

VITAL SIGNS

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Suggestions & Feedback

We welcome your questions, comments, or suggestions. Your opinion matters!

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Founded in 1981, the International Association for Near-Death Studies, Inc. (IANDS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. The organization is dedicated to encouraging scientific research, education, and support regarding the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual nature and ramifications of near-death and related experiences. IANDS associates comprise a broad audience from around the world, including experiencers; researchers; medical, mental, social, and religious/spiritual healthcare professionals; educators; and the general public. For more information, or to become an IANDS member, visit <https://iands.org>.

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Cover Image:

Self Love

Painting by Stefan Senna





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Endings and Beginnings: A Time for Gratitude

The closing of 2023 and opening of 2024 seems a perfect time to reflect with gratitude on IANDS. Although I don't have the space to name everyone and everything deserving of attention, here are a few highlights for which I'm so grateful:

Who we are. Our amazing 2023 conference reminded me what a wonderful community IANDS is—from the many people who made the event happen to those who contributed to its vibrancy by attending. We have a capable and committed office manager in Susan Amsden. And IANDS is being led by what I believe to be its strongest Board of Directors ever—each one bringing unique expertise; each one being an active contributor; and each one, to a person, being dedicated not to their own agenda but to the shared purpose of making IANDS ever more effective.

Where we've been. IANDS has evolved from its origins as a research-focused organization to one that has retained its roots while extending its branches—into service to near-death and related experiencers and into education of professionals whose work in some way touches those people and topics and of the public who seek knowledge. We've become a complex organization rich in

resources of support and information—and, as one IANDS member recently told me, of hope in a troubled world.

Where we're going. According to our invaluable treasurer, Robert Mays, IANDS is on its firmest-ever financial foundation, and our new chair of Development, Deborah Conner, is implementing steps to ensure that we also have financial support from dedicated donors into the future. With those resources the Board has been working on some strategic goals, such as revamping our website, and is considering new goals—ideas that have repeatedly come up over the years but, until now, had to be sidelined for lack of resources, such as hiring additional professional staff. IANDS's future is bright as we progress in pursuing our mission—to advance global understanding of near-death experiences and related phenomena through research, education, and supportive communities and resources—and achieving our vision: A world in which near-death experiences and related phenomena are widely recognized as valid and profound experiences that inspire and create lasting positive change.

Happy New Year, everyone!
Janice Holden, EdD, LPC-S, ACMHP

Open to the public:

IANDS
Spring
Symposium

SAVE
THE
DATE

IANDS
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR NEAR-DEATH STUDIES, INC.

Shared Crossing Project

Saturday, April 20, 2024

**Shared Death Experiences:
What Healthcare Providers
—and Everyone—
Need to Know**

Continuing education for many healthcare providers

symposium.iands.org

What Are “Related Experiences”?

by Janice Miner Holden, EdD, LPC-S, ACMHP, the IANDS Academic and Research Committee, and the IANDS Board of Directors

IANDS’s articles of incorporation indicate that our organization’s focus is “near-death and similar experiences.” Throughout our website, we also refer to “near-death and related experiences.” Although IANDS’s primary focus has been and continues to be near-death experiences (NDEs), the question arises: What are these similar and related experiences? Below is a list of three categories of “related and similar” experiences that is inclusive, though not exhaustive. Readers interested in following up on the references and/or in answers to two related questions -- under what circumstances do these experiences occur, and how do they relate to the term “spiritually transformative experiences” (STEs)? -- can visit the IANDS webpage URL shown at the end of this article.

One category is experiences that can occur during NDEs and also outside the context of a close brush with death (Atwater, 2021; Holden et al., 2009). These include, but are not limited to:

Out-of-body experience (OBE) – in which a person experiences their consciousness located and functioning outside their physical body (Tart, 2009),

Telepathy – in which a person encounters and communicates “mind-to-mind” with another living or trans-material being (Tart, 2009; Watt & Tierney, 2014),

After-death communication (ADC) – in which a living person experiences the presence of a physically deceased person or animal (Holden, 2017),

Past-life memory – in which a person recalls a previous lifetime as a different person or other entity (Mills & Tucker, 2014),

Precognition – in which a person perceives a future event in the absence of any normal way of predicting it (Tart, 2009; Watt & Tierney, 2014),

Remote viewing – in which a person visualizes physical events outside the normal range of perception in the absence of any normal way of perceiving them (Tart, 2009),

Mystical experience – which “diverges in fundamental ways from ordinary conscious awareness and leaves a strong impression of having encountered a reality radically different from the sensory-based world of everyday experience . . . often stand[ing] out as joyous, defining moments in [experiencers’] lives” (Wulff, 2014, p. 370), and

Anomalous healing of self – in which a person is healed in ways that transcend normal healing processes (Tart, 2009).

