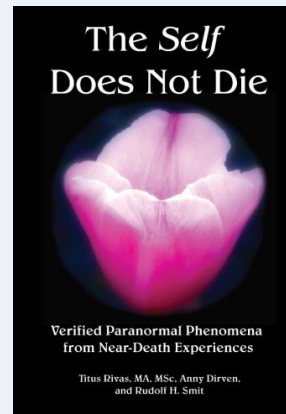


The *Self* Does Not Die

Verified Paranormal Phenomena in NDEs

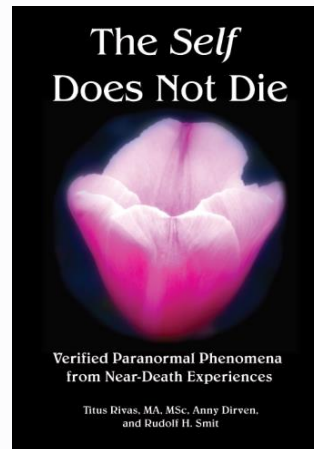


Robert G. Mays, BSc
Suzanne B. Mays, AA, CMP
www.selfconsciousmind.com

youtu.be/42-IK4wAgu0

Preliminaries

- About us
- Announcements
- Books for sale



412 pages, \$20.00

NDE Visions of the World's Future
A Study of Near-Death Experiences

We are seeking near-death experiencers (NDErs) to participate in a study of "NDE Visions of Scenes from the World's Future." About 18% of NDErs receive information about a future world event during their NDE or at some other time. **World events** are occurrences that involve or impact a large number of people, such as tragic accidents, terrorist attacks, large-scale social disruptions or conflicts, large-scale natural or environmental disasters, and so on.

We are trying to answer questions like:


1. Can world-event predictions be verified as accurate?
2. Are there common themes among the world events received by NDErs?
3. Is there a purpose for visions of future world events, like a tragic airplane crash, when the NDEr can do nothing to prevent it?
4. Do the visions of future world events include a message of what needs to be changed, for example in people's attitudes, relationships with others, or relationships with the environment?
5. Is it possible to avert or mitigate the outcome of a future world event received by an NDEr?
6. If a future event does not occur or does not occur at the expected time, is the vision in some way still valid?

If you have had an NDE or NDE-like experience and during your experience or at some other time, you have received information about a future world event, **we invite you to participate in our study.** Please fill out the survey form at:

tinyurl.com/NDE-Future-Visions

The survey form has more information about our study and other instructions. We estimate that it will take 30-45 minutes to complete and submit the survey.

If you have questions about the study, please contact us at mays@ieec.org.



Many thanks,
Suzanne and Robert Mays
selfconsciousmind.com

Fill out survey form at
tinyurl.com/NDE-Future-Visions

REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENCES

Near-Death Experience Conference
August 29 - September 1, 2019
Crowne Plaza, Philadelphia
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

The Power of Love & Consciousness

EXPLORE THE EXTRAORDINARY Discover how near-death and spiritually-transformative experience (NDE, STE) lead to altruistic values, a global raising of consciousness, compassion and brotherhood.


OVER 70 PROFESSIONALS AND EXPERIENCERS TO SPEAK, PRESENT WORKSHOPS!

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS KEYNOTE PANEL

 Nancy Rynes Geologist, Artist Awakenings from the Light	 Rev. Bill McDonald Vietnam Veteran Warrior A Spiritual Odyssey	 Suzanne Giesemann, MPA Evidential Medium Ret. Navy Commander Messages of Hope	 Bruce Greyson, MD Professor Psychiatry Neurobehavior Inducible Mind	 Elven Alexander, MD Neurosurgeon Proof of Heaven
---	--	---	---	---

Back by popular demand, past IANDS' speakers share the stage for our first-ever keynote panel!

FEATURED SPEAKERS

 P.M.H. Atwater Dying to Know You	 Maggie Callanan, RN Final Journeys	 Sandra Champlin We Don't Die	 Kelvin Chin ED, Overcoming Fear of Death Foundation	 Yvonne Kason, MD Touched by the Light
---	---	---	---	--

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR NEAR DEATH STUDIES | www.conference.iands.org

General and Health/Education/Research/Science Tracks • Healing Area • Bookstore/Exhibitors
Veterans Discussion Group • Spanish-speaking Session(s) • Group Discounts

Kevin Kern

Kevin Kern is known world-wide for his beautiful piano solos he calls "sound paintings." Legally blind since birth, he began playing piano at 18 months old. NDErs point to "Remembering the Light" and "And the Light is Forever" as capturing their experience through sound.

