

Editor's Foreword

This issue is dedicated to recent work by two of the founders of the International Association for Near-Death Studies and pioneering researchers in the field of near-death studies.

Bruce Greyson, MD, is now formally retired as the Chester F. Carlson Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry & Neurobehavioral Sciences at the University of Virginia, but he remains professionally very active. His decades of research into the nature and implications of near-death experiences (NDEs) actually began unbeknownst to him at the time when he personally was the subject of veridical perception during the NDE of one of his own unconscious patients. Not long after, in the mid 1970s, while directing emergency psychiatric services at the University of Virginia, he supervised an intern named Raymond Moody who had just published a book entitled *Life After Life*—which has subsequently been credited as opening the contemporary field of near-death studies. The rest, as they say, is history—one that Greyson recounts captivatingly in his 2021 memoir *After: A Doctor Explores What Near-Death Experiences Reveal About Life and Beyond*.

This issue of the *Journal* opens with a review of Greyson's book by his psychiatrist-colleague, Rebecca S. Valla, MD. In it, Valla deftly summarizes each chapter of the book, highlighting aspects that spoke particularly to her. She concludes that the book provides readers relatively unschooled in NDEs a firm foundation of knowledge but also provides readers who, similar to her, are quite knowledgeable about NDEs material that will both surprise them and deepen their knowledge base. She recommends that readers not rush through but rather savor the richness that the book has to offer.

The next three articles comprise a scholarly exchange between Greyson and University of Greenwich PhD candidate in Psychology and Counseling, Pascal Michael, MSc. In the first article, Michael comments on *After*, laying out his thesis that what is now known about the neurobiology of psychedelics, and the possible role of endogenous neurotransmitters during the dying process, might provide greater understanding of the possible mechanisms underlying NDEs than Greyson acknowledged in *After*. In the next article, Greyson responds, elaborating on points he did not address in his book, in part due to

space limitations. In the final of the three articles, Michael rejoins Greyson's response, clarifying points upon which he and Greyson agree, as well as a few on which their views seem to diverge.

In the final article, the theme of space limitations in *After* reemerges. *Journal* readers become the beneficiaries of those limitations, in that Greyson here offers material his editors recommended he delete from the book to make it a more attractive length—but material that, in itself, is on a topic many readers find very attractive: near-death experiences and claims of past life memories. In his characteristically clear and adept style, Greyson first provides data on past life memories from the NDEs narratives in his own research archives; then compares this material to results of research on children who, outside the context of NDEs, remember previous lives; then addresses challenges from these data pertaining to the nature of time and of consciousness as they relate to the possibility of reincarnation.

This issue closes sandwiched, as it were, by the review of a book by yet another pioneering researcher in the field of near-death studies: Kenneth Ring, PhD. In his review of Ring's book, near-death scholar Michael Grosso, PhD, quickly apprises readers that Ring's book title, *Waiting to Die*, is actually a treatise on living fully—and with humor—throughout life, including a phase of physical decline.

Hopefully readers will join me in honoring two “retired” pioneers in the field of near-death studies through dedication of this issue to their ongoing contributions to the field—and to humanity.

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