LETTERS

Grosso’s Review of Ring’s *Heading Toward Omega*

To the Editor:

I wish to thank Michael Grosso for his excellent review of Kenneth Ring’s book *Heading Toward Omega* (Grosso, 1985). Grosso’s additional comments referring to “the new literature of hope” and “what might be called the evolutionary imperative” address a theme that has been close to my heart since my near-death experience.

As one of the subjects in Ring’s book, I would like to elaborate on a few issues. In noting that the interview excerpts in *Heading Toward Omega* leave Ring open to charges that his findings are due to an experimenter effect, Grosso cited the following interchange between Ring and myself as an example that “could be construed as a perfect illustration of experimenter effect” (1985, p. 51):

... the interviewer (presumably Ring) says: “And you really did experience the real you in this state, it seems.” And the interviewee responds: “Yeah, I knew at that point that I had met myself.”

It might appear from that excerpt from *Heading Toward Omega* (Ring, 1984, p. 107) that Ring was putting words into my mouth; that is a danger in any interview. In my case, however, that was not true. That interview, done over two days, contained four and a half hours of tape. I had come to Connecticut to meet Ring with those ideas expressed throughout his book very set in my mind. During the taping, which followed four days of talks, Ring may have moved me along from topic to topic, but the ideas expressed were all originally my own.

Now that I am also working as a near-death researcher at the University of Connecticut, I realize that those ideas I once thought so personally mine might be expressed by anyone who has had a core experience, triggered either near death or in any other way. I also realize how strong minded “core experiencers” are as a group. Far from our opinions in Ring’s book being a result of an experimenter effect, they have come from us, and even feel as though they have come through us from a higher source.
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Grosso's and Ring's "literature of hope" validates our connection to the divine in our own higher selves. Personally, we struggle to maintain a balance between our earthbound humanness and our desire to again achieve that lofty experience of transcendence. In Grosso's paraphrasing of Pico della Mirandola's observation, "the peculiar glory of being human is to be permanently suspended between beasthood and godhood" (Grosso, 1985, p. 61). Life after near-death seems to be a bouncing back and forth along that continuum. John Wren-Lewis has eloquently described his new level of consciousness that has continued since his own near-death experience (Wren-Lewis, 1985). Other near-death experiencers have expressed their ability to remain "awake" for longer and longer periods of time, or, as they have said, not in time, but in the "eternal now." Ring, Grosso, and Wren-Lewis have given us hope for that continued psychospiritual consciousness. That level can only be achieved by the work we do on our inner selves, while at the same time practicing what we have learned by helping others. My hope for all of us as we travel that continuum together is that we do that work on ourselves to release our own negativity, leaving us with the positive energy and clarity to help mankind head toward omega.

REFERENCES


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