# A New View of Consciousness and Realityby Daniel Neiman

# Introduction

Today's materialistic science is dominated by the view that everything we see today originated in the Big Bang, when space and time came into existence and the laws of the universe were set. According to mainstream scientists, there was no guiding intelligence behind this event. The laws of nature that just so happen to allow for the formation of stars, galaxies, planets, and ultimately life are all accidental properties forged during the Big Bang billions of years ago. All matter and energy by nature is unconscious and unintelligent.

Two views about life and consciousness arise from this line of thinking. The first is that all life evolved more or less by accident, via random interaction of chemicals and biological materials and selection for survival. The other is that consciousness is not fundamental to reality, but a secondary phenomenon arising from a certain complexity of brain and nervous system function. Therefore, our seemingly intelligent minds that we operate with on a daily basis are ultimately the result of a plethora of unconscious, unintelligent processes in the brain.

The first view that life arose and evolved through random mutation and selection is being undermined today by the specified complexity of information contained within DNA, as well as the intricate, coherent, and interdependent inner workings that we now find within all living cells. The second view that consciousness arises from, or is reducible to, brain function is being undermined by the evidence from Near-Death Experiences that consciousness can still function, and indeed shows enhanced functioning, when brain activity is miniscule or absent altogether. I will start by exploring these new findings and the conclusions they point to, while showing how both lines of inquiry lead to the same expanded view of reality, namely that intelligent consciousness underpins the material world.

Next, I will show how the underlying Source Consciousness of the universe is experienced by people in various situations, including spontaneously, during UFO abductions, Near Death Experiences (NDE's), and during usage of psychedelic substances. Finally, I will go through five points of knowledge that this new understanding of reality gives. Specifically, I will show how the various areas of paranormal research converge upon the same knowledge concerning life and reality.

It is due time to replace the current understanding of life and reality as touted by today's mainstream academia. We must come to a new, truer understanding of reality. We need a view that can incorporate the findings from modern day paranormal research. This is pertinent for the advancement of knowledge and the continuing progression of society, not just scientifically but also spiritually.

# Evolution and Consciousness

Two of the leading proponents of the development of life being guided by an intelligence are biology professor Michael J. Behe and philosopher of science Stephen C. Meyer. Stephen Meyer explores the structure and function of DNA in his magnum opus, *Signature in the Cell*. In this book, Meyer explains how DNA codes for proteins and why this process cannot be imitated by random mutation and natural selection. I will now briefly describe these findings.

There are four DNA bases, represented by the letters A, C, T, and G, which are arranged into 3-letter combinations (essentially 3-letter words), called codons. Each codon, or 3-letter word, represents one of twenty different amino acids that link up in specified sequences to build proteins. Also, there are codons that specify when to start or stop the building of a protein.1 Amino acids form proteins by linking together one at a time, based on the DNA instructions, and then folding into 3-dimensional structures. The specific 3-dimensional structure of the protein determines its precise function.2

You can think of this process as translating one language into another. You start with the language of DNA, which consists of 3-letter codes. Each of these 3-letter codes translates into one of twenty possible amino acids. During protein synthesis, amino acids are linked together in discrete chains hundreds of units long. The precise arrangement of these amino acids in the chain is crucial to the development of the protein. If the amino acids are not arranged in the proper order, a functional protein will not be produced. Therefore, if the codons are not arranged properly in the DNA, then the amino acids will not link up properly, and a functional protein will never be made.

Even a simple protein requires a chain of 100+ amino acids. Again, these amino acids *must*be arranged in a specific order to code for a functional protein because most combinations of amino acids will not fold into a stable functional protein at all. Remember that DNA encodes for one amino acid at a time with 3-letter “words”, or specific sequences of bases. Therefore, to encode for a simple protein requires that 300+ DNA bases be arranged in a specific order so that the amino acids link up in a proper sequence to produce a functional protein. Then, add to this the correct words, or codons, for starting and stopping the protein making sequence. These codes must be at the beginning and end of the coding region to initiate and end protein production respectively. This is akin to producing a 100 word paragraph of coherent text with a capital letter to start the paragraph and a period at the end. To produce such a paragraph by random processes is highly unlikely. Just imagine a monkey given a typewriter and blindly typing letters at random to try and produce an entire paragraph of coherent meaningful text.

