To the Editor:

I am a member of the International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) and a long-time follower of near-death research and the Journal. In the latest issue of the Journal, there was a letter to the editor from Ken Vincent requesting that “mystical religious experiences” take part in IANDS’ agenda and in the Journal.

As we know, the interpretation of the near-death experience (NDE) is based most on the NDEr's culture or religion, and it is because of this that there is an ongoing debate regarding the origin of the “being of light.” When NDErs come back from an experience, whether or not they have encountered the “being of light,” they should at that time apply the appropriate scientific point of view or religion to their own experiences. The elements of the NDE should be without a label of a specific culture or religion, and we should consider that the “being of light” might represent a supreme being, or one’s higher self as suggested by the holographic reality theory, or a separate part of one's consciousness as suggested by the Eidolon/Daemon model (Peake, 2004).

It is because of this perspective that I feel religion should not be mixed in with the NDE, with IANDS, or with the Journal, and I therefore oppose Vincent’s proposal.
References


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