



**The International Association for Near-Death Studies, Inc.**

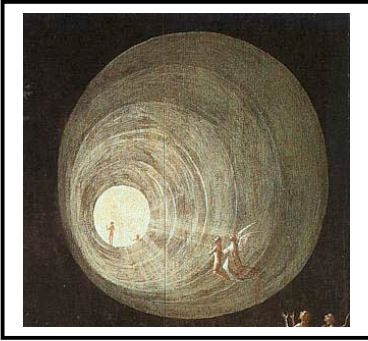
## STRATEGIC PLAN: 2007-2009



Photo by Bill Taylor

# THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR NEAR-DEATH STUDIES, Inc. - IANDS STRATEGIC PLAN: 2007-2009

## Introduction



Through near-death experiences (NDEs), humanity now has thousands of documented cases of transcendent encounters that transform the experiencer's life and in which consciousness may appear to exist independent of the physical body. The International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) is the only international organization dedicated to encouraging thoughtful scholarship and scientific research into the nature and implications of these experiences—physical, psychological, social, and spiritual; to educating about NDEs; and to supporting near-death experiencers and people close to them.

Recently, the organization has embarked on a series of strategies to disseminate the growing body of research indicating strongly that the NDE cannot be explained by physiology or pharmacology alone. It is critical that this research reach a broader audience, including scientists, medical professionals, religious thinkers, and the general public.

Meanwhile, many people apparently outside the context of imminent death or clinical crisis report experiences involving virtually identical elements and aftereffects as NDEs. These near-death-like experiences may signify unrecognized moments of clinical emergency but also occur in times of emotional extremes or at the deathbed vigil of a loved one. Though descriptions of these experiences have existed throughout human history, they have become a focus of renewed interest.

While experiencers sometimes struggle to adjust, they usually feel a need to discuss the NDE and its aftermath but often have difficulty finding others in whom to confide. They, their caregivers, and others close to them feel in great need of information and support.

Since its founding in 1981, IANDS has been the central address for research and education about the NDE. The organization has expanded to include an international network of local interest groups, quarterly publishing of a newsletter and the peer-reviewed *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, and periodic conferences that afford the opportunity for near-death experiencers, researchers, and the public to interact and discuss significant issues and new understandings.



## Milestones



Among IANDS most important accomplishments are these:

- since 1981, consultant to all network and cable morning and evening news and feature programs throughout the U.S. and Canada, major talk shows, film producers, and countless magazine and newspaper reporters, providing information, research references, and referrals to near-death experts and experiencers
- 1981, inauguration of the quarterly newsletter *Vital Signs*.
- 1982, inauguration of the scholarly, refereed quarterly *Journal of Near-Death Studies*.
- 1982, first local support and interest groups; as of 2006, 45 in the U.S. and 10 outside the U.S.
- 1982, first medical seminar, Yale University School of Medicine
- 1984, first NDE research and clinical conference, Pembroke Pines, Florida
- 1985, first public conference, with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross at University of Connecticut
- 1989, institution of regularly scheduled conferences
- 1995, debut of an informational website, still expanding its services
- 2002, publication of the scholarly research tool, *Near-Death Experiences: Index to the Periodical Literature*, on CD-ROM, indexing all scholarly and many non-scholarly articles addressing NDEs; updated in 2006
- 2005, distribution to U.S. medical schools of *The Day I Died*, an hour-long BBC production about the most compelling cases of NDEs and current research on NDEs
- 2006, research conference observing the first 30 years of NDE research, University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center

## Vision Statement

- *We envision a future in which the study of near-death experiences is established and integrated into all relevant scientific, academic, healthcare and spiritual/religious communities.*
- *We envision a future in which all near-death experiencers are accepted, respected, and supported by their healthcare providers, families, co-workers, and the public at large as they integrate the experiences into their lives.*
- *We envision a future in which people from all walks of life, religions and cultures will look at near-death experiences as a potential source of meaning and inspiration for a better world.*



## Mission Statement

*To build global understanding of near-death and near-death-like experiences through research, education, and support.*

### How we accomplish our mission:

**Research** Through the *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, work with authors to promote the use of scientifically valid research protocols, publish findings, encourage investigations in diverse disciplines, and enable informed discussion and examination of NDE-related topics. Through conferences and other programs, we look for opportunities to collaborate with other organizations having research interests.

**Education** Expand program offerings for the scientific, academic, medical, therapeutic and spiritual/religious communities and for the public at large. Continue building a library of information addressed to people facing death, and to their loved ones and those who assist the dying and the grieving. Incorporate NDE-based knowledge into publications and programs for suicide prevention, for the easing of grief, and for the discovery of meaning and purpose in life.