To stress this point once more, consider that “though proteins tolerate a range of possible amino acids at some sites, functional proteins are still extremely rare within the whole set of possible amino-acid sequences”.3 In other words, if you link amino acids together at random you will be hard pressed to create a functional protein, just as you would be hard pressed to create a paragraph of meaningful English text by way of randomly placed letters. Therefore, if the DNA bases were arranged randomly, they may exhibit codons (3-letter words) for specifying amino acids to link together to form a protein, but these amino acids would most likely link together in such a way as not to produce a functional protein. In fact, the chances of producing any functional protein of 150-amino-acids by combining those amino acids by chance is 1 in 1074.4 Now take into consideration the fact that many proteins require far more amino acids than 150.5 As the number of amino acids in a protein rises, the chances of producing one by linking amino acids by chance just gets worse. Finally, one has to take into consideration the start and stop codons that must be in the proper place to start and stop the sequencing of amino acids for protein production. So, just as there is a low probability of combining English letters into a meaningful sequence, especially one that’s at least 150 words (or letters), in length, by pure chance and random processes, it is similarly implausible to suggest that DNA bases could be randomly arranged to create functional proteins.

Meyer refers to the information encoded in DNA with the term “specified information.” This means that it is complex, as the information does not follow a repeating pattern, and specified, meaning that a specific arrangement of bases performs a specific function.6 This is the kind of information found in a language or computer code, whereby the specific arrangement of parts determines its meaning or function and a random arrangement confers nothing. Basically what's happening when you arrange DNA bases properly to code for a functional 3-dimensional protein is that you’re hitting a target sequence out of a vast space of possible arrangements of those bases.7 That target sequence does not get hit by 'chance', especially not over and over again. Meyer further asserts that specified information is only known to be caused by intelligent agents.8 Computer code and language are just two examples, whereby a specific arrangement of 0’s and 1’s in computer code and letters and punctuation in language confer meaning. However a random arrangement of these constituents would only produce non-functional or non-meaningful gibberish.

Now, the argument has been put forth, most notably by Richard Dawkins, that you could start with just one protein and then modify it little by little, or amino acid by amino acid, until it turns into another protein quite different from the original.9 This would be akin to modifying my last sentence one letter at a time until it turned into a completely different coherent and meaningful sentence. You may be able to anticipate the problem already. To change the sentence letter by letter, or even two letters at a time, would take that sentence through a whole host of unmeaningful sequences until it finally arrived at the new meaningful sentence, whatever that may be. The problem turns out to be even worse for proteins. This is because if you change too many of the amino acids in a protein, it will not only degrade function, but the amino-acid sequence that constitutes the protein will cease to fold into a 3-dimensional shape altogether. Therefore, one protein cannot morph into another protein with a completely novel function. If you start changing the amino acid sequence of a protein, function quickly degrades, and the process soon leads to amino acid sequences that fail to fold into a stable structure at all.10 Dawkins, however, *imagines* that proteins can change their shape little by little to successively approximate a completely different shape necessary to perform a completely different function. As stated above, this is of course, a purely imaginary line of reasoning. It does not reflect reality. Proteins have *specific* shapes to perform *specific* functions, thus emulating language or computer code. And as Meyer points out, the only known cause of specified information is an intelligent agent.

What are we to conclude from these findings? One way out would be to posit the existence of extraterrestrials from somewhere else in the universe who seeded life on this planet. However, this only pushes the problem further back to how the Aliens themselves were created. It is much more plausible, especially with respect to the findings from NDE’s which we will be discussed later, that an intelligent consciousness underlies the material world and is intimately involved with its creation from the atomic level on up. Because if a consciousness is responsible for forming the DNA bases into meaningful pairs, where would this consciousness lie? It must be woven into the very fabric of reality. It must underlie the material world itself, able to form and direct matter. Now, we will explore one more line of evidence that points to an intelligence at work in nature.

In his landmark book, *The Edge of Evolution*, Professor of Biology Dr. Michael Behe explores the inner workings of the cell to conclude the impossibility of the sophisticated systems therein arising by randomness and natural selection. As an example, Behe describes IFT (intraflagellar transport) which constructs and maintains the cilium, which is just one of many “molecular machines” within the cell.

