developed and will allow for assessing bigger samples in the future.

Personal Myth, Personal Rituals, and Experiences of Transcendence

1. A Personal Myth is based on a person’s story. A story can be called a Personal Myth if it is perceived or developed in a certain direction, if it contains several recurring themes, has a life-task and stage or one or more archetypical characters. The term was coined by McAdams (1993) who did pioneering work on the topic. The construct has been slightly modified and integrated into the theory of Implicit Religion. For this study of an archetypical tale, Personal Myth was analysed by means of three relevant elements:

A. Direction of development: Personal Myths can be either positive or negative. The direction of development was assessed by asking people to divide their lives into chapters and then to select which of the chapters they would consider to be the most important in their development. The most important chapters are listed in a chronological order, or ‘always, if...’

2. The Life-task: A Personal Myth only complements if one or more elements are embedded in a bigger, universal framework. This was assessed by asking for a personal utopia or life-task. Life-tasks that were rated high can be classified as follows:

A. No task: (24%)
B. 1 Life-task (76%) – A life-task that contains the passing on of experiences and knowledge, the one to contribute positively to society and to the good:

C. (17%) – A life-task aimed at discovering oneself.
D. (5%) – A life-task aimed at conquering and fulfilling human mission.

3. Archetypes: As a Personal Myth stages several prototypical, they can be called archetypes. Archetypes—not to be interpreted in a Jungian way—can be addressed as prototypes for certain animals or figures. Archetypes in a Personal Myth reveal whether a person either identifies with, or idealises, or is in conflict with. One possibility to find out about a person’s archetypes is to ask about role models and attachment figures.

The study at hand, Personal Myth was analysed by means of three relevant elements:

3. Archetypes:

1. Extra-sensory experiences (96%)
2. Its pointing beyond itself; the obvious meaning of an action is superseded by another, broader
3. A combination of

4. The obvious correlations were found:

– Religiosity is positively associated with A and C.

– Open, nature-religiosity and spirituality,

– As in a narrative function and

– Extraverted

The following correlations were found:

– Life-task and

– No Models

The adequacy of the Big 5 is not universally agreed upon (Huck, 2002; Cloninger et al., 1994). While not all five factors are replicable, other aspects are ignored. Cloninger et al. (2000) argued that The Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) developed character scales that are meant to cover individual differences in neuroticism. These scales are relevant as well as openness.

The TCI character scales show a remarkable pattern of association with openness. This result might be partly related to openness.

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Results

The existence of role-models, Personal Myths and Transcendence Experiences is closely linked to openness. This indicates a more personal and spiritualistic character of Implicit Religion. In contrast to a fundamentalist way of holding the existence of role-models and associated with Transcendence Experiences, the subject to the personal theory of Personal Religiosity, is linked to Personal Myth, Personal Rituals and Transcendence Experiences—up from the existence of role models.