

into the formless. Adeptship, the culmination of mystery schooling, is far beyond the first initiation.

It is adepts whom I have in mind as models of *Homo noeticus*: the Jesuses, the Gautamas, and other enlightened men and women of history who delineate the characteristics of what I see as the coming race. Beyond them, it seems to me, are the beings of light met during NDEs; they are enlightened to a still higher degree, that of actually *being* light, and likewise exemplify a still further stage of our future evolution.

Homo noeticus is such not simply because he or she has awakened at the heart, a quality wonderfully exemplified by NDErs. *Homo noeticus* also has awakened the wisdom-eye. The love of Christ, the compassion of Buddha, is balanced by wisdom. Without wisdom, transpersonal love can become "sloppy *agape*," mere emotionalism or foolish, platitudinous behavior that turns people off to what NDErs want to share with them.

NDErs have a distinct calling to live in accordance with the ideals they experience during near-death, and that is fine. But they are returned to life and the Earth to make the ideal *real*, to ground it in the material plane. To *realize* who we are means living from the wisdom-eye as well as the heart.

So it is no wonder that Newsome's three cases don't measure extraordinarily well on the conventional instruments she used. While those instruments may be less than suitable for measuring the Divine, NDErs themselves are less than fully realized divinity. The ultimate yardstick was stated simply two millennia ago: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

By that I do not imply any criticism of Newsome's three subjects, or of NDErs in general. I merely mean that we all have a long way to go, and the spiritual journey proceeds at perhaps a slower pace that we'd like to think after coming back from an NDE. But the timing is God's, not ours, and the amount of frustration, impatience, and anger we feel with others for not understanding our reorientation to life or "getting with the program" is a direct measure of the amount of ego left in us.

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