A second category is experiences that can occur after NDEs—as well as in other circumstances apart from NDEs (Atwater, 2021; Holden et al., 2009). These can include the above-listed experiences as well as:

Anomalous healing of others – in which a person perceives the ability to promote healing in others through other-than-normal means (Krippner & Achterberg, 2014; Tart, 2009),

Aura viewing – Perceiving white or colored light emanating from people and/or objects,

Encounter with non-material entities – in which a person perceives the presence of and communication with one or more entities not of the material world, perhaps originally encountered during an NDE, such as light beings and orbs,

Encounter with extraterrestrial beings – in which a person encounters beings from other worlds or dimensions (Appelle et al., 2014; Ring, 1993),

Environmental sensitivity – in which a person is unusually sensitive to aspects of the environment such as chemicals and/or electrical fields (Blalock et al., 2015),

Exceptional talent – in which a person becomes unusually interested and capable in a skill that previously was of little interest, such as playing and composing music,

Kundalini awakening – in which a person experiences rushes of energy up the spine along with increased physical heat and perceptions of light, associated with spiritual development (Edwards, 2013),

Lucid dreaming – in which one is conscious that one is dreaming while one is dreaming (LaBerge & Rheingold, 1991),

Mediumship – in which a person serves as a medium of communication between a physically deceased person and a living person (Holden et al., 2014; Windbridge Research Center, 2021),

Psychokinesis – in which a person moves an object or otherwise influences the environment, either intentionally or unintentionally, without the use of physical force (Tart, 2009); this category includes electromagnetic aftereffects whereby electronic devices in an NDEr’s vicinity malfunction (Blalock et al., 2015), and

Shared-death experience – in which a living person shares in a dying person’s transition to the initial stages of an afterlife (Moody, 2010; Shared Crossing Research Initiative, 2021),

Synesthesia – in which “an inducing stimulus produces, at the same time, two kinds of experience: a primary experience (sensory, perceptual, conceptual, affective) normally associate with that stimulus and an anomalous secondary experience in the same or another domain” (Marks, 2014, p. 81), such as having a particular sound also evoke an image of a particular color.

A third category is phenomena that do not typically occur either during or after NDEs but that, similar to NDEs, have implications for an understanding of consciousness, the mind-brain relationship, and a possible afterlife. These include:

Nearing-death awareness – in which people with terminal illness have experiences such as impactful dreams and visions in the period just prior to their physical death (Callanan & Kelley, 1993; Kerr, 2020),

Personality changes following heart transplant – in which heart transplant recipients manifest personality characteristics of their unknown donors (Leister, 2020), and

Terminal lucidity – in which people with terminal illness who have organic brain impairment somehow have a period of lucid communication in the days prior to their physical death (Batthyány, 2023; Nahm, 2009).

For more information and to view references: https://iands.org/images/stories/pdf_downloads/What_Are_Related_Experiences.pdf

BECOME AN IANDS MEMBER OR RENEW NOW TO LOCK IN 2023 PRICES!

IANDS membership prices will increase by 10% on January 1, 2024. This is the first membership price increase since 2006 and coincides with **increased member benefits** for all levels that we introduced in July 2023, particularly for discounts on IG&E events and videos.

- ▶ **Basic members now receive 50% off all IG&E prices!**
- ▶ **Supporting and higher level members now may access nearly all IG&E events and videos for FREE!**

You can **SAVE THE EXTRA FEE** fee by renewing your membership by 11:59 PM CST December 31st. Your membership will then be extended for another year at the current annual fee.

LEARN ABOUT MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS AND BECOME A MEMBER HERE:

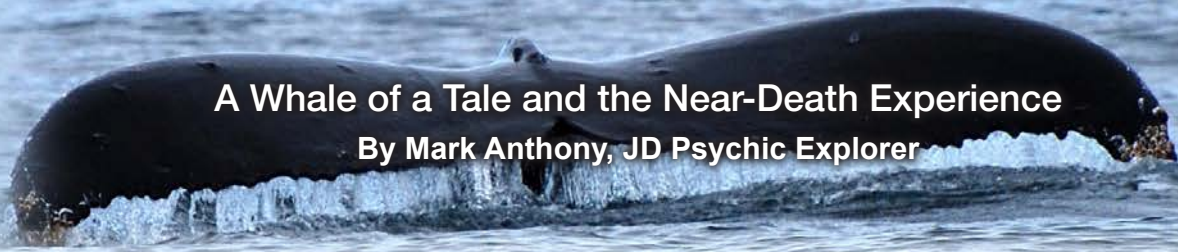
<https://iands.org/about/membership/join-iands.html>

Membership levels for 2024	Current annual fee	New annual fee
BASIC (first year)	\$30	\$33
BASIC (subsequent years)	\$40	\$44
SUPPORTING	\$65	\$72
SUPPORTING (senior/student)	\$55	\$61
PROFESSIONAL*	\$125	\$138
PROFESSIONAL* (senior/student)	\$105	\$116
SPONSOR*	\$250	\$275
SPONSOR* (senior/student)	\$220	\$242
PATRON	\$500	\$500
BENEFACTOR	\$1,000	\$1,000
Individual JOURNAL subscription*	\$62	\$68
Institutional JOURNAL subscription	\$398	\$398

* For Professional, Sponsor, & Journal Subscription levels outside the US, add \$10 for mailing the *Journal of Near-Death Studies* three times per year outside the US.