In a nutshell, IFT consists of mini railroad cars (specialized proteins called IFT particles) that carry cargo (various proteins needed to construct the cilium) to their proper locations and deposit the cargo for construction of the cilium. As an analogy, think of railroad cars going up and down a steel structure carrying building materials to make a building. The cars have to bring many different kinds of parts, including parts needed for the floor, parts needed for the walls, parts needed for building the windows of the building, and parts needed to build the balconies. Actually, the cilium is far more complex than this, requiring about 200 different kinds of building materials, or proteins that construct the cilium.11 So, the cars, or IFT particles, that carry the proteins must be able to bind to and carry a vast array of different kinds of proteins. Furthermore, all of these parts have to be deposited in just the right location—window parts must be placed at the proper window building position, floor parts must be placed at the floor position, and so on--and at just the right time. Another interesting fact about this process is that the railroad cars, or IFT particles, have two different “motor” proteins, one for powering the cars up the cilium and a different “motor” protein for its trip back down the cilium. Now, here’s the biochemical explanation for how this construction works. Quoting Behe:

“Biochemical studies show that IFT can be conceptually broken down into several parts. The first part consists of the motor proteins that carry the IFT particles along the interior of the cilium. The motor protein that carries the particle toward the tip of the cilium is different from the one that carries it back. The trip out is powered by Kinesin-II, one member of a family of kinesin motor proteins that perform a variety of jobs in the cell . . . The trip back is powered by a dynein motor protein . . . Exactly what causes IFT to shift from kinesin-powered transport to dynein transport at the tip of the cilium remains unknown. The second part of IFT is called the IFT particle. It’s the container that grabs hold of the correct proteins to be carried in or out and releases them at the proper point.”12

Behe further elucidates that “the IFT particle consists of sixteen separate proteins that bind together in one aggregate.”13 This 16-protein complex can be separated into two protein-complexes, one containing six proteins and the other ten proteins. Each of these structures “contain substructures that are known to be particularly good at binding diverse proteins—exactly what you need to transport the many kinds of protein cargo that travel by IFT along the cilium.”14 Indeed, as mentioned before, the cilium which IFT constructs is made of about 200 different kinds of proteins. Therefore, the IFT particle is a specifically designed protein for its job. It is designed to be able to bind to and carry a variety of different proteins.

This system of construction machinery also boasts not one, but two, motor proteins that are designed to carry the IFT particle up and down the interior of the cilium. If that’s not enough, when building this system, there is some sensing mechanism that senses the amount of material that the cilium needs, evidenced by the fact that “after construction is completed the trains keep coming at about the same rate, but now some of the cars are empty.”15

You can imagine the sophisticated control mechanisms that must go into the construction project, with genes controlling how much of each protein to build and when to build them, how many IFT particles to send with loads of protein, and when to cut production. Furthermore, all of the proteins used in construction require acute specification. The IFT particles must be precisely engineered to be able to bind to all of the differently shaped proteins that make up the cilium, the motor proteins must be precisely engineered to function as motors to move the IFT particles up and down the length of the cilium, and each protein that goes into the actual building of the cilium requires precise engineering to fit with all of the other parts and create a functional cilium. As you can tell, this process is integrated, complex, and coherent. Furthermore, DNA provides the instruction manual for building the entire structure, including instructions for building the molecular machines used to construct the edifice, instructions for building each of the around 200 proteins that compose the building blocks of the structure, and control instructions for coordinating the entire process.

It should be blatantly obvious by now that an intelligence is behind this process. You don’t randomly throw together a skyscraper. It takes careful planning; blueprints of the building must be drawn up, resources gathered together at the building site, all of the construction workers given specific assignments, and foremen and supervisors to manage the entire process. A cellular machine requires just as much. In the case of the cilium, DNA contains the blueprints for making the building, as well as the information needed to coordinate the project, make the IFT particles (construction workers) to do the work, and make all the building materials. The cell is miraculous in that it has the ability to make both the work force (construction machinery) and all of the materials needed to make up the structure (essentially many different kinds of proteins). Stephen Meyer’s concept of specified information is also relevant here. In IFT, we have a specific arrangement of parts that perform a specific function. This is evident in the building process and in the completed structure. Again, this requires an intelligence to arrange the parts into a functional pattern.

