

Subject: UFOs and NDEs - the whole truth
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NDEs and UFOs --THE WHOLE TRUTH
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Beginning with the work of Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross in the 1960s and the publication of "Life After Life" in 1975 by Dr. Raymond Moody, a new branch of thanatology (the study of the death process) has evolved, known as the New Death Experience (NDE). Although not the main subject of our book, some researchers are now making a connection between NDEs and the UFO abduction experience. In his book "The Omega Project" (with foreword by popular horror novelist and UFO abductee Whitley Streiber), Dr. Kenneth Ring collects information on the experiences of both UFO abductees and NDE percipients, and claims that they may be "in effect alternate pathways (Dr. Ring's emphasis) to the same type of psychospiritual transformation." This is a strong statement, no doubt suggested by the similarity between the UFO and NDE percipient's altered state of consciousness during the experience, their alleged contact with non-human entities, and the experience's after-effects. Dr. Ring further describes the "psychospiritual transformation" that both abductees and NDE-ers go through as being "one that expresses itself in greater awareness of the interconnectedness and sacredness of all life and necessarily fosters a heightened ecological concern for the welfare of the planet." Since this has the makings for a new social and spiritual movement, it is important to understand the nature of an NDE -- not just what is reported, but the whole truth.

What is an NDE? Although the particular experience may vary, an NDE can be defined as the vivid and detailed report given by an individual who has been close to death (or has even been declared clinically dead), but has survived either through good fortune or through modern medical resuscitation efforts. Several decades ago, individuals who were declared clinically dead could seldom be resuscitated. Over the last several decades, however, medical resuscitatory technology has advanced to such a level that many patients who are clinically dead in the sense of having flatline EKGs

and no discernible brain activity for several minutes have been brought back to life. Surprisingly, reports began to surface from these individuals that were very similar in content, suggesting that their consciousness and personality had continued (and even been enhanced) into the period after clinical death.

At first such reports were simply ignored by attending physicians and nurses, who were properly concerned with the patient's physical rather than spiritual condition (they still are in many cases). When the reports began to be noticed by the medical community, they were assumed to be the result of delirium brought on by lack of oxygen to the brain, by administration of pain-killing narcotics, by endorphins released in the brain, by erratic temporal lobe activity, and other medical factors. However, further investigation by pioneers such as Drs. Raymond Moody, Melvin Morse, and others have made a strong case that such NDEs represent a real rather than hallucinatory experience. For example, measurements of brain oxygen levels in dying patients has shown that many of those who report an NDE were at a normal oxygen level. Others, such as Dannion Brinkley (author of "Saved by the Light"), who "died" at home from a lightning strike while holding a telephone, had no drugs administered. Endorphin and temporal lobe-related hallucinations replicated in other settings do not repeat the same sequences as in an NDE. Most fantastically, some NDE-ers verified details of their own resuscitation and even the layout and activities of their relatives in other rooms while they were clinically dead. One such woman well known to the authors, Lynn (not her real name), "died" in 1973 and returned with a fascinating story. Although others have tried to investigate and relate the story of this honest and credible woman, she has never before given permission because of its personal nature and its religious significance. Even well-known UFO abduction researcher Budd Hopkins tried to have her agree to a hypnosis session with him, which she refused. Because of her trust in our desire to present the entire account, she has agreed to the release of her story.

Lynn's story begins in 1973 in Texas, where she was seven months pregnant and began complaining of severe abdominal pain and discomfort. Her husband Ted (not his real name) rushed her to a local clinic through a driving rainstorm, where she was diagnosed as having an infection due to possible appendicitis. Treatment of her deteriorating condition, combined with her pregnancy, was beyond the capabilities of the local clinic. She was instead rushed immediately in an ambulance to the emergency room of a major hospital. Her husband drove his car behind the ambulance, and when he arrived at the hospital he called several relatives and family friends to tell them about the situation. At the hospital it was found that her appendix was in fact close to bursting, and she was quickly prepared for surgery. Lynn remembers having her arms strapped to boards alongside the bed and having an IV started in a vein before she lost consciousness. Her pregnancy and

weakened state made the operation particularly difficult. During the operation her condition deteriorated and her heart arrested, which made the doctors call a RCode Blue.S Lynn suddenly found herself still in the operating room, but this time floating above her body. From her position, she could see and hear the doctors and nurses giving commands and then bringing paddles to jolt her now still heart. However, Lynn did not feel any pain or sense of panic. Instead she felt warm and protected, more of a spectator than a participant. She found that she could move about freely, and proceeded to float through the wall and into the adjacent waiting room while the physicians feverishly worked on her now lifeless body.