A Whale of a Tale and the Near-Death Experience

By Mark Anthony, JD Psychic Explorer



Over a billion people worldwide are Christians. The Resurrection of Jesus is the most beloved, mysterious, inspiring, controversial, and well-known story of someone who died and returned to physical life.

The purpose of this article is not to advance one belief system over another. However, the triumph of eternal life over physical death is a universal concept central to belief systems worldwide.

Faith teaches the soul/spirit/consciousness pre-exists the physical body, comes into the body, and then lives on eternally after the body dies. Physics proves energy is neither created nor destroyed, only transferred from one form to another. Neuroscience has proven the brain has the most sophisticated electromagnetic field in the human body. During my research I developed the term “electromagnetic soul” (EMS) which describes what we really are: pure consciousness that is eternal electromagnetic energy. I also believe the EMS theory provides the scientific basis for eternal life.

Since ancient times there have been accounts of people who died and lived to tell about it. Tales of these “resurrections” baffled physicians and religious leaders alike. We now know them as near-death experiences (NDEs) which occur when someone dies and that person’s electromagnetic soul separates from the body yet that person’s awareness remains intact.

Many accounts of NDEs describe traveling through a tunnel into a brilliant light, having a life review in which the experiencer evaluates his or her entire life within moments, meeting spirits of deceased loved ones, and encountering an infinite all-knowing and loving intelligence so intense that even the word “God” is too limiting to describe this energy.

One of those people is me. At age four, I died and after several minutes of CPR was resuscitated. In my book *The Afterlife Frequency* I described in detail how what I encountered in those moments beyond this world has shaped the direction of my life.

Perhaps the earliest recorded NDE is the Book of Jonah from the Old Testament. Jonah was a Hebrew Prophet who lived in the 8th Century BC. He was

instructed by God to preach in the city of Nineveh located in modern day Iraq.

Like today, the turmoil in the Iraq of Jonah’s time did not make it a popular vacation destination. Instead, Jonah hopped on a ship headed for Spain. A storm struck, and when Jonah told the crew he disobeyed God, they promptly tossed him overboard just in time for a large aquatic creature to swallow him. For three days Jonah lay in the creature’s belly before it vomited him up. Jonah emerged a changed man and resumed his spiritual mission to Nineveh.

Is Jonah’s story a metaphor for an NDE? In Jonah 2:6-10 the prophet wrote, “To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, Lord my God, brought my life up from the pit. When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.”

The “holy temple” has been interpreted as one of the three levels of Heaven described in scripture. The First Heaven is sky (Genesis 7:11), the Second Heaven is the realm of the stars (Exodus 32:13), and the Third Heaven is the abode of God (2 Corinthians 12:1). Many Biblical scholars interpret the “holy temple” as the abode of God.

The story of Jonah may be a metaphor for an NDE. He was cast into the ocean, which means he was drowning. Then he was “swallowed” by a sea creature, which could be a metaphor for traveling through a tunnel. Then, as Jonah’s life was “ebbing away,” he remembered his faith. This description may be what NDE researchers refer to as the life review.

Next, Jonah rose to the “holy temple” where he reconnected with his faith. Then the sea creature vomited him onto dry land. It appears Jonah received the

message from his NDE loud and clear. It was not his time to leave this world because he had a mission to complete.

Was this an NDE? Did Jonah drown but survive? Drowning victims who have been resuscitated have been thoroughly documented in the 20th and 21st centuries (<https://library.unt.edu/aquiline-books/nde-003-8/>).



Could Jonah actually have been swallowed by a whale as described in scripture? According to Cetology, the field of Marine Biology which studies whales, the esophagus of even the largest whale is roughly 5 inches (12.7 cm) in diameter. So, Jonah being swallowed by a whale is impossible, right? Maybe not, which brings us to Cape Cod, June 2022. Lobster diver Michael Packard was diving off Provincetown, Massachusetts. Suddenly he felt a huge shove. Everything went completely black. He was engulfed in the mouth of something enormous. At first, he thought it a great white shark, but he felt no sharp teeth. Nevertheless, the massive pressure was crushing him.

“I’m done—I’m dead,” Packard thought, horrified he’d never see his children again. Then suddenly he saw a light as he was vomited from the mouth of a humpback whale. Luckily for Packard, humans aren’t on a humpback’s menu. Perhaps the whale was disgusted by the strange yucky tasting human in its mouth.

If this happened in ancient times, you ended up in scripture. When it happens in the 21st Century, you end up like Michael Packard did on “The Jimmy Kimmel” show hailed as “The Modern Day Jonah.”

Maybe Jonah was swallowed by a whale—it’s only fair to mention this story for the benefit of readers who interpret scripture literally.

Recently, there have been two major developments in the field of NDEs. The first occurred in February 2022, in Tartu, Estonia. An elderly man suffered a stroke and was rushed to the hospital. While his brain waves were being monitored by an EEG (electroencephalogram) he suddenly had a massive heart attack and died.

This was the first time in history a human brain was monitored by an EEG at the precise moment of death. Doctors were stunned by the massive spike in his brainwaves just as he died. His brain’s electromagnetic field went off the charts!