It is useless to invoke a Darwinian, stepwise scenario, for this process. That is because the process is so integrated. Without an IFT particle, there could be no cilium. Without the control instructions for coordinating the construction project you would have a mess of unregulated IFT particles, carrying unregulated proteins, at unregulated times. The project would never be able to build a coherent machine. And if you are missing many of the around 200 proteins needed for building the cilium, well, you can’t build it. Complex integration is the key to understanding intelligent design. Gradual evolution doesn’t work because without any one of the parts, the others couldn’t function. Therefore, a bottom-up approach doesn’t work. Instead, a top-down approach whereby the end product (cilium) is thought up first, or envisioned in the mental realm, then the many details of how to build that product are worked out in succession, and finally the whole system is implemented at once. Intelligent agents do this all the time. We think of a new idea, say to build the first automobile. First, we must think about what function our new structure is to have. In our example of the automobile, the function is to move people and objects quickly from one place to another via roads. Then, we should consider what parts are needed and how they will connect to perform the desired function. For instance, a car would need wheels that turn, a motor to power the car, a steering wheel to steer the car, and so on… We would have to figure out how to connect all of these parts to produce a functional automobile. Once we have the entire plan with all the parts and how to connect them in our minds (the mental realm), we can then begin to manufacture and arrange the material constituents to conform to our mental image and create the world’s first automobile. So, we start with figuring out what function we want a new machine to perform. Then we have to think of a design that will enable that function to be performed. The design requires not only the parts that will be used, but how those parts will connect. Once we have this mental image, we can go to work building our new structure.

In essence, we take ideas from a mental, non-material realm, and then manifest those ideas in the material realm. This is simply an imitation of what a greater intelligent consciousness does to create the machinery that sustains life. How else are we to explain intelligent workings at the cellular level without an intelligence that penetrates into the deepest aspects of the material world? And where else do we find intelligence than in the workings of conscious agents? Different types of cells require different functions, which require different kinds of protein machinery, which in turn requires the guidance of an intelligence to form. From DNA on up, life is intricately designed.

So, all of creation is first envisioned in the mental realm. To implement these creations in the material realm requires a conscious intelligent entity to arrange and organize matter in conformance with the desired function and design. For life to show evidence of intelligent design, consciousness must underlie material process and have the ability to form and manipulate the material world. To take a line from Physicist David Bohm, it forms and in-forms the material world.16 It is the basis and mover of all energy in the universe. This underlying consciousness not only forms all of the matter in the universe, it also provides the information to organize matter into functional systems, such as DNA and living cells. As we will see after looking at the evidence for consciousness after death, this consciousness has its source in a realm outside of our known concepts of space and time. It is a realm of infinite energy in a non-local space. Our consciousness is in fact identical to this One Source Consciousness. Now we turn to the unassailable evidence for life after death.

# Life After Death: The Verdict Is In

The existence of intelligence in a universe supposedly constructed from entirely unconscious and unintelligent energy presents a major philosophical problem from the outset. I have often wondered at the illogicality of how you get intelligence from non-intelligence. It seems like a conundrum that is hard to get around. However, the story goes that through a certain complex composition of matter, this is indeed possible. I never bought this idea. No matter how much unintelligent matter you throw together, intelligence should not spontaneously arise. In any event, we all experience ourselves as intelligent agents with the ability to think and act in the world purposively. Where does this intelligence, this consciousness, come from? That is the central question. Is it indeed, as science postulates, a temporary manifestation of the complex workings of a number of unintelligent parts (the brain and nervous system)? Or does it come from some other realm or dimension and simply manifest for a time in the material realm before going back to this other dimension?

Extraordinary evidence from the study of Near-Death Experiences points to the latter conclusion. How do we know this? I will provide a couple of examples to explain why Near-Death Experiences cannot be due to the workings of the brain. The first is written about in Cardiologist Pim Van Lommel’s book *Consciousness Beyond Life*. The story is of Pam Reynolds, who needed an operation on an aneurysm in one of the cerebral arteries close to the brain stem. Due to the positioning of the aneurysm, a rare and risky medical procedure was required that entailed lowering her body temperature to about 50 degrees Fahrenheit during the operation and draining all the blood from her head. The electrical activity in her cerebral cortex and brain stem were constantly measured during this time and once she had been cooled down sufficiently all activity in these areas was found to be absent. Nevertheless, she reports popping out of the top of her head and being able to see and hear what was going on in the operating room during the operation. While out of body she observed the instrument used to open her skull, which did not conform to her prior expectations. Specifically, she reports “I remember the instrument in his hand; it looked like the handle of my electric toothbrush. I had assumed that they were going to open the skull with a saw. I had heard the term *saw*, but what I saw looked a lot more like a drill than a saw."17 Dr. Michael Sabom, who investigated the case himself and got photos of the instrument used to open her skull reports that the saw does actually look like an electric toothbrush.18 However, this instrument did not conform to her prior expectations of what a saw should look like, and before the operation this instrument was covered and out of her view. However, this is not the only accurate perception she made during the OBE. She also overheard a conversation between the head neurosurgeon Dr. Robert Spetzler and a female cardiovascular surgeon. In her own words, “I distinctly remember a female voice saying: ‘We have a problem. Her arteries are too small.’ And then a male voice: ‘Try the other side’."19 Commenting on this experience, Van Lommel states that “When the cardiovascular surgeon made an incision in her right groin, she found that Pamela’s veins and arteries were too small, so she had to switch to the left groin. The doctors had a brief exchange on this matter. *Pamela heard these remarks and repeated them word for word*.”20 This, in spite of the fact that she had loud clicking devices inserted into her ears that were constantly emitting loud clicks to monitor her brain stem electrical activity. This fact automatically excludes hearing the conversation through the use of her physical ears because the loud clicks would have prevented her from making out any conversation going on in the room. After viewing the operation for awhile she then reports a more or less typical Near Death Experience of going to the Light and communicating with deceased relatives before reconnecting again with her body.