When she reached the waiting room, she saw her mother, two aunts, and a friend looking very worried, but her husband was not there. Unbeknownst to her, Ted had rushed from the waiting room into the hospital chapel when he heard the doctors yelling "Code Blue," and began praying for his wife's recovery. Lynn floated out of the waiting room into the corridor, and saw Ted leaving the chapel and running into two family friends who were just arriving: James (a professional TV cameraman) and Alan (an Episcopal priest).

In spite of the commotion around her, Lynn was very much at peace in her rather bizarre state, and felt that she was being called to proceed to another plane of existence. However, she could sense that her husband needed her, and his prayers were somehow holding her in this world. Although none of her family or friends seemed able to see her, she instinctively "yelled" the words "Ted, let me go!" but realized that Ted could not hear her. However, Alan did seem to hear her, because he suddenly looked "spooked" and stared at her position, although it was clear from his look that he could not see her. She again yelled "Ted, let me go!" two more times, and the third time Ted also heard her and thought he was being paged. Ted ran to the reception desk and said that he had just been paged. The receptionist told him that he had not, and in fact was not even possible at the time because the thunderstorms had knocked out their commercial power (which powered their paging system) and they were on emergency power. At that point Lynn saw what appeared to be a tunnel and was drawn to it, moving rapidly through it towards a distant point of light. While she was going through the tunnel, still totally at peace, she was fascinated by the many beautiful colors that she could see going past her. As Lynn approached the light it became intensely bright but did not in any way hurt her "eyes." In fact, she felt very much loved and accepted by this being of light, and when she approached him, she recognized him as Jesus Christ--not through a physical resemblance but rather through some kind of direct knowledge. Christ took Lynn to a beautiful place full of love and light which she knew was heaven. While there, she saw her deceased father, her deceased great grandmother, and a long-time friend since the first grade who had been killed in a car accident in 1971.

Lynn saw earth-like features in heaven, but much more beautiful. For example, the flowers seemed to glow brilliantly with multiple beautiful colors. Although she very much wanted to remain there, she looked at Christ and felt Him lovingly telling her that it was now time to go back. Like a little girl, she looked to her father to ask him why she had to go, because she felt so happy there. Her father told her that it was not her time, and then she heard Christ explain that her work was not yet finished on earth, and she had to return.

Lynn hesitatingly agreed to return, and found herself back in the hospital room where she saw that the doctors were still trying to resuscitate her. She came back into her body, and immediately felt excruciating pain while the doctors kept up their resuscitation efforts. After a difficult and lengthy resuscitation effort Lynn was brought back and recovered.

Three days later, Lynn delivered a healthy baby boy through natural childbirth and recovered fully. After the baby was delivered, their priest friend Alan came to visit her and told her somewhat nervously that there was something he wanted to talk to her about. Lynn sensed what he wanted to talk about and said, "Alan, the tie, handkerchief, and yellow shirt you were wearing when I died did not match your maroon coat." This was precisely what he had been wearing when he "heard" Lynn's voice in the corridor outside of the hospital chapel while she was having her NDE -- which left Alan dumbfounded.