The second major development was in November, 2022, when researchers at New York University released the “Lucid Dying Study.” This research involved 567 men and women at 25 different hospitals in the US and UK. The subjects’ hearts stopped beating, and then CPR was administered while their brainwave activity was recorded. Researchers recorded a massive spike of brainwave activity in all subjects.

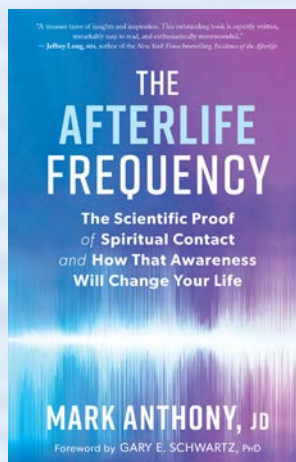
One in five survivors reported lucid experiences of death which appeared different from hallucinations, dreams, illusions, or delusions. The lead researcher, Sam Parnia wrote, “These recalled experiences and

brain wave changes may be the first signs of the so-called near-death experience, and we have captured them for the first time in a large study...Identifying measurable electrical signs of lucid and heightened brain activity, together with similar stories of recalled death experiences, suggests that the human sense of self and consciousness, much like other biological body functions, may not stop completely around the time of death.”

I have dedicated my life studying the science of spirit communication, NDEs, supernatural phenomena, and ancient mysteries. My father, a NASA Engineer and US Navy SEAL, once told me, “There’s no such thing as a mystery; there are only questions for which we do not yet have the answer. If enough research, focus, and funding is put into a question, we will eventually have an answer which will be explained through science.”

These discoveries appear to validate my electromagnetic soul theory and may be an important step toward scientific proof of the triumph of eternal life over the darkness of physical death. If so, that is certainly one enlightening whale of a tale!

(Originally published by *Best Holistic Life Magazine*, April 2023)



Mark Anthony, JD Psychic Explorer® (The Psychic Lawyer) is a fourth-generation psychic medium who communicates with spirits and is a near-death experiencer. He is an Oxford educated attorney licensed to practice law in Florida; Washington, DC; and before the United States Supreme Court. Mark travels to mystical locations in remote corners of the world to examine Ancient Mysteries and Supernatural Phenomena. Mark appears nationwide on TV & Radio including CBS TV “The Doctors,” Gaia TV, and Discovery Channel. He is the co-host of the live stream show “The Psychic and The Doc,” on the Transformation Network.

He is a headline speaker at conventions, expos, and spiritual organizations such as the Edgar Cayce A.R.E., International Association for Near-Death Studies, The Shift Network, Spiritual Awakenings International, Helping Parents Heal, Vail Symposium, and universities including Brown, Columbia, Harvard & Yale.

Mark Anthony is the author of the multiple award-winning bestseller *The Afterlife Frequency* which, like his book *Evidence of Eternity* was considered for a Pulitzer Prize. His other bestseller is *Never Letting Go*. For more information about Mark Anthony, JD Psychic Explorer, visit: www.AfterlifeFrequency.com

After Death Movie Review by Col. John B. Alexander, PhD

After Death is a valuable contribution to the rapidly growing body of literature and media presentations regarding life after death or continuation of consciousness.

A significant factor in this movie is the recurring commentary by Dr. Michael Sabom, one of the pioneers in researching near-death experiences (NDEs). Dr. Sabom was one of those who met with Raymond Moody, MD; Bruce Greyson, MD; Ken Ring, PhD, and John Audette that led to the founding of the International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS). As he stated in the movie and is consistent with his comments over 40 years ago, Dr. Sabom was a true skeptic who became convinced of the reality of NDEs based on the evidence he gathered during a multi-year study.

Whereas most NDE research studied reports that came well after the cited incident, Dr. Sabom was different. As a cardiologist, he noted that he had been present when many patients were resuscitated and had not heard any reports of NDEs or similar events. After reaching out to other health care practitioners, he began to hear such recantations and also learned that many of those who had an NDE were reluctant to discuss the topic for fear of ridicule. Unfortunately, that ridicule often came from their doctors and clergy. Until Dr. Raymond Moody's groundbreaking book, *Life After Life*, was published, few people dared openly discuss their NDEs. Often, these extraordinary encounters were not even shared with family members.

Admittedly, I am biased on this topic. Before proceeding further, the reader should know I am a past president of IANDS and know some of the people in the film. Several of those both in the film and mentioned in it I consider personal friends. Further, the head of my doctoral committee was the legendary Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, who, in the 1970s, was also a pioneer in the embryonic field of NDEs. Elisabeth was largely responsible for advancing the hospice movement in America. Her landmark book was *On Death and Dying*, and she is the one who developed the famous model of five stages of grief.

After Death presents many NDEs including what I consider two of the most significant ever recorded. From a technical perspective, the Pam Reynolds

case is extremely significant. Although most NDEs happen spontaneously, Pam Reynolds was completely instrumented at the time of her NDE. As *After Death* portrays, during her cranial operation for an aneurism deep in her brain, Pam had no breathing, no heart rate, and no cortical brain functioning. In medical terms, that is usually known as death. What is presented in the film is very significant, but there was even more to the story. Not mentioned was that Pam reported that she thought the music her surgeons chose to play during her procedure, *Hotel California*, was not quite appropriate ("You can check out anytime, but you can never leave").