It should be noted that Pam’s NDE began while she was under general anesthesia, before her body had been cooled down and all electrical activity in her brain had ceased. Although she wasn’t clinically dead at the start of her OBE, the fact that she was under anesthesia, had her eyes taped shut, and had loud clicks emitting in each ear should have ruled out perception by normal sensory means. In fact, she shouldn’t have been conscious at all. Her experience lasted until she saw her body jump, which is when she again entered her body again. This was after the operation had ended and electric shock had been administered to restart her heart. So, although her experience started before cool down of her body began, it persisted until after the operation was over. So a significant part of her NDE, where she entered the light and spoke with deceased relatives, occurred during a period of time when her brain was nonfunctional.

Without any electrical activity in her brain, how could she experience these things? The simplest and most plausible explanation is that consciousness does not depend on the brain to exist or experience. The brain begins to resemble more of a tool that consciousness uses to manifest in the physical world, but not the producer of that consciousness.

Remarkably, there is another case on record of this same kind of operation where the patient experienced consciousness during a period of lack of brain function. This account comes from the book *The Scalpel and the Soul* by neurosurgeon Allan J. Hamilton. This case involves a thirty-four-year-old woman, again suffering from an aneurysm near the brain stem known as a basilar aneurysm. Again, her temperature had to be lowered, “to make her core temperature cold enough to stop her heart so all blood flow would cease."21 At that time, all brain wave activity as measured by an EEG would stop. While the operation was winding down and they were about to start warming her body back up, several documented conversations were recorded that the patient somehow heard and reported after the experience, even though all electrical activity was absent as measured by an EEG. After the patient had fully awoken from all of the anesthetic, she was greeted by her team of doctors. Specifically she said that she thought she heard someone say “thar she blows,” and she recalled “A one-and-a-half-carat yellow diamond from Johnston Fellows. Oh. . . and Morton’s restaurant where someone fell into a wine case."22 The doctors present during her operation:

“all knew that this woman’s brain had been dead—without discernible electrical activity whatsoever. This meant that no brain cells were active, working, firing, or emitting electrical signals. Yet somehow the patient managed to recall the conversation in the operating room while her EEG was flat. In other words, while she was, for all intents and purposes, clinically dead—with no ability for her brain to function—she somehow managed to make or “encode” specific memories of that conversation in the OR. And this was no hazy recollection. The patient was reproducing practically word for word what had been said. Right down to the jewelry store and the waiter stumbling. No, she clearly recalled what had been said. There was no doubt about that."23

After further investigation it was established that she could accurately report many more details than just those mentioned above, including exactly where the heart-lung bypass machine was located in the room (which hadn't been there until after she was anesthetized), and what the people in the room looked like.24 Unlike Pamela, however, she did not report a deep Near Death Experience of going to another dimension or encountering beings of light. Nevertheless, this case along with Pamela’s case strongly suggests that consciousness can exist independent of a functioning brain.