Free Lecture & Performance!

The general public is invited free to join conference-guests for Thursday night's opening lecture by Kelvin Chin, and fifteen minute pre-and-post musical interludes by Kevin Kern. Come see what our conferences are all about!

EARLY BIRD
Discount Registration
through June 30th

Information and registration at
conference.iands.org

- Mays, R. G., & Mays, S. B. (2008). The phenomenology of the self-conscious mind. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 27(1), 5-45.

Background and Motivation for the book

- What do NDEs really mean?
 - The ultimate question: Do NDEs actually mean the survival of physical death?
- Janice Miner Holden's work (1988–present)
 - Apparently nonphysical Veridical Perceptions (AVPs) during NDEs
 - How to test AVPs in prospective studies
 - Retrospective analysis of cases in literature (2009)
 - For NDE theorists: AVPs are an essential part of the NDE phenomenon
- 25 years of debates and battles with skeptics (1993–present):
 - NDEs are easily understood by naturalistic, materialistic explanations
 - Susan Blackmore, Gerald Woerlee, Keith Augustine, Kevin Nelson, Sam Harris
 - “Battleground” veridical cases
 - Maria's shoe
 - Pam Reynolds
 - The man with the dentures
 - Eben Alexander
 - Rudolf Smit, Titus Rivas and many others: responding to the skeptics



Jan Holden

- Holden, J. M. (1988). Rationale and considerations for proposed near-death research in the hospital setting. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 7(1), 19–31.
- Holden, J. M. (2009). Veridical perception in near-death experiences. In J. M. Holden, B. Greyson & D. James (Eds.), *The handbook of near-death experiences: Thirty years of investigation* (pp. 185–211). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger/ABC-CLIO.

Development of the book

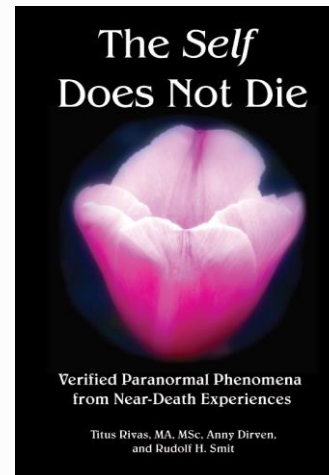
- The authors
- The Dutch edition: *What a dying brain can't do* (2013, 78 cases)
- The English edition (2016, 104 cases) – IANDS's and the Mays contribution
- Other translations (Italian, Spanish)
- The planned future English edition: donations are welcome



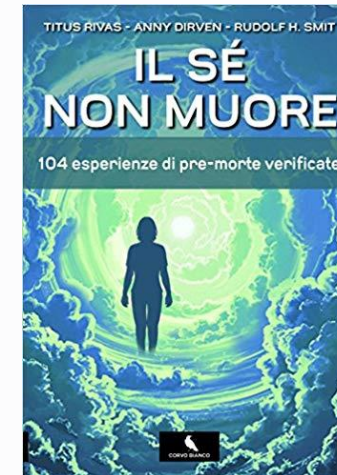
Titus Rivas, Anny Dirven & Rudolf Smit



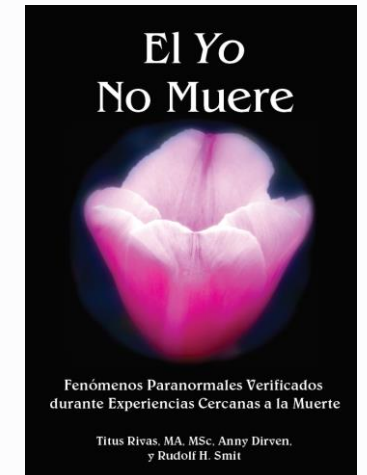
2013 – Dutch – 78 cases



2016 – English – 104 cases



2018 - Italian



2019 - Spanish

Features of the book

- Each chapter has an introduction and summary remarks
- Narratives of each case with extensive documentation (quotes from books, scholarly articles, email correspondence) and a list of the sources: focus on the verified paranormal aspects of the NDE
- Source references are listed after each case and at the back (over 250 total)
- Specific, arcane topics are presented in separate “intermezzos”

References

An online version of this list is available at <http://iands.org/these-self-references>.