In *After Death*, the narrative is given by Dr. Robert Spetzler, the neurosurgeon at Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix who performed the operation. His account is supported by Dr. Karl Green who also attended Pam Reynolds. Not mentioned is that it was Dr. Sabom who popularized the case in his poignant book, *Light and Death*. Also not mentioned were Pam's encounters with deceased relatives during her NDE. The significance of that case cannot be overstated. There are very few NDE cases in which researchers can access the medical condition of the patient. Although exceedingly rare, there are other cases such that of

anesthesiologist Rajiv Parti. His life-changing case can be read in his book, *Dying to Wake Up*.

Orthopedic surgeon Mary Neal's case is also extremely important. She and I have met at several IANDS conferences, and I consider her to be extremely compelling. Though she appears in the film, some of the most extraordinary evidence was omitted. With multiple witnesses, it is known that she was under water far longer than she could hold her breath. Bluntly, she drowned in her kayak. Also omitted was the extent of injuries to her body, as both legs were broken above her knees and precognitively she received accurate information about events that would come to pass years later. In fact, when I spoke with her at the 2022 IANDS conference in Salt Lake City, she mentioned that some of the foretold events had yet to occur but were personal in nature.

Although the film focused on the consciousness aspects of NDEs, there are physical miracles associated with Dr. Neal's case that are simply mind boggling. As an example, after her body was recovered, two unknown young men appeared and helped transport her to a waiting ambulance. It is important to note there were no



ambulances in that remote part of Chile. Yet, there was one waiting on the otherwise deserted road to take her to the nearest hospital. All readers are strongly encouraged to read Dr. Neal's full accounting in her captivating and informative book *To Heaven and Back*.

After Death does feature another important NDE researcher, Dr. Jeffery Long, a radiation oncologist who has been instrumental in providing information about life after death to the public. Jeff and his wife Jody, a retired attorney not shown in the film, created and maintain the Near-Death Experience Research Foundation (NDERF) which has a website with over 5,000 cases, all available to the public online. Known to few people is that Jeff and Jody were able to keep the NDERF functioning even when a hurricane displaced them from their damaged Louisiana home.

After Death included comments and pronouncements of concern. For example, it is claimed, even in the movie trailer, that "23% of NDErs have Hellish experiences." That figure needs to be substantiated, as it runs counter to every report on distressing experiences ever researched. Of particular concern is the "Hellish" criteria. Although distressing NDEs do happen and have been reported, they were found to be relatively rare. Most researchers have put distressing NDEs at 5% or lower, and that includes all forms of psychological concerns, not necessarily religiously (Hell) related.

A similar comment, also contained both in the movie

and the trailer, is "that since 2001, the number of people who doubt the existence of life after death has nearly doubled." That figure too, should be substantiated, as it is counterintuitive to all of the publicity that NDEs have received. When IANDS was started, seeing serious information about NDEs on television or in major movie scripts was quite rare. For the past couple of decades, many mainstream news programs have carried objective stories, and life after death has been a significant theme in several major motion pictures. Most of us who study the field of continuation of consciousness believe the times they are a-changing, and in a positive direction.

After Death is a welcome addition, as it joins the ranks of documentaries that explore one of life's most enduring questions, "What happens when we die?" The graphics department has done an excellent job in providing context for the inevitably ineffable description afforded by those who have had an NDE. Viewers should stay through the credits, as there is a short roundtable discussion conducted by several of the key participants.

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TO VIEW THE MOVIE:

<https://www.angel.com/watch/after-death>

Book Review of John Audette's *LOVED BY THE LIGHT*

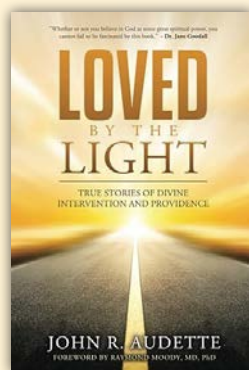
Excerpted from a Review by Robert C. Anderson EdD, MDiv, Lt Col USAF retired

Modern thinkers and astute observers of contemporary global affairs might agree with John Audette's observation in his recent book entitled, *Loved by the Light*, that humanity is in dire need of an urgent crisis intervention strategy. Indeed, we are. But whether they would go so far as to agree with his proposed plan of action remains to be seen. In what can be justifiably called an act of considerable audacity, Audette boldly describes his visionary out-of-the-box remedy in this provocative book.

Unashamedly, Audette calls for an immediate global spiritual revolution, one that takes place outside the framework of traditional religion. He advocates one unlike any before it, entirely non-violent, non-denominational, and focused solely on expanding human consciousness to the point

of a critical mass spiritual awakening. He reasons that it should be predicated on reliable knowledge derived from the scientific study of spiritually transformative experiences (STEs), not on faith in dogma or theology. He refers to it as an evidence-based and data-driven spiritual revolution founded on empirically defensible scientific conclusions about the nature of human consciousness and its disposition after death. He even goes so far as to champion the idea of forging a convergence between science, spirituality, and religion.