**Support** Advocate and provide support for NDErs and NDLErs, assuring them that their experience is a normal, valid, and common phenomenon. Assist experiencers, their families, their caregivers, others close to them, and local support groups in the process of integrating these experiences into their lives.

## Values

- **Beneficence:** We pursue and use information about near-death and near-death-like experiences to promote the welfare of all forms of existence.
- **Responsibility:** We promote balanced, research-based and thoughtful views about near-death and near-death-like experiences.
- **Inclusivity:** We welcome various disciplines and viewpoints in the search for greater understanding of near-death and near-death-like experiences.
- **Nonpartisanship:** Where research does not indicate a reasonably clear position, we remain impartial.
- **Community:** We promote connection between, and support for, people interested personally and/or professionally in near-death and near-death-like experiences.



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## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### Research Goals & Objectives:

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*Research Goal #1: Sponsor research on NDEs/NDLEs and provide the most current data for IANDS researchers and others.*

#### **Annual Objectives:**

##### **2007**

- To identify stakeholders and funding sources for current prioritized research areas:
  1. Cross-cultural field studies on NDE incidence, nature and aftereffects, particularly in non-Western cultures .
  2. Combat experience aftereffects and educational interventions
  3. Update of U.S. statistics on NDE incidence, demographics and aftereffects
  4. Methods of applying the NDE to prevent suicide, alleviate grief and reduce death anxiety in the general population.
- To prioritize other issues suggested for IANDS-sponsored research, such as:
  - What more can be learned about shifts in electrical sensitivities following an NDE/NDLE?
  - Are there contributing factors for radiant and terrifying experiences?
  - How do aftereffects of childhood and adult experiencers compare?
  - What are the implications of the NDE for religious communities?
  - What are the aftereffects of other transcendent/transpersonal experiences compared with those of the NDE?
  - What are the messages contained in NDEs/NDLEs, and how do they affect experiencers?
  - What are the changed beliefs in NDErs/NDLErs by religious background?
  - What are the implications of NDEs as compared with NDLEs?
- To provide students with mentors to assist and promote NDE research.
- To update the *Near-Death Experiences: Index to the Periodical Literature*.

##### **2008**

- To invite requests for proposals to pursue priority research questions
- To develop an online database of funding resources for NDE researchers

##### **2009**

- To complete NIH research grant proposal on near-death experiences
- To inform academic institutions about support for dissertations in the field of NDE/NDLE research.

#### **Long Term Objectives :**

- To publish results of selected research questions
- To offer competitive grants to researchers.
- To provide fellowships/scholarships for research
- To coordinate and share findings with other organizations using database analyses.

***Research Goal #2: Upgrade the state-of-the art tools and methodology for science-based research.***

**Annual Objectives:**

**2007**

- To bring the current database of NDE reports up to commercial standards.
- To review status of archives for availability to researchers.
- To revise the current questionnaire to conform to the Greyson scale and incorporate recent findings in the NDE field.
- To complete internet NDE survey tool.
- To initiate an online NDE narrative repository.

**2008**

- To put the *Near-Death Experiences: Index to the Periodical Literature* through 2007 online to maximize its availability to researchers and other interested persons.

**2009**

- To develop a formal assessment of the needs of experiencers and their families.

**Long Term Objectives :**

- To expand NDE database to incorporate multi-lingual data.

***Research Goal #3: Enhance collaboration with organizations that have credibility within the scientific, healthcare, spiritual/religious, and academic communities.***

**Annual Objectives:**

**2007**

- To update list of research contacts
- To cultivate research connections by sponsoring and speaking at relevant organizations.
- To explore collaborations with relevant foundations, universities, and non-profits, such as Templeton Foundation, IONS, the Rhine Research Center, and Fetzer, involved in scientific research on the nature of consciousness, spirituality, etc.

**2008**

- To develop a list of institutional collaborators
- To explore alliance with other professional / spiritual / religious organizations that support physicians, nurses, grief counselors, psychotherapists, physicists, clergy, etc.

**2009**

- To identify and develop collaborations with scientists in fields which are concerned with an explanation for the near-death experience, such as quantum physics and neurophysics.
- Sponsor a collaborative forum on priority research issues.

**Long Term Objectives:**

- To conduct and publish collaborative research projects.
- To hold collaborative conferences on selected research issues.