- ABC News. (2011, August 3). *Jake Finkbonner among the angels*. ABC Primetime Nightline: Beyond Belief. Retrieved from <http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/video/jake-finkbonner-angels-flesh-eating-bacteria-eats-face-almost-kills-boy-talks-to-god-nightline-14227643> (Case 8.7).
- AHA (2005). 2005 American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care, Part 6: CPR Techniques and Devices. *Circulation*, 112, IV-47-IV-50. (Referenced in Appendix B).
- Alexander, E. (2012). *Proof of heaven: A neurosurgeon's journey into the afterlife*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster. (Referenced in Chapter 11).
- Alexander, E. (2012, October 15). Proof of heaven: A doctor's experience with the afterlife. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/proof-heaven-doctors-experience-afterlife-65327> (Referenced in Chapter 11).
- Ally, R. (2014, November 11). “Miracle mom” talks about her near death experience. *CBS Miami*. Retrieved from <http://miami.cbslocal.com/2014/11/11/miracle-mom-talks-about-her-near-death-experience/> (Case 8.9).
- American Academy for Oral Systemic Health. (2011, June 24–25). Dr. Lloyd Rudy, famous cardiac surgeon, talks about the importance of oral systemic health [2-part interview]. Retrieved from <http://oralsystemiclink.pro/heart-attack-stroke/1st-scientific-session-of-the-academy-for-oral-systemic-health/> (Case 3.11).
- Astorga, J. V. (2014, November 9). Miguel Ángel Pertierra: “No entusiasmo a la profesión médica de forma oficial pero sí individualmente” [Miguel Ángel Pertierra: “No enthusiasm from the medical establishment, just individuals”]. *Diario Sur—Málaga*. Retrieved from <http://www.diosur.es/malaga/201411/04/miguel-pertierra-entusiasmo-profesion-20141104221417.html> (Case 1.13).
- Atwater, P. M. H. (1994). *Beyond the light: The mysteries and revelations of near-death experiences*. New York, NY: Avon Books. (Case 8.8).

CASE 3.27 Sandra do Nascimento

A retired Brazilian psychiatrist named Sandra do Nascimento had had diabetes, heart symptoms, and kidney problems for some time when she finally experienced a cardiac arrest. Subsequently, she had an NDE in which she observed what two doctors and a nurse did to resuscitate her. Then she experienced the powerful presence of a light and a feeling of peace and joy. After the resuscitation, according to her cardiologist, Fernanda Lanzoni, do Nascimento kept bringing up her NDE.

Three days later, the patient recognized a heart surgeon, Leonardo Miana, who had actually been involved in the resuscitation. Do Nascimento had never seen this doctor prior to her cardiac arrest. She addressed him by his first name, Leonardo (a typical Brazilian custom), and she knew he had made an incision during the resuscitation. She was moved to tears on seeing him again and stressed that he had saved her life. A year later, do Nascimento also recognized the other doctor who had assisted Dr. Miana during the resuscitation, and she also addressed him by his first name. Both doctors were particularly impressed by the recollections, and Miana determined that no one could have told do Nascimento any details about the resuscitation.

Later, in response to this and other cases, Miana became actively involved in a Brazilian project in connection with the international AWARE Study. He is currently affiliated with the Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Juiz de Fora, a hospital associated with the Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora (UFJF) in the city of the same name, Juiz de Fora, in Southeast Brazil.

SOURCES

- Pinto, L. F. S., & Raimundo, J. (2011). *Menina ressuscitada em hospital reconhece médico que a salvou* [Resuscitated girl in hospital recognizes doctor who saved her]. Retrieved from <http://g1.globo.com/globo-reporter/noticia/2011/09/menina-ressuscitada-em-hospital-reconhece-medico-que-salvou.html>
- Seara Espirita. (2012). *Cirurgião cardíaco fala sobre experiência de quase morte* [Cardiac surgeon speaks about a near-death experience; interview in Brazilian Portuguese with Leonardo Miana]. Retrieved from <http://youtu.be/zpUth5sI2Keg>

- Over 100 links to relevant web sources, including more than 20 links to relevant YouTube and Vimeo videos)
- Reference list is also available online with links: iands.org/these-self-references
- Glossary of Terms and an extensive index