The author asserts that certain postulations can be confidently advanced into the court of public opinion based on empirical findings that have been generated over the past five decades or so by serious scientists who have conducted pioneering work in this area. These



Cont. on page 12

CATHOLIC PRIEST HELPS SOULS CROSS OVER

Fr. Nathan Castle, OP, is the author of the *Afterlife, Interrupted* book series. For the past 27 years, his unique ministry has been helping souls move from a therapeutic transitional afterlife plane to the next more joyful one. In his new book *Afterlife, Interrupted Book Three: Please Let Me Explain* explores interrupted death experiences and their impacts on our lives. Written by a Catholic priest, the book emphasizes the power of these life-altering examples to make us more conscious, connected, and loving. Fr. Nathan dispels misconceptions about deceased loved ones being stuck and provides support for those navigating grief, emphasizing the possibility of moving forward with peace.

Fr. Nathan has helped over 500 people who died suddenly adjust to the afterlife. These victims of fires, automobile accidents, shootings, stabbings, and drownings came to him in his dreams seeking help for resolving their Interrupted Death Experience. And although such contact with the Other Side was not something he sought out, Fr. Nathan has come to believe that providing such help is something the Holy Spirit has given him to do. He has a companion podcast called *The Joyful Friar* which provides a more in-depth explanation of the *Afterlife, Interrupted* stories from all three books. His *Praise*



for *Afterlife, Interrupted Series* books may be purchased on [Amazon](#).

“The work Fr. Nathan describes in *Afterlife, Interrupted* is fascinating. It has touched me at a very deep level. One of the things I take away from this is that we do go on. We don’t stop existing just because we dropped our bodies.”—Jack Canfield, co-creator of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series and author of *The Success Principles*.



Father Nathan Castle, OP is from Groves, Texas. Father Nathan received MA and MDIV degrees from the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. He served in campus ministries at the University of California Riverside, Arizona State University, Stanford University, and currently at the University of Arizona. Father Nathan has chaired the Executive Board of the Catholic Campus Ministry Association (CCMA).

Link to interview by Jack Canfield with Fr. Nathan Castle: <https://youtu.be/bALRVITWs4?feature=shared>

Link to Fr. Nathan’s interview of IANDS President Jan Holden: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrAnofCL0aM>

Die Hard Atheist: From NDE Denier to Full-On Woo-Woo Against My Will

Book by Louisa Peck

Louisa was raised to view God as nothing more than a human concept and spiritualism as a form of superstition. Then, in 1982 at a Manhattan nightclub, she suffered a cardiac arrest brought on by lidocaine poisoning, shot out of her body, and experienced an otherworldly journey to her god source — the Sun.

Returned to her body, she dismissed her experience as a hypoxic hallucination. She’d never heard of a near-death experience, and even if she had, she’d have considered the idea of crossing over to be ludicrous.

But WEIRD THINGS began happening for her— inexplicable events that wouldn’t stop! She tried to



shut her mind against seeing a ghost, knowing the future, and reading people’s sometimes-embarrassing thoughts, until she came to understand that leaving her body had damaged whatever filter blocked out spirit energies. As a spirit voice continued to coach her in how to live wisely, Louisa accepted two facts: (a) the spirit realm is real, and (b) visiting it had gifted her with new perceptions. As a full-fledged woo-woo, Louisa found community among fellow near-death experiencers and became willing to share her story.

Louisa’s book is available on Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0CFZF1GKM>

Crossing the Veil & Coming Back to Life: An Ensemble Theater Piece Based on NDEs

by Robert Cornett, MTS

I have been a student of conceptions of the afterlife, after-death communication, and near-death experiences for most of my adult life and have in recent years been called to be trained as an end-of-life doula working with hospice patients and their families. Death and what happens after is something my soul needs to deeply explore and understand in this lifetime. As a student of Anthroposophy and other esoteric systems, I have learned that in the past two centuries there has been a thinning of the veil and an opening of communication between the living and “the dead.” A planned effort has been made by spirits beyond the veil to reveal to those of us now in incarnation something about life after death and about the spiritual world that is our source. Evidence of this can be found in the plethora of communications in the 19th and 20th centuries from those who have purported to have direct or indirect communications with family members and others who have passed on. The Spiritualist movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had millions of followers. At the same time, we saw the emergence of the esoteric wisdom teachings of Anthroposophy, Theosophy, the Rosicrucian Order, Edgar Cayce, Alice Bailey, and others. Many of these spiritual teachers foresaw a coming transformation and expansion of human consciousness that would open the gates between the living and the dead and lead to a growing understanding and knowledge that life and consciousness continues after death.

In 1975 Doctor Raymond Moody published his book, *Life After Life*, the first qualitative study of 150 people who had undergone near-death experiences (NDEs). Since that time there have been nearly 50 years of research and thousands of case studies of people who have had medical crises that brought them to the edge of death or actually have been declared clinically dead and came back from the experience feeling they had traveled out of their bodies and had some sort of spiritual or transcendent experience. This research has opened the minds of

millions of people around the world to the possibility that life continues after death.