## Education Goals & Objectives:

*Education Goal #1. Provide most current information to healthcare providers, medical, religious and academic professionals.*

### Annual Objectives:

#### 2007

- To collect, publish and disseminate the proceedings of the IANDS Conference at MD Anderson
- To create a 5-hour internet-based CEU program for counselors/psychologists
- To produce specialized CEU program modules for nursing, pastoral care
- To plan for a conference in 2008
- To finalize the Road Show as two-hour CEU program with evaluation form for healthcare providers.
- To post bibliography online.

#### 2008

- To launch at the IANDS website the 5-hour internet-based CEU program for psychologists and counselors
- To create an online area at the IANDS website for professionals
- To revise existing brochures/website

#### 2009

- To hold an interfaith conference
- To develop strategies for educational programs to be used in training of clergy

### Long Term Objectives:

- To develop strategies for educational programs for universities
- To hold a conference for mental health professionals

*Education Goal #2. Enrich our offerings of educational materials in specific topic areas for experiencers and the public at large.*

### Annual Objectives:

#### 2007

- To put top/best research articles on NDEs/NDLEs on website
- To develop brochure/webpage that addresses NDEs and suicide
- To develop brochure/webpage for spouses, friends, and families of experiencers
- To develop catalog, database on audio, videos, DVDs and book holdings for library.
- To diversify articles of Vital Signs

#### 2008

- To develop brochure/webpage that addresses NDLEs, nearing-death awareness, after-death communication, and mystical experiences
- To develop brochure/webpage on uncommon aspects of the NDE, such as pleasurable dark experiences

#### 2009

- To develop brochure/webpage to address spiritual aspects of NDEs/NDLEs

*Education Goal #3. Expand access of knowledge of NDEs/NDLEs through a variety of media and materials.*

**Annual Objectives:**

**2007**

- To complete conversion of past conference tapes to digital format for purchase and download from website
- To produce and/or digitize current conference presentations (audio, DVD) for download or purchase
- To modify and promote the Road Show to multiple venues and post on website.
- To develop a press kit and media area on website
- To develop web-based seminars on a variety of NDE/NDLE-related topics for members

**2008**

- To complete conversion of past recordings into multiple digital formats
- To develop procedures and criteria for a within-IANDS Speakers' Network as a resource for IANDS Local Group leaders
- To plan audiovisual programs at the IANDS website
- To develop marketing plan for Road Shows for venues other than nursing.
- To hold an international conference

**2009**

- To begin translating IANDS membership materials into at least two other languages

**Long Term Objectives:**

- To develop and launch an IANDS Speakers' Bureau
- To facilitate documentaries for television

## Support Goals & Objectives:

*Support Goal #1. Expand availability and effectiveness of local groups for public education and individual support in all major communities and universities.*

### Annual Objectives:

#### 2007

- To develop and hold training for local group leaders
- To expand and improve local group leaders' manual based on policies and agreements
- To review / revise local group leaders' manual for effectiveness/improvements for use with international groups
- To improve group report form and solicit leader reports by year-end
- To plan for meetings of international group leaders
- To evaluate creating unique group report form for international groups
- To create database template for local group lists.
- To gather/improve international group contact information
- To establish teleconference for start-up and potential local group leaders
- To explore the establishment of a virtual group that meets monthly via conference call, to serve those who do not have access to a local group
- To create links to / from IANDS website to local FOI sites

#### 2008

- To create a library for distributing program materials to local groups.
- To update online catalog of available support services and resources.

#### 2009

- To translate local group support materials into two additional languages.

### Long Term Objectives

- To create regional local group coordination structure
- To develop culturally based local group support materials
- To hold meetings for international group leaders
- To invite teleconference/e-mail participation by international groups

*Support Goal #2. Increase our understanding of the needs of near-death and near-death like experiencers and expand programs to support them.*

### Annual Objectives:

#### 2007

- To develop policy on support for experiencers
- To explore a website / message board to allow members to communicate with each other
- To conduct a formal survey on experiencers' needs and challenges

#### 2008

- To create a process for expansion of experiencer retreats

#### 2009

- To develop workshops and programs to address experiencer's needs and challenges

## Infrastructure Goals & Objectives:

### *Infrastructure Goal #1. Expand administrative and operational capabilities.*

#### **Annual Objectives**

##### **2007**

- To implement the use of Quickbooks for Non-Profits for financial record keeping
- To increase staff to 1 FTE (Full Time Equivalent)

##### **2008**

- To hire a full-time executive director

##### **2009**

- To increase staff to 2 FTE
- To hire dedicated webmaster

#### **Long Term Objectives**

- To acquire a resource center for administrative, archival research, and educational purposes.