Foreword by Mays & Mays



Robert and Suzanne Mays

- **Research requirements addressed with this book**
 - The need to compile verified cases scattered across the NDE literature + new cases
 - The need to apply a standard of verification of cases
 - The need for a standard classification and grouping of cases
 - The value of uncovering hitherto unrecognized types of NDEs
 - The value for scientific discourse to broaden the debate beyond a few favorite cases
 - The value of being able to view NDEs *as a whole*
- **Explanations of NDEs need to address *all* aspects of *all* NDEs**
 - The most parsimonious explanation is that NDEs *are* what they appear to be to the NDEr—namely that the person’s nonmaterial mind or self *in fact* separates from the physical body.
- **The objective reality of the NDEr’s *separate spiritual self* is demonstrated in “apparitional” NDEs**
 - Implies that the independent mind or self is *real* and survives physical death.
- **With the power of large numbers of similar cases, the validity of an hypothesis that explains NDEs is exponentially stronger.**
 - Use of large numbers of cases exposes skeptics’ reliance on *ad hoc* hypotheses

Introduction by the authors



Titus Rivas, Anny Dirven & Rudolf Smit

- Criterion for inclusion of cases in the book:
 - If a paranormal phenomenon during an NDE is confirmed by at least one other person
- Focus of the book: *paranormal* aspects of NDEs, from two perspectives
 - (1) Phenomenological research: describes the NDEr's *subjective* experience
 - (2) Parapsychological or psychical research: investigates *anomalies* through empirically *objective* or *intersubjective* evidence
 - Requires a *nonmaterialistic* thought context or *ontology*
- Kinds of evidence
 - Experimental studies vs. studies of spontaneous cases
 - For this book: case studies, duly investigated
 - Also: the study of patterns in NDEs and with related phenomena

Chapter outline

- **Chapter 1: Extrasensory veridical perception of immediate environment (14 cases)**
- **Chapter 2: Extrasensory veridical perception of events beyond the reach of the physical senses (18 cases)**
- **Chapter 3: Awareness and extrasensory veridical perception during cardiac arrest and other conditions seemingly incompatible with consciousness (36 cases)**
- **Chapter 4: Telepathy (4 cases)**
- **Chapter 5: After-death communication with strangers (5 cases)**
- **Chapter 6: After-death communication with familiar people, not known to have died (6 cases)**
- **Chapter 7: Observations of out-of-body NDEs by others (“apparitional” NDEs – 7 cases)**
- **Chapter 8: Miraculous healing (10 cases)**
- **Chapter 9: Paranormal abilities after NDEs (4 cases)**
- **Chapter 10: General remarks (Titus Rivas)**
- **Chapter 11: How skeptics attempt to explain away NDEs ... and fail (Rudolf Smit)**

Chapter 1 (14 cases)

Extrasensory veridical perception of immediate environment

- Apparently nonphysical veridical perceptions (AVPs) are “extrasensory” perceptions
 - Cases where we can’t be certain of the exact moment of the purported AVP or how well the NDEr’s brain was functioning at the time of the perception
 - Highest *evidential* value: cases which include statements from *both* the patient and one or more witnesses
- Case 1.5 - Al Sullivan
 - Emergency bypass operation, eyes taped shut, head behind surgical drape, under anesthesia
 - NDE out-of-body, saw Dr. Takata “flapping” his arms (he was giving directions to surgical assistants during the prep – a personal habit)
 - Mentioned the behavior afterward to cardiologist Dr. LaSala; confirmed by both Takata and LaSala
- Remarks
 - Convincing evidence that during their NDE, patients are able to have correct, verified perceptions (AVPs) of events or conditions in their immediate environment, not attributable to their physical senses
 - Given the specificity of the reports, chance, prior knowledge or mental reconstruction are not acceptable hypotheses



Al Sullivan



Eyes taped shut



Dr Takata 'flapping' arms

Chapter 2 (18 cases)

Extrasensory veridical perception of events beyond the reach of the physical senses