A few years ago, I had the idea that these moving stories of near-death experiencers would make a very compelling theater piece. As I began sketching out ideas for a play, I had the good fortune of meeting Ted Pugh and Fern Sloane, professional actors and leaders of the Michael Chekhov School of Acting in Hudson, NY. I approached them with the idea for a play about NDEs. They warmed up to the idea and gathered together a group of actors to read through my initial script. Over



From left to right: Vincent Ropollo, Robert Cornett, Dasana Smyth, Laurie Portocarrero, Eddie Allen, Sarah Stosiek, Ted Pugh, Christina Pokert

several months I reworked the script until we felt we were ready to start rehearsing. I had imagined this as an ensemble piece that would emerge from a creative exploration of imagining into the experience of what may happen

after the moment of death. The hope was that by engaging with and entering into the experiences of real people who have had near-death experiences, the ensemble would discover powerful ways to give dramatic expression to these stories. The Michael Chekhov acting techniques turned out to be the perfect vehicle for the project. After many months of experimenting, the result was the creation of an ensemble theater piece titled, “Crossing the Veil & Coming Back to Life.”

The play has been performed multiple times over the past year for several community, artistic, and church groups. We also were honored to perform at the 2023 International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) annual conference in Washington, DC. I feel blessed to have found such a talented group of professional actors to bring this piece to life and to share these powerful stories with the communities where we have performed. Those who come back from NDEs and tell their stories seem to me very akin to the heroes that the scholar of mythology, Joseph Campbell, described in his book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. Campbell describes the “Hero’s Journey” as a travel story with three stages:

- A Departure from the ordinary word and crossing a threshold into an unknown reality.
- Wandering and undergoing various trials and tests and awakenings in the Initiation stage.
- Ending in a Return to their origin point by crossing a threshold back into the ordinary world, integrating new wisdom learned along the way and sharing it as an elixir with the community. Sharing the story can lead to a sense of healing in the community.

Our work together as an ensemble has been a true labor of love. We hope our performances honor the real people behind these stories and bring a sense of hope, inspiration, and healing to the audiences that come to see it.

The ensemble includes Eddie Allen, Robert Cornett, Laurie Portocarrero, Ted Pugh (Director), Vincent Ropollo, Dasana Smyth and musicians Christina Porkert and Sarah Stosiek.

Robert Cornett is an actor and playwright and holds a master's degree from Harvard Divinity School. He has done extensive study of the literature of post-mortem experience and communication. He is a certified End of Life Doula working with hospice patients and their families in New York state.

View the video from the IANDS 2023 Conference in Washington, DC, of the presentation

Crossing the Veil and Coming Back Again:

An Ensemble Theater Performance:

<https://vimeo.com/874150995/41f0b58427?>

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postulations are summarized in Eternea's Seven Statements and Fifteen Elaborations, which Audette claims provide an adequate ideological foundation for the spiritual revolution he recommends to solve all of the world's problems (view them at AffirmingGod.com or Eternea.org in which he also outlines ways people can have their own direct life-changing spiritual epiphany).

Audette earned a Master of Science degree in sociology from Virginia Tech. He is the founder of Eternea.org and co-founder of IANDS.org. His professional career consisted of several senior executive positions in hospital and hospice administration, physician practice management, as well as public broadcasting and the performing arts. His sociological training could explain his idealistic macro orientation.

Thus, *Loved by the Light* could be one of the most important books ever written on the subject of progressive spirituality. It could qualify as a seminal work, as Dr. Raymond Moody predicted in his Foreword to the book. If so, maybe it will provoke the sea-change the author envisions. Then again, maybe not. But if it fails to do so, humanity will be the big loser—tremendously so.

One of the best features of this book is that Audette writes engagingly of a circuitous spiritual awakening over the course of his lifetime involving multiple angel encounters, most life-saving, as well as after-death communications, deathbed visions, near-death and shared death experiences, and even a mystical vision quest in the Mojave Desert. Most striking of all is the story he bravely shares about being divinely rescued in utero from multiple abortion attempts by his mother when he was a developing fetus in her womb. How he found out about this is an even greater miracle, which truly makes this book a must read.

As the author opines in his closing sentences: "Haven't we waited long enough? Haven't we suffered long enough?" Well, if a sufficient number of people the world over answer these questions in an affirmative fashion, then maybe Audette's book is well-timed. Maybe it will make a huge difference. Maybe it will serve as a sorely needed catalyst to trigger an urgent global spiritual revolution which sparks a new "Age of Enlightenment," in which the "Golden Rule" becomes the new prevailing paradigm. For all our sakes, let's hope so. It cannot happen soon enough. Humanity's future may depend upon it.



NEW *Groups*

LEARN MORE AT ISGO.IANDS.ORG



Last Fridays at 12:00 PM ET

Healthcare Professionals Sharing Group

The IANDS Healthcare Professional group will primarily be focused on the near-death experience and/or other related spiritually transformative experiences.



First Wednesdays 7:00 pm ET

UFO/ET/NDE Sharing Group

Share, discover, and explore the connection between spiritually transformative experiences like NDEs, encountering galactic beings, and sighting UFOs.