# A New Way of Envisioning Consciousness and the Brain

Based on quantum theory, Cardiologist Pim Van Lommel, in his landmark book on Near-Death Experiences *Consciousness Beyond Life*, posits that consciousness actually exists in a non-local space where time and distance play no role. Quantum theory suggests that all matter can exist as either a wave of spread out energy or as a discrete particle located in space and time. Furthermore, consciousness seems to play a decisive role in the transition from a wave of spread out energy to its collapse into a discrete particle located in time and space. For instance, an electron around the nucleus exists as a wave of probability until it is observed, whereby the numerous possibilities collapse and the electron is concentrated in a particular spot for everyone to see.25 Underlying reality, therefore, is a sea of infinite energy where all possibilities exist. If we want to describe consciousness, we could think of it as an infinite sea of light where everything is connected non-locally. The light acts like a unified field, whereby every part of the field is connected to every other part without the need for energy transfer. In the words of Van Lommel,

“nonlocal space could also be called the absolute vacuum: it lacks structure, has no time, and is an empty space in which quarks (elementary particles and fundamental constituents of matter), electrons, gravity, and electricity have all become one and as such do not exist. This space forms the foundation for an infinite number of possibilities.”26

I like to think of it as an infinite field of intelligent light that holds all knowledge, or information, encoded in wave functions. The material world, which we are so familiar with, can be seen as the collapse of these wave functions into a particular possibility. In Van Lommel’s words,

“the physical aspect of our consciousness in the material world, which we experience as waking consciousness and which can be compared to the particle aspect of light, stems from the wave aspect of the “complete” and “endless” consciousness created by collapse of the wave function in nonlocal space.”27

In essence, an infinite consciousness underlies and forms the basis for our material world. This consciousness is in direct control of all energy manifest in the material realm because it is the source of that energy. It literally forms the material world by creating information, or specific patterns of energy, from an infinite number of possibilities of that energy configuration. The material world is but one manifestation of this consciousness and there is evidence that there are many more dimensions created by this consciousness. This process of creation is an ongoing and never ending process.

The real clincher in all of this is that our consciousnesses are essentially identical to this one consciousness, which can be labeled Source Consciousness. The brain, then, operates as a receiver of an aspect of this Source Consciousness into the material dimension of space and time. In Van Lommel’s words,

“The brain and the body merely function as a relay station receiving part of the overall consciousness and part of our memories in our waking consciousness in the form of measurable and constantly changing electromagnetic fields.”28

I propose that your waking consciousness is essentially the light from Source Consciousness manifesting through the brain and body to experience the energy patterns of the brain and body. However that energy is not just experienced by consciousness, but in-formed by consciousness. In other words, consciousness is in control of how that energy is configured. Consciousness is the creator of information. I believe the electro-chemical processes in the brain operate much the same way as DNA or language, on the idea of specified information which consciousness provides. Different types of energy produce different experiences. The electro-chemical energy produced by the brain to create an image is different from the electro-chemical energy produced by the brain to create an emotion. Furthermore, the specific pattern of energy determines the specific image or emotion that is experienced. To experience a picture of the sun in your mind requires the “image energy” to be arranged in a specific pattern that is different from the specific pattern of “image energy” required to experience a different picture in the mind, say a tree. Consciousness is the intelligence operating within the body to produce these specified energy patterns, which you will remember equates to information. So, consciousness underlies and collapses the energy in your brain to produce conscious experiences of thought, emotion, and action.

Briefly, I will discuss some of the evidence that consciousness plays a decisive role in the energy configuration of the brain. Although the brain is influenced by the environment, consciousness can control the brain activity through focused thought and belief. Study after study shows that processes within our bodies can be controlled and manipulated through conscious intention. We now know that the brain is not a fixed entity, but has a considerable degree of plasticity.29 It is our consciousness that can control the neuronal pathways developed in the brain.

Jeffrey Schwartz, a neuroscientist at UCLA, has demonstrated this plasticity of the brain in Obsessive-Compulsive patients. He figured out that the cause of their OCD was due to an overactive part of the brain that was "locked into a pattern of repetitive firing."30 His approach to dealing with this problem was to have patients consciously start thinking in a different way about their compulsions. This approach included having patients reattribute their compulsive thoughts with sayings such as, "It's not me: it's my OCD!" Also, patients would reassign their thoughts. For instance, they would substitute "go work in the garden" for "wash hands seven more times." These, along with a couple of other strategies, worked significantly in 12 of 18 patients who showed "significantly diminished metabolic activity after the treatment" in the areas of the brain that were responsible for their symptoms. As Schwartz pointed out after the study: "This was the first study ever to show that cognitive-behavior therapy--or indeed, any psychiatric treatment that did not rely on drugs--has the power to change faulty brain chemistry in a well-identified brain circuit"31