- Cases of perception beyond the range of the normal physical senses
 - Not *certain* whether the perceptions occurred during cessation of electrical brain activity
- Case 2.3 - Maria's shoe
 - Cardiac arrest, out of body, floated out of hospital room up and around to another side of the building
 - Saw a left blue tennis shoe on window ledge, with worn little toe and shoe lace tucked under the heel
 - Described the shoe to social worker Kim Clark and begged her to find it: she found the shoe in the exact position and condition Maria had described
- Another similar case
 - Case 2.15 – Chester (not his real name)
- Remarks
 - Comparison with veridical perceptions during remote self-induced OBEs
 - Analysis of George Ritchie's NDE OBE to an all-night café 523 miles away (Mays & Mays, 2010)



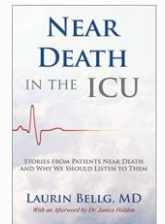
Kim Clark in reenactment



From reenactment



Laurin Bellg



Near Death in the ICU

Chapter 3 (36 cases)

Awareness and extrasensory veridical perception during cardiac arrest and other conditions incompatible with consciousness

- During cardiac arrest, brain activity shuts down after 15 seconds
 - No complex conscious experience or memory formation can occur
 - Yet under these circumstances many NDErs report vivid experiences that are vividly recalled
- Case 3.11 - Lloyd Rudy's patient
 - After heart valve replacement surgery, doctors could not get patient off the heart-lung machine
 - Patient was declared dead and the machines were turned off; no heart beat, no blood pressure, no respiration for at least 20 minutes
 - Later the patient recounted several veridical perceptions during this time: the surgeons standing in the doorway in shirt sleeves, Post-It notes stuck together in a chain on a computer screen
- Other cases
 - Case 3.7 - Man with the dentures (asystole cardiac arrest, case from Pim van Lommel)
 - Case 3.29 - Pam Reynolds (aneurysm surgery under hypothermic cardiac arrest)
- Remarks: Discussion of issues regarding cardiac arrest
 - When is brain electrical activity restored after it has ceased? Is there still a residual, weak heart beat? Can electrical activity arise that *could* be responsible for NDEs produce by dying brains?
 - No, it makes no sense to continue to doubt the reality of the continuance of consciousness including veridical perceptions in cardiac arrest
 - Could NDEs be caused by a spontaneous resurgence of electrical activity—even up to 3 minutes—at the point of death?
 - No, brain activity of this duration is inadequate to explain the cases presented in this chapter



Dr. Lloyd Rudy & Mike Milligan



Pim van Lommel



Pam Reynolds

Chapter 4 (4 cases)

Telepathy

- Two types of telepathy in NDEs
 - The NDEr perceives the thoughts of someone else: has contact with the other person's mind or consciousness
 - Another person has telepathic perceptions of the NDEr's NDE – a shared near-death experience
- Case 4.3 - George Rodonaia
 - Run over, declared dead, placed in cold storage in morgue 3 days.
 - During his NDE, he went into wife's head. He could see through her eyes and think her thoughts, as she was choosing his grave site. She was going over possible men she could marry.
 - He heard all of her thoughts and after he recovered, recited them back to her verbatim
- Another case:
 - Case 4.2 (also Case 3.13) – The unuttered sigh
- Remarks:
 - In NDEs, we would *expect* veridical perceptions of a person's *thoughts* (telepathy) as well as veridical perceptions of the *physical world* (clairvoyance)



George Rodonaia

Chapter 5 (5 cases)

After-death communication with strangers

- NDE-related after-death communications: meeting with deceased persons, communicating telepathically.
- NDEr did not know deceased person prior to the NDE; deceased person was found later to have existed and NDEr could confirm characteristics of the deceased person
- Case 5.5 - Viola Horton
 - NDE OBE during cardiac arrest after gall bladder surgery
 - Went through a tunnel to a beautiful meadow; met a deceased person appearing as a baby who said he was her brother; she did not have a brother
 - He told her to remember how he looked—tiny cap and dress, socks and booties—and to provide the description to her father
 - All of her perceptions proved to be accurate: her father confirmed that his first child was a boy who had died a few days after birth and was never talked about in the family
- Remarks
 - These cases are strong indicators of actual contact with those who have died
 - One skeptical explanation: the NDEr obtains information through “super-psi,” a hypothetical process in which the NDEr obtains the information subconsciously using a form of clairvoyance
 - But in these cases, the NDEr has no motive, desire or reason to access super-psi information for a deceased person unknown to the NDEr
 - Furthermore, in these cases, the deceased person appears to seek contact with living people in order to convey information to them—implies that the reality experienced in NDEs is an *intersubjective* reality, one that is shared with others