Although the individuals in this account are still alive, known to the authors, and of incontrovertible character and honesty, all such accounts nevertheless remain anecdotal until we all discover for ourselves if they are objectively true. Lynn's account contains many of the themes which are now recognized as being normative in an NDE. According to Dr. Moody, nine such themes have emerged from NDE experiences: (1) a sense of having died, (2) feelings of peace, (3) an out-of-body experience, (4) going through a tunnel, (5) seeing beings of light, (6) being greeted by a particular being of light, (7) having an instant review of their life, (8) returning in spite of a desire to not return, and (9) having a psychospiritual transformation after they return. Not all who experience an NDE report all of the characteristics now recognized as being common in such episodes (Lynn, for example, only experienced seven of the nine). Nevertheless, it has been found by Dr. Moody and others that every NDE percipient reported at least one of the nine themes, and some reported many (a few all nine). The life review (which Lynn did not experience) is said to consist of vivid scenes from their life, which pass instantaneously and yet can be reviewed in detail -- as if the individual no longer exists in time. They see both the good and the bad. While they observe these scenes from their own lives, NDE-ers can feel not only what their own emotions were at that time, but also the consequences of

their acts on others whom they had either hurt or been hurt by, or to whom they had performed acts of love and kindness. Some of these NDE percipients claim to receive knowledge of spiritual and scientific mysteries while they are in this state, although most of them forget this knowledge once they return. They are usually given a choice to either remain there or to return, and as is obvious from the fact that they came back to life, they all chose to return -- usually not for themselves, but for the sake of some loved one for whom they cared.

Of particular importance to this book is the nature of the "being of light" towards which NDE percipients are drawn and their life review. Although the percipients themselves say they felt either self-judgmental or happy as each of these events flash before them, the being of light is said to be non-judgmental and to express unconditional love, regardless of the moral quality of the scene being viewed by the percipient (even in the case of homicide). We will return to this thought.

The comparisons drawn between the UFO abduction experience and NDEs by Dr. Ring and others may at first appear tenuous. However, there are at least three similarities: the percipients enter an altered state of consciousness, they claim to communicate with metaphysical entities, and they return with a newly found sense of mission. In particular, many of the abductees and the NDE-ers return with a mission to help the environment and proclaim a "gospel" of universal love, peace, and brotherhood.

A recent Gallup poll estimates that as many as eleven million Americans may have experienced an NDE. Combined with the (arguably high) estimate of five million that have reported incidents that may be related to UFO abductions, we may now have a critical mass of individuals ready to proclaim a new religion based not on faith but on personal experience.

NDE-er Dannion Brinkley mentions such a religion in his book "Saved by the Light." (with foreword by Dr. Moody). He claims that in 1975, while he was clinically dead, thirteen wise "beings of light" showed him a number of future earth events stretching through the end of the 20th century and into the beginning of the next century. Unlike typical NDE percipients, Brinkley was able to return with this knowledge and even claims to have been given the power to read minds. Among the events he was shown were the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, the oil crisis, the Chernobyl disaster, and the Gulf War. According to Brinkley, he was also told that there would be a series of environmental disasters which would usher in a new environmental religion. Interestingly, one of Brinkley's prophecies is of a major nuclear disaster that will occur in a badly polluted northern sea in a part of the world that has fjords that reminded him of Norway. This accident is to occur in 1995 and "could spread radiation everywhere and

affect all humankind." In his foreword to Brinkley's book, Dr. Moody states confirms that Brinkley told him about these events when he interviewed him in 1976. He dismissed the prophecies at the time, until he saw them coming true.

With fantastic tales such as these, many in the UFO and NDE communities appear to be joining hands, preaching a gospel of knowledge, of loving "space brothers" coming in UFOs to save mankind, or unconditionally loving "beings of light" that warn us about coming disasters and greet us in the afterlife. It is claimed that those who come back from an NDE have a deeper spirituality, but broaden their perspective to encompass all religions rather than the one they may have espoused before the NDE. Spiritual centers are beginning to be set up by NDE researchers such as Dr. Moody. Together with Dannion Brinkley, who is now his associate, Dr. Moody has established an "Aesculapian Temple" at his retirement home near Anniston, Alabama, dedicated to psychic healing, necromancy, past-lives regression, and other such things. Dr. Moody and other researchers are said to be attempting to produce near death-like experiences while they are still alive, through stimulated out-of-body episodes.