Experiments have also shown that people can control their emotional responses to stimuli, which are designed to invoke an emotional response, by consciously trying to detach themselves from that event. This requires a suppression of brain activity normally associated with emotional arousal.32 As Mario Beauregard and Denyse O’Leary say in their book *The Spiritual Brain,* “It appears that, in principle, normal humans are not feeling robots, but are quite capable of adjusting their emotional reactions.”33

Other studies have shown that experienced meditators can adjust their brain waves through meditation. In one study, Buddhist monks, by focusing their thoughts on loving compassion for all living things, were able to shift their brain waves into a gamma-ray state and sustain that state.34 This state is characterized by heightened awareness, when the brain is in a state of rapt attention.35 Furthermore, the monks experienced “permanent emotional improvement, by activating the left anterior portion of the brain—the portion most associated with joy.”36

Not only can conscious intention activate or deactivate parts of the brain, but studies show that you can cause permanent changes in the brain through focused attention. Neuroscientist at Massachusetts General Hospital, Sara Lazar, scanned the brains of 20 Buddhist meditators who had long been practicing mindfulness meditation, whereby the practitioner focuses on heightening his/her perceptions of the senses in the current moment. She found that "those portions of the brain associated with attention, awareness of sensation, sensory stimuli, and sensory processing were thicker in the meditators than in the controls."37 Furthermore, she found that the longer the practitioner had been practicing meditation, the thicker these areas of the brain were.

In a similar vein, psychic Ingo Swann, who is well known for his gift in remote viewing--the perception of objects or events outside of one's sensory awareness--was tested to see what his brain activity was like when he used his psychic power. In the experiment, run by Dr. Michael Persinger, he was hooked up to an EEG machine and asked to identify objects in a distant room. "At the very moment that he was able to "see" the items remotely, his brain showed bursts of fast activity in the high beta and gamma range...Those bursts of activity occurred primarily over the right occipital region, the portion of the brain relating to sight." Furthermore, an MRI scan showed that the large parieto-occipital right-hemisphere lobe of his brain, which is involved in sensory and visual input, was "unusually large."38

Again, as with the Buddhist meditators, we see that advanced awareness and perception are associated with gamma-ray brain activity, which is the highest level of electromagnetic frequency. Moreover, we see that areas of the brain can grow and strengthen their neural connections through performing tasks that utilize those brain areas. Most importantly, it is conscious intention that lies behind it all. Without regularly exercising the large parieto-occipital region of his brain through the conscious intention to see faraway places and objects, would this area of the brain be as large in Swann as it is? It seems likely that it would not be in light of the Lazar study which showed that Buddhist meditators had thicker than normal brain areas that were activated during their many years of meditation. However, it could be that Swann was simply gifted from birth with an unusually large parieto-occipital region of his brain. Likewise, it could also be the case that people who are drawn to become meditating monks already possess thicker portions of the brain related to attention and sensory awareness. So, we can only tentatively conclude that focused intention can permanently change the structure of the brain. Further research will hopefully clarify this issue.

Now we've seen examples of people decreasing activity in certain areas of the brain, as with OCD patients and subjects trying to control emotional response to stimuli, and examples of people increasing activity in certain areas of their brain, as with Buddhist meditators and Ingo Swann. This all shows us that by consciously focusing our thoughts we can control the flow of energy in our brains and even control the brains development; clearly, consciousness is the director of matter.

Another category of conscious control that deserves equal mention is belief. The focused attention of your thoughts is one thing, and deeply held beliefs are another. Everyone knows about the placebo effect, whereby someone's belief that they are receiving a medicine is all it takes to make them better, regardless of whether or not they are actually receiving a pharmaceutical drug. However, this effect takes many forms, not just in regards to pharmaceutical medicine. One interesting study, run by University of Michigan researchers, tested the placebo effect by injecting saltwater into the jaws of young, healthy men. The saltwater should have created painful pressure in the subjects jaws. However, the young men were actually told that they were receiving pain relief. Well, the suggestion worked. "They reported feeling better. The placebo treatment reduced the brain responses in a number of brain regions known to be implicated in the subjective experience of pain."39 In other words, the persons belief that they were receiving pain relief triggered the brain to respond in accordance with that belief. Again, ones consciousness is in the driver's seat.