Viola Horton

Chapter 6 (6 cases)

After-death communication with familiar people, not known to have died

- Meeting familiar deceased people in an NDE is *expected* when the deceased is *known* to have died; but *totally unexpected* when the deceased is *not* known to have died
 - Skeptical interpretation could be that they are a projection of dreamy images from the NDEr's unconscious mind
 - How then to explain when the NDEr knows the person but does not know person has died—the NDEr is surprised to see the person
 - “Peak in Darien” experiences (term no longer used): encountering something totally unexpected
- Case 6.4 - Eddie Cuomo (9 years old)
 - Was hospitalized with very high fever which finally broke after nearly 36 hours. As soon as he opened his eyes, at 3 AM, Eddie told his parents that he had been to heaven, where he saw several deceased relatives.
 - Then added that he also saw his 19-year-old sister Teresa, who told him he had to go back. But Teresa was alive at college. The father had spoken to her only two nights before.
 - Later, when Eddie's parents telephoned the college, they learned that Teresa had been killed in an automobile accident just after midnight—college officials had been trying to reach the Cuomos to inform them of it.
- Remarks
 - These cases suggest actual contact with the other side: NDEr could not have known the other person had just died.

Chapter 7 (7 cases)

Observations of Out-of-Body NDErs by Others

- The NDEr appears to another person (or otherwise makes their presence known) and both parties confirm each other's account
 - We call them “apparitional” NDEs but the NDEr is not an ethereal presence – generally appears to be normal
- Case 7.3 - Olga Gearhardt (documented by Dr. Melvin Morse & Paul Perry)
 - Underwent a heart transplant; her entire family was at the hospital except her son-in-law stayed at home.
 - At 2:15 AM her new heart stopped beating; she was finally resuscitated 3 hours later.
 - The son-in-law woke at exactly 2:15 AM, Olga was standing at his bedside. She seemed normal—he thought the operation had been postponed. He asked “how are you?” She replied “I’ll be all right, there’s nothing for any of you to worry about. Give this message to my daughter [his wife].” He wrote down message, time of day, and went back to sleep.
 - When Olga regained consciousness later that day in the hospital, she asked her daughter “Did you get the message?” – Olga had left her body and could not communicate with those in hospital, so she went to her son-in-law.
- Remarks
 - Such cases add to the growing number of cases that seem to defy materialist explanations.



Melvin Morse

Chapter 8 (10 cases)

Miraculous Healing

- Paranormal healing of serious illness or injury during an NDE or rapid healing in stages after the NDE
 - The healing is completely unexpected—some form of “spontaneous remission”
 - The NDEr does not appear to sustain any serious, permanent brain damage despite cardiac arrest, etc. (e.g., case 3.11 Dr. Lloyd Rudy’s patient)
- Case 8.4 - Anita Moorjani
 - Diagnosed with Hodgkin’s lymphoma, she refused chemotherapy, after 4 years her health deteriorated rapidly, with widespread organ failure; she fell into a coma and had a deep NDE
 - She left her body, had veridical perceptions of conversations her husband had with doctors far from her room, and a vision of her brother en route via plane to be with her (her case qualifies also to be in Chapter 2)
 - Told she could choose to return to her body and be healed of her cancer; but if she chose to stay, she would die as the doctors had foretold; she chose life and regained consciousness
 - Her tumors disappeared and her organs recovered rapidly; her case was reviewed by a US oncologist who concluded that she should have died
- Remarks
 - All of the cases in this chapter are supported by statements from doctors or investigators who had access to the relevant medical records
 - These cases may fit with cases of *terminal lucidity* in patients with dementia, shortly before dying: the patients suddenly regain their mental capacities—should be impossible given that their brains are irreversibly damaged



Anita Moorjani

Chapter 9 (4 cases)

Paranormal Abilities After NDEs

- An NDE might well awaken dormant abilities that are universally human but normally function in only a few people
 - For example, clairvoyance, psychokinesis (PK), after-death communication and precognitive dreams or visions
- Case 9.3 - Cherylee Black has had 3 NDEs – ages 2, 10 and 29
 - Starting at 11, recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK) began, dependent on Cherylee's emotional state—once her 6th grade teacher slapped her and as the teacher walked away, a book flew from a shelf at the side of the room and struck the teacher
 - Experimentally confirmed instances of psychokinesis – movement of a pinwheel or Egely Wheel in a sealed container
 - Accurate precognitive dreams
 - Verified after-death communication with known and unknown persons
- Another case
 - Case 9.4 - Tom Sawyer (precognition)
- Remarks
 - Paranormal abilities are common in NDErs but they are rarely confirmed by independent investigation



Cherylee Black



Tom Sawyer

Chapter 10 ...