In his recent book "To Hell and Back," Dr. Maurice Rawlings states that Dr. Moody gives seminars on a method of Rthought travels which he calls RscryingS with a process using mirrors and crystals. In Faber, Virginia, out-of-body-experience (OOBE) researcher Robert Monroe has established the Monroe Institute, which teaches techniques for OOBES to thousands. His RWeekend GatewayS program is a tailored Rsystem of exercises and technologyS which is said to have Raided more than 10,000 participants.S For those who can not attend the institute, Monroe even provides home study courses which include video and audio tapes. NDE pioneer Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, who according to Dr. Rawlings now claims to channel several spirits, used MonroeUs machinery and techniques to have her own OOBE. Monroe is said to have experimented with a mesmerizing Rtime machineS known as the M-5000 that allowed subjects to travel astrally from his Virginia home to Stanford University, Berkeley, or UC Davis, where notable parapsychologists such as Dr. Charles Tart assembled and verified through telephone calls that the astral traveler could accurately describe what they had seen. It should be noted, however, that Dr. Tart and others claimed similar success with Uri Geller and a method they called Rremote viewingsS in the 1970s, claims which were later shown by the National Research Council to be unsubstantiated.

This is all very fascinating -- but is it credible? Given the deception and manipulation of UFO abduction victims that we have uncovered elsewhere in this book, is it possible that there might also be deception and manipulation brewing behind NDE percipients?

First, let us state that regardless of the objective

reality of UFO abductions and NDEs, it is clear that most percipients are themselves credible and believe that something phenomenal has happened to them. Furthermore, a great number of NDEs, perhaps most, are very positive experiences that provide hope for the resuscitated as well as for their loved ones. Most NDEs have a spiritual context that is consistent with the personal beliefs of the percipient (with the possible exception of atheists, who are faced with a bit of a contradiction). As in the example of Lynn, Christians have identified the "being of light" as Jesus Christ, and some have even reported seeing the crucifixion wounds on His body. Those of other religions have reported the "being of light" as being a religious personage or angel revered within their own faith. However, there is one bothersome question: since almost every religion in the world teaches that there is not only a RheavenS but also a "hell" (MoslemUs Jahanna, HebrewUs Gehenna, Tibetan BuddhismUs eight cold hells, HinduismUs 21 hells to burn away bad karma, etc.), why do all of the NDE researchers seem to only report positive experiences an no negative ones? Is it because there are no negative experiences? Or because percipients of a negative experience do not return? Or is there something more sinister going on -- perhaps some deception? Before addressing these interesting questions, let us return for the "rest of the story" in the Lynn case described above, which will shed some light on this issue.

As related earlier, as soon as Lynn returned to her body she found herself in the hospital bed in excruciating pain. Amazingly, this made her leave her body once again, this time by a sheer force of her will! After all, Lynn had tasted the happiness of heaven, so why should she remain in her miserable state? This time, however, as she floated above her body she did not see any heavenly sights but just the opposite. She saw darkness and heard deep howling and roaring noises, like the screaming of wild animals in a zoo. Instead of feelings of warmth and protection, she felt cold and lifeless. She then looked at her body and saw the doctors and nurses removing tubes from it. She realized that this time she was not going to see her father in heaven, but would go in the opposite direction. This frightened her terribly, and she began to plead with God to let her go back to heaven and away from her pain. She could still see the tunnel faintly, but the light seemed very much further away than the first time. After her pleadings, she still did not go to the light but instead the light seemed to come towards her. As the light got closer, she found herself going back into her body and coming back to life. The doctors noticed signs of life and immediately resumed their efforts, which led to a full recovery. Three days later she went into labor and gave birth to a healthy baby boy.

Here we have a negative NDE, perhaps prompted by Lynn's wanting to be in charge of her own ultimate destiny instead of accepting that it was not yet her time to leave. This particular episode also has parallels with accounts of frightening entities reported by UFO abductees. If incidents

like these are not reported in the NDE literature, one wonders how many more negative cases might be. In his 1993 book "To Hell and Back," Dr. Rawlings claims not only that there are many negative experiences, but that such data may have been held back by some otherwise reputable researchers. Dr. Rawlings is in a very credible position to state his case -- he is a widely known and respected heart specialist who specialized in teaching methods for the retrieval of patients from sudden death. In fact, he was General Eisenhower's personal physician before he became President. Dr. Rawlings has himself brought many patients back from clinical death, and was present at the moment of clinical death and at the moment when they returned. In his experience, he has heard negative as well as positive accounts.

