

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Hypothesis Regarding the Mechanism of Telepathy

To the Editor:

Beginning with the book *Life After Life* (Moody, 1975), researchers have investigated the cases of people who survived close brushes with death and reported particular types of memories during their experiences. These memories often included having seen their whole lives as a high-speed movie in which, despite the speed, they perceived every moment of their lives in detail. In one case, a woman reported, "The things that flashed back came in the order of my life, and they were so vivid. The scenes were just like you walked outside and saw them, completely three-dimensional, and in color. And they moved" (p. 66). Also, in the aftermath of these experiences with their unique memories, people often reported a newly acquired capacity for extrasensory perception, including telepathy.

A famous Bulgarian clairvoyant, Vanga (1911–1996), may have been among this group of people. At age 12 years, she survived a tornado, and as a result of the injuries she sustained, she lost her eyesight (Stoyanova, 1989, p. 37). Then, at age 29, she was close to death as the result of a serious illness (Stoyanova, 1989, p. 47). Although none of the literature on Vanga includes an explicit description of a near-death experience in either of these close brushes with death, soon after her unexpected recovery from her illness, she showed telepathic abilities for the first time. In the more than 55 years from that time until her death, she providing telepathic readings for over 300,000 sick or otherwise suffering people (Kostadinova, 2008).

The subjective nature of Vanga's telepathy bears certain resemblances to the life reviews of near-death experiencers. She explained,

When a person comes to me, I feel like a window opens in my head and I see pictures through it and that person's life passes before my eyes like a movie, while I hear voice from above me that tells me what to relay. (Kostadinova, 2009, p. 14)

Vanga's niece, medical doctor Krassimira Stoyanova, has confirmed,

Does Vanga read thoughts? Yes, she does. Vanga often tells her visitors what they have thought prior to visiting her or what they have

thought in some respect. Distances do not matter to her . . . the information she receives is in the form of a voice. (Stoyanova, 1989, p. 28)

One illustrative case is that of famous Russian actor Vyacheslav Tihonov who visited Vanga in 1979.

While still in the yard in front of Vanga's house, Vanga told her sister: "Let him wait for some time outside, because I have to receive a sign when to accept him here." At the moment Tihonov opened the door, Vanga told him: "Why didn't you fulfill the last wish of your best friend Yurii Gagarin? When he was leaving for his last flight, he came to you to say goodbye and told you: 'I don't have time now to buy it, but please purchase an alarm clock on my behalf and keep it on your desk as a reminder about myself.'" The actor was so astonished that he felt faint. He was handed some valerian and confirmed that all stated by Vanga was exactly the truth, but in the confusion of Gagarin's death he had forgotten to buy this clock. (Stoyanova, 1989, pp. 25–26)

In 1989, I (I.A.) had a personal visit with Vanga and came away convinced of her telepathic abilities. I also was inspired to hypothesize how her telepathic abilities developed following her survival of serious illness.

My hypothesis begins with the fact that neuronal activity in the living brain continuously produces an electromagnetic field (Nachev, Penchev, Nikolova, Dimitrov, Dakalov, & Pirova, 1989) and the speculation that the associated thoughts produce a sort of a field form of substance—perhaps related to, but not the same as, the electromagnetic field—that is not bounded by space or time. In turn, every person's subconscious is constantly irradiated by the thoughts of other people, but, compared to one's own thoughts, the field form of others' thoughts is relatively weak. In order for people to attend to their own thoughts and not be distracted by others', they need to block out the bombarding weaker thoughts of others from their perceptions. Consequently, I speculate that as an evolutionary development, people's brains detect these weaker signals and produce a chemical substance that blocks the weaker currents of others' thoughts from being perceived. Occasionally—perhaps because of a relatively stronger signal resulting from such phenomena as strong emotional charge—this blocking function fails, and people experience intuition. I believe that in Vanga's case—and perhaps many near-death experiencers' cases—the close brush with death impaired the brain's production of this chemical, so its blocking mechanism does not function, and the person frequently perceives relatively weak currents of others' thoughts that most people naturally block out; this perception is telepathy.

At present, this proposed chemical blocking process in the brain is purely speculative. I offer the idea of it as a possible basis for future research.

References

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