### *Infrastructure Goal #2. Enhance website to support all IANDS activities.*

#### **Annual Objectives:**

##### **2007**

- To develop capacity to support web-based seminars
- To develop capacity for local group leaders to submit annual report online.
- To develop capacity to post back issues of VS available for a fee
- To reactivate message boards.
- To implement strategies outlined in the Challenge Grant
- To post Legacy Society Page

##### **2008**

- To explore the development of a CMS template for local group mailing addresses, etc.
- To explore posting JNDS online for subscription fee.
- To explore posting VS online for subscription fee.

##### **2009**

- To explore video conferencing capabilities
- To explore possibility of a dedicated server for research request system
- To develop capacity for streaming audio/ video for programs, including recorded conference presentations

#### **Long Term Objectives**

- To develop a multi-lingual website

*Infrastructure Goal #3. Strengthen organizational governance structure with respect to board, committees, advisory boards, local groups, and volunteers.*

**Annual Objectives:**

**2007**

- To develop job descriptions for existing board, committee chairs, committees, staff and volunteer roles.
- To develop job descriptions for needed functions, ie. executive director, development chair, development director, etc.
- To formalize a process to solicit and recruit board and committee members
- To design and adopt optimum legal, financial structure for local groups and IANDS
- To formalize and develop policies for Policies and Procedures Manual
- To structure and direct volunteers to implement appropriate objectives.
- To formalize performance needs and assessments of each function.
- To hold training workshops in non-profit management for board, staff, and committee chairs

**2008**

- To implement optimum structure for local groups and IANDS
- To explore the feasibility of recruiting international board members

**Long Term Objectives**

- To evaluate optimal governance structure re: policy board vs. working board.

*Infrastructure Goal #4. Increase financial and staff capacity of IANDS to achieve its goals.*

**Annual Objectives:**

**2007**

- To increase membership to a level that fully funds operational expenses.
- To develop budget, marketing, and development plan based on strategic plan
- To conduct financial audit
- To implement marketing and development plan based on strategic plan
- To hire a grant consultant
- To promote planned giving through Legacy Society
- To conduct periodic assessments of target markets
- To install a donor tracking/contact/grant management systems with trained staff

**2008**

- To develop partnerships with planned giving entities
- To seek grants to fund research, educational, and support programs
- To hire a development director
- To hire a publicist to assist with collaboration and dissemination of information to other groups and the public
- To develop an annual report for donors
- To increase membership to level that funds program and operational goals.

**Long Term Objectives**

- To implement IANDS' own charitable trust program.
- To hire a constituent director to oversee marketing and membership.

## Participants in Strategic Plan Development

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### Board of Directors

Yolaine M. Stout  
*President*

Debbie James, MSN, RN, CCRN, CNS  
*Vice President*

Charles Swedrock, M.B.A.  
*Recording Secretary*  
*Local Group Coordinator*

Scott Taylor, EdD  
*Treasurer*

Nancy Evans Bush, M.A.  
*Publications*

Diane Corcoran, PhD, RN, CLNC  
*Research and Education*

Nancy Clark, Ph.D  
*International Group Coordinator*

Mary Montgomery Clifford, M.A.  
*Public Relations*

Allen Katzoff, M.B.A.  
*Marketing & Membership*

Dan Punzak, P.E.  
*Professional Relations*

### Administrative Director

Anneliese Fox

### Research Director

Bruce Greyson, M.D.

### Vital Signs Editor

Linda Jacquin / Nancy Evans Bush

### Physician's Advisory Committee

Pam Kircher, M.D.

Jeff Long, M.D.

Jason MacLurg, M.D.

### Research Committee

Vince Migliore

### Former Board Directors

P.M.H. Atwater, L.H.D.

Janice Miner Holden, EdD, LPC-S, LMFT, NCC

Kenneth Ring, Ph.D

Jerry Shields, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M

Barbara Harris Whitfield, RT

### Local Group Leaders

Beverly Brodsky  
*San Diego, CA*

Nancy Clark  
*Columbus, OH*

Richard Dinges  
*Virginia Beach, VA*

Patreesa King  
*Virginia Beach, VA*

Madelaine Luther  
*St. Louis, MO*

Denis Purcell  
*Los Angeles, CA.*

Linda Reed  
*Tucson, AZ*

Lynn B. Robinson, PhD.  
*Mobile, AL*

### Life Members, Donors, Supporters & Volunteers

Kathi Beasley

W.D. Coffey

Nanci Danison

John Egle

Bill Guggenheim

Michael Krumper

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