

Letter to the Editor

Shared NDEs

To the Editor:

I was pleased to note that the lead article in the Winter 2001 issue of the *Journal of Near-Death Studies* was on a subject I have previously raised among near-death experiencers, namely “shared near-death experiences” (NDEs). The examples in Glennys Howarth and Allan Kellehear’s (2001) article are interesting in that they occurred long before Raymond Moody’s book *Life After Life* (1975) made the phenomenon well known, and referred to “no corroborative feedback.” However, what Howarth and Kellehear meant by “shared NDEs” was “participation in a dying person’s NDE,” and although that topic is valuable and interesting, it is unrelated to the shared experiences I have been researching.

The type of shared experience I hope to study occurs in a situation in which more than one person comes close to death in the same accident and they are aware of the other person(s) and describe similar events. At any time there are a multitude of mortals making the fantastic journey through the tunnel to a realm of light. Currently, the September 11, 2001 World Trade Towers attack is an extreme example in which a great many people simultaneously experienced the same scenario. If, among them, a few or even many did miraculously survive, would they report similar experiences? In my opinion, the answer would be “no,” and thus far I am aware of only a single instance where there was a consciousness of another experiences.

I share Kenneth Ring’s belief that up to the frequently reported “barrier” the person can be said to be still capable of recovering, and whether such a person chooses to pass or return raises fascinating aspects of the NDE that we may someday be able to understand. “Death watches” and “bedside vigils” involving healthy individuals are merely partial “participations,” but we may yet learn a great deal from someone who truly shares an NDE and returns to tell us about it. Howarth and Kellehear’s article might bring to light this sort of “shared” NDE.

References

- Howarth, G., and Kellehear, A. (2001). Shared near-death and related illness experiences: Steps on an unscheduled journey. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 20, 71-85.
- Moody, R.A. (1975). *Life after life*. Covington, GA: Mockingbird Books.

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