According to Dr. Rawlings, there are two reasons why negative NDE's have not been reported by researchers. The first reason is that such negative accounts are usually suppressed over time by the normal human tendency to forget the negative and recall the positive. Since most NDE researchers are not there at the moment that the patient is resuscitated, they do not hear the negative experiences. The second reason is of vastly more concern -- the nature of the "being of light." Dr. Rawlings hypothesizes (from a Christian perspective) that the "being of light" seen in some positive NDEs might not be God or a holy personage, but instead Lucifer (whose very name means "light-bearer") masquerading as an "angel of light." If so, what would be his purpose? Perhaps to deceive percipients into accepting the false belief that death is always a positive experience, regardless of the kind of life the person has lived, with no need for repentance and salvation. In the end everyone will go to heaven and be accepted with unconditional love, regardless of what they have done or believed in this life. In particular, this philosophy runs counter to traditional religious belief that salvation comes through some type of atonement -- from Christ's sacrifice on the Cross to Hinduism's teaching that salvation is not automatic, but relies on the accumulation of enough good "karma" to reach "Nirvana." But now we seem to be witnessing the creation of a cheap grace religion in which heaven is guaranteed.

Those proclaiming the advent of a this new religion often rely on claims such as Brinkley's prophecies to bolster their claims. However, while we have no proof that Brinkley has purposely deceived anyone (nor do we have proof of his claims), it is impossible to ignore the fact that Brinkley's book is published in 1994, when he obviously had knowledge of the events that he claimed to have received as prophecies from the beings of light. What about the 1995 nuclear disaster prediction, whose truth or falsity we will soon find out? It does not take a lot of research into the environmental literature to realize that this is a fairly safe bet. The Barents Sea and the Kara Sea off Russia's northern coast (shared with Norway) are atomic disasters waiting to happen because of the dumping of nuclear waste by the Russians over the years. In fact, on April 7, 1989, the

nuclear submarine Komsomoletz sank a mile deep in the Barents Sea after a fire and explosions. The Komsomoletz carries a nuclear reactor and two nuclear torpedoes armed with plutonium that might leak into the ocean and thus get into the food chain. Although the likelihood of that happening has been debated heatedly, Alexey V. Yablokov, environmental adviser to Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin, stated that he considers the Komsomoletz as the most threatening potential source of nuclear contamination. Based on examination of the wreck by submersibles in 1991 and 1992, a commission headed by Yablokov reported in March 1993 that the plutonium could begin leaking by 1995. Brinkley was certainly in a position to have read these reports and extrapolate from them. Regardless of the seriousness of any leakage, Brinkley is in a position to claim success. As far as Dr. Moody's having received these prophecies as long ago as 1976, the burden of proof is on him.

Let us not, however, become distracted by these accounts and lose sight of the larger issue - the impact on society of these new beliefs. As Dr. Ring admits, many NDE'ers and UFO abductees return with a psychospiritual transformation that causes them to proselytize in the name of ecology and universal love. Although both of these are important and noble concepts (as the Komsomoletz case illustrates), there is a subtle underlying assumption that is not often noted. This is the assumption that traditional belief systems are bankrupt and that mankind's salvation will come from "space brothers" and "beings of light" that come in the name of ecology and universal brotherhood -- even if some of their methods are repulsive (e.g. UFO abductions and negative NDEs) or free of moral concerns (such as the unconditionally loving beings of light). Accounts such as Lynn's, in which her psychospiritual transformation led to a confirmation of her Christian beliefs and a deeper and more devout Christianity, are not given the same weight when models of such experiences are constructed. In this sense, perhaps not only is there a similarity between NDE's and UFO abductions, but between an element of manipulation and deceit behind both types of experience. And the consequences on society may be far deeper than we realize.