General remarks – Titus Rivas



Titus Rivas

- **Criteria for inclusion**
 - Cases that can't be explained by chance, foreknowledge, residual activity in nervous system
 - Cases with reliable sources, investigators, and witnesses
 - Cases of confirmed physical death with sufficient information to conclude the NDE occurred during cardiac arrest
- **Paranormal phenomena that can and do occur in NDEs**
 - Clairvoyant perceptions of the immediate vicinity and beyond the range of the physical senses
 - Telepathy and forms of consciousness not supported by neurological activity
 - Actual contact with deceased persons (also deceased pets)
 - Paranormal manifestations of the NDEr during an OBE ("apparitional" NDEs) and shared paranormal experiences during an NDE (case 3.32)
 - Paranormal results stemming from NDEs: awakening of ESP and PK abilities, miraculous healing, unintentional poltergeist-like incidents
 - Additional paranormal phenomena are awaiting third-party confirmed cases
- **Brain and mind**
 - Mainstream physicalist view of the brain can't explain NDErs' conscious and paranormal experiences. Implies consciousness and mental abilities do not depend *ultimately* on brain function. The mind *can function* independent of the brain.
 - Possible explanatory dynamic: "transmission" or "filter" theory—takes into account the dependence of ordinary consciousness on brain function.
 - Confirmed cases of paranormal phenomena support the theory that mind is separate from the brain, even though mind and brain interact during physical life. Furthermore, the mind survives the death of the brain and NDErs have actual experiences of the hereafter.
 - Skeptics point out: NDErs did not ultimately die, so their experiences do not imply what the afterlife is actually like.
 - On the contrary, there are two lines of evidence for personal survival after physical death (next slide).

Chapter 10

Two lines of evidence for personal survival after physical death

- (a) Evidence for personal survival from consciousness during cardiac arrest (Chapter 3)
 - In cardiac arrest, blood flow to the brain stops. In about 15 sec the EEG is flat—too little cortical activity to enable complex consciousness. Subcortical brain activity also stops.
 - Yet NDEs show complex consciousness with no measurable brain activity, contrary to materialist view—especially in cases where no resuscitation occurred at the time of certain veridical NDE perceptions (example cases: 3.7 dentures man, 3.11 Lloyd Rudy's patient, 3.13/4.2 Tom Aufderheide's patient, etc.)
 - Therefore consciousness is not the *product* of the brain but occurs in *interaction* with the brain.
 - Clinical death vs. irreversible (“actual”) death are *functionally* equivalent: all relevant brain functions are shut down.
 - Skeptical arguments that consciousness is *totally* dependent on brain function easily fit into a dualistic worldview: the nonmaterial mind works via *interaction* with the brain; when the brain is impaired, consciousness is impaired.
 - *The presence of personal consciousness during a cardiac arrest implies personal survival after irreversible death.*
- (b) Evidence for personal survival from apparent contact with deceased persons (Chapters 5 and 6)
 - Communication with someone who has already died is evidence implicitly for personal survival of physical death
 - One theory: deceased people do not survive *individually* but are dissolved in a universal field of consciousness: meeting deceased individuals is *triggered by the NDEr's desire* to see them. Not supported by cases from Chapters 5 & 6: the NDEr would have no desire, if the deceased person is unknown or is not known to have died.
 - The theory of personal survival is further supported by a “convergence of evidence”: recollections of previous lifetimes in young children, pre-birth memories, deathbed visions, after-death communications, etc.
- In conclusion
 - Skeptics deny that actual paranormal experiences occur in NDEs: the NDErs are mistaken, NDEs are merely subjective experiences.
 - The cases presented in this book demonstrate that the skeptics are wrong: NDEs have far-reaching implications for humanity; the spiritual aspects of NDEs can be taken seriously.



Titus Rivas

Chapter 11 ...