Fourth Wednesdays at 8:30 PM ET

NDE Integration

Engage in a 12-Step NDE Integration process for experiencers to find a path to community, validation, support, and acceptance. ***This is a support group & class w/optional prework that provides conversation and resources to support integration.

Raising Our Ethical Vibrations

by Jim Fisher

In the book *Lessons from the Light* by Ken Ring and Evelyn Valarino, the authors reported that exposure to NDEs—having had one or having studied the phenomenon—can lead to positive effects on one’s life. People “become more appreciative of life, more self-accepting, more compassionately concerned for others, more spiritual, less materialistic, and so on...” Although many readers of this article would agree with that observation, there are still occasions where the vagaries of life can negatively affect us. We are still humans subject to emotional pain and other frailties. The IANDS community is not insulated from these issues.

In 2020 the IANDS board appointed several individuals to a newly formed Ethics Committee to create policies and procedures that promote ethical behavior and to address instances of potential ethical misconduct among members and participants in our programs. In late 2020 ethical standards were adopted and a process was instituted to facilitate addressing issues when they arose. Fortunately, there haven’t been many cases since then that have come to the attention of the Ethics Committee.

When a case does arise, it can be difficult for committee members to accumulate unmistakable evidence and make decisions as to how to proceed. From a spiritual perspective we understand that judging others is contrary to lessons learned from NDEs. Yet the committee is expected to exercise human judgment in deciding cases. We can’t know what higher purposes might be involved in a specific case but we recognize that there might be spiritual objectives working behind the scenes.

Recently, the committee has given some thought to this conundrum. A concept arose that we hope might help us manage cases that arise going forward. Consider the nature of a life review that sometimes occurs during an NDE. An individual not only gets to re-experience aspects of their life but also may experience the impact they had on others. This insight allows the individual to assess their role in creating less than loving interactions with others. There isn’t a third-party judgment. Rather, any judgment that arises comes from within under the supervision of guides or beings of light.

The Ethics Committee thinks this approach to judgment when wrestling with ethics cases might

be helpful in settling those cases. We start from the perspective that the people involved are of goodwill. That is, people don’t intentionally start from a frame of mind that they want to hurt others. A humorous anecdote might help.

A man walks into a restaurant and sees a woman sitting at a table who he thinks he recognizes. He walks up to her and says, “You look like Helen White.” The woman looks up at him and says, “Well you don’t look so good in blue, yourself.”

Phonetically, both people heard the same sounds. Their respective interpretations of what was said were quite different.

The committee will strive to create conditions that foster understanding between parties involved in ethics cases. We will attempt to play the role of guides rather than judges. The hope is that differences may get resolved if the two parties can listen to the perspective of the other. If that doesn’t work, the committee has some very caring and experienced people who, reluctantly, can be fair judges of appropriate outcomes.



New!

IANDS Development Committee

Call for volunteers

Are you looking for an opportunity to contribute to the near-death community? IANDS needs your help to move our vision forward.

Fundraising, writing, marketing, and/or great people skills?

Join our group today – no committee experience necessary. Commitment: 2-3 hours per month. Contact Deborah at: deborahc@iands.org



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Great presentations from our *Explore the Extraordinary* podcast, previous IANDS conferences, and more:

<https://www.youtube.com/@IANDSvideos>



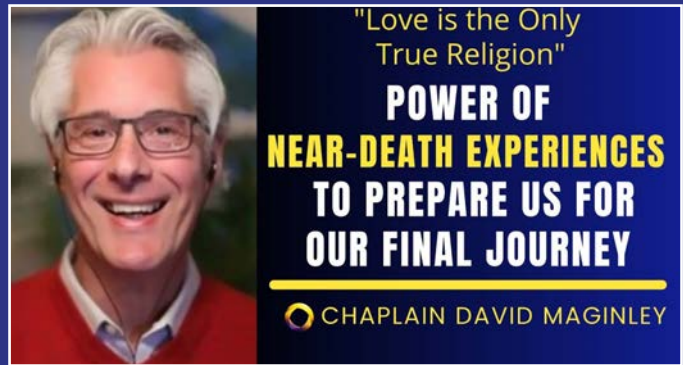
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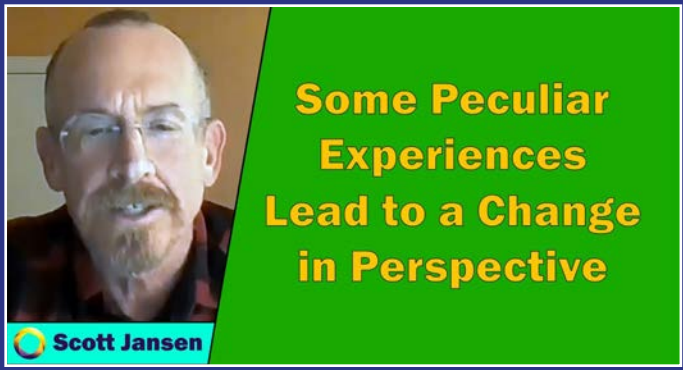
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Image adapted from a painting by Nancy Rynes