How skeptics attempt to explain away NDEs ... and fail – Rudolf Smit

- Skeptics appear motivated by materialistic ideology to *explain away* NDEs so they can dismiss them out of hand.
- A prime example: Eben Alexander's controversial book *Proof of Heaven* (2012)
 - His NDE from severe bacterial meningitis & coma: NDE elements included meeting unknown deceased person later identified, verified "time anchors"
 - Barrage of intemperate criticism (2012): Steven Novella, Sam Harris; countered by Bernardo Kastrup
 - Luke Dittrich article in *Esquire* (2013); countered by Mays article (2013)
 - Subsequently: detailed critique of the Dittrich article and further details about Alexander's NDE (2016); review of Alexander's medical record (2018)
- The remarkable arguments of Dr. Gerald Woerlee
 - Dutch anesthesiologist, materialist and militant atheist: his anti-religious sentiment has colored his view of NDEs (as the root of all religions)
 - The dentures man case (3.7): Could Mr. B have seen male nurse "TG" remove his denture and place it on the cart shelf *before* CPR started? Numerous back and forth exchanges with Woerlee.
 - Other cases covered in the chapter with Woerlee's analyses and Smit's responses:
 - Pam Reynolds case (3.29)
 - NDEr's encounters with deceased persons, known and unknown (Ch. 5 and 6)
 - Eben Alexander case



Rudolf Smit



Gerald Woerlee

Chapter 11

How skeptics attempt to explain away NDEs ... and fail – Rudolf Smit



Rudolf Smit

- **Skeptics who go too far**
 - “Hard” skeptics go too far in their assumptions about the cases they question. Often they use the tactic of “moving the goal posts” – constantly inventing additional requirements.
 - Some skeptics never relent:
 - Did Pam Reynolds (case 3.29) receive a pre-op briefing during which the surgical instruments (e.g. the bone saw) and the operating room were shown to her?
 - Rivas emailed Pam Reynolds to check: “I saw Dr. Spetzler in the afternoon ... I was not given a tour nor was I ‘walked thru the process.’ ...”
 - [Moving the goal posts] Maybe Reynolds had read about similar operations, then forgotten or perhaps she had seen TV programs showing operating rooms and the surgical instruments her doctors used, etc. Here skeptics have exceeded the credible basis for their skepticism.
- **Summing up**
 - Gerald Woerlee is representative of the “hard” skeptical position.
 - Smit commented on Woerlee: “One can deduce that Woerlee is not primarily motivated by science—i.e. the unbiased desire to know—but at least equally so by his revulsion against religions ... [Woerlee] uses his own brand of science to explain the NDE away, even if he has to twist the facts to achieve that goal.”
- **Is no criticism allowed? Not at all...**
 - Skeptics can certainly assert that anomalous NDE phenomena *can't happen* because they cannot be explained based on materialist principles. “But to deny even the *possibility* of NDE phenomena *solely* because those facts do not fit with one's ideological presumptions is simply unscientific.”
 - Sound skepticism: To go wherever the evidence leads, irrespective of ideology, prejudices, beliefs or objections to how things seem to be turning out.

Overall Conclusions on Personal Survival

- From the Foreword (Robert & Suzanne Mays)
 - When NDEs are considered as a whole (*all* aspects of *all* NDEs), the most parsimonious explanation is that NDEs *are* what they appears to be subjectively to the NDEr—namely that the person’s nonmaterial mind or self in fact separates from the physical body.
 - The objective reality of the NDEr’s separate mind or self is demonstrated in “apparitional” NDEs (Chapter 7), implying that the independent mind or self is real and survives physical death.
 - With the power of large numbers of similar cases, the validity of an hypothesis that explains *all* aspects of *all* NDEs is exponentially stronger.
- From Chapter 10 General Remarks (Titus Rivas)
 - NDEs show complex consciousness with no measurable brain activity—contrary to the materialist view—especially in cases where no resuscitation occurred at the time of certain veridical NDE elements (Chapter 3).
 - *The presence of personal consciousness during a cardiac arrest implies personal survival after irreversible death.*
 - *Communication with someone who has already died is implicitly evidence for personal survival of physical death,* especially cases of unknown deceased persons (Chapter 5) and cases of known persons not known to have died (Chapter 6).
 - The theory of personal survival is further supported by a *convergence of evidence*
- From Chapter 11 on Skeptics (Rudolf Smit)
 - Sound skepticism means to go wherever the evidence leads, irrespective of ideology, prejudices, beliefs or objections to how things seem to be turning out.