Another study looked at the effects of "sham surgery." This is where a person goes in for surgery, is put under, given incisions to look like something has been done, but no actual surgery takes place. The patient is simply cut open and sewn back up again. I will quote one example from *The Spiritual Brain*:

"...a 2004 study compared thirty patients who received controversial embryonic stem-cell implants for Parkinson's disease to patients who received only a sham surgery. Those who thought they had received the stem cells reported better quality of life a year later than those who thought they had received the sham surgery, *regardless of which surgery patients had actually received*."40 emphasis added

All of the evidence examined so far shows that consciousness has direct control over the body. By consciously directing your attention or thoughts, you can directly control the flow of neuronal activity in the brain. Furthermore, an ingrained belief also instantiates brain and bodily processes to conform to that belief.

In my view, the brain produces conscious awareness while you are in a physical body, your conscious awareness being what you actually experience. However, this electromagnetic energy of the brain is the result of consciousness operating through the brain. Consciousness is the light that sustains the body and moves the energy within it. Without conscious light, the body dies. There can be no zombies. The brain is constantly transmitting information about the body and outside world, as received through the senses, to conscious awareness. The brain is also being guided by consciousness to produce emotions, thoughts, direct awareness to certain sensations, memories, or other areas of focus, or to move some part of the body. A conscious thought could be said to be received by the brain, as if there were some transfer of energy. However, in my view, consciousness can directly control brain activity. To me, consciousness is the intelligence using the brain as a medium to operate through. Consciousness, therefore, has no need to transfer anything to the brain. Rather, consciousness produces a thought by directly moving the energy of the brain to create the energy pattern associated with that thought. Since consciousness underlies and forms the energy, it is in control of how that energy is formed, or the pattern that it takes. Consciousness is like the ocean, and the waves on the ocean are the energy that we see manifest in physical reality. The wave rests on the ocean and the ocean can direct that wave and manipulate it in any way it sees fit. So too can consciousness direct the energy of the material world. As the basis of the material world, consciousness can create any energy pattern it wants. Our individual aspect of consciousness can do the same with the brain, creating specific energy patterns in the brain to create the desired experience. Furthermore, consciousness stores all of the information ever experienced via wave patterns. When the brain is no longer functional (when you die), then consciousness no longer has an interface to operate through and so separates from the body and returns to its Source.

Now, we are ready to tie all of the preceding sections together. There is a supreme consciousness at the base of reality. It is an intelligent consciousness containing infinite possibilities. This consciousness contains infinite energy in potential and manifests the energy of the material world from this infinite potential, at the same time determining the patterns that that energy takes. It directs the material universe via what we know as the laws of nature, which are really like habits of mind of the creator. The laws of nature are no more than the ideas about how to run the universe in the mind of God. DNA and cellular structures show clear evidence of intelligent design. Now, based on this model we can easily postulate that the Consciousness underlying reality is the intelligence that forms and directs all the energy of the material world. It is in direct control, not through some sort of transfer of energy, but because it manifests the energy in the first place. Instead of random evolution, then, we may speak of intelligently directed evolution of life. DNA was created by the consciousness underlying reality creating specific patterns of energy, or matter. DNA, can then be said to be an intelligent formation of cosmic consciousness, just as our consciousness forms the energy patterns in our brain. Our individual consciousness is but a tiny aspect of this overall consciousness. Our brain acts as an interface for this aspect of consciousness to experience material reality.

# What Happens When We Die?

We’ve already explored the knock down evidence that Near-Death Experiences are not a result of some process in the brain. We may never know the full story about what happens after we die. Indeed, if we did that would ruin the mystery. However, the Near-Death Experience comes the closest to illuminating at least some aspects of life after death. The problem with NDEer’s (Near-Death Experiencer’s) descriptions of the afterlife from a scientific perspective is that we can never verify their descriptions. Science deals only with the material realm. As of now, there is no way of using scientific instruments to explore other dimensions. These can only be explored consciously. So, we must treat NDE’s more like we treat historical science. How do archeologists come up with an accurate depiction of ancient cities and how life was conducted there? There are certainly no experiments they can carry out in a laboratory to figure out what happened long ago. Instead they are left with digging up artifacts and examining the written testimonies from that time. The more artifacts they find and the more the ancient peoples wrote, the more accurate will be the historian’s depiction of that place and time. With Near-Death Experiences, too, we have no way of accessing directly the otherworldly realms that NDEer’s describe. Instead, we must rely on the accurate testimony of people who have consciously experienced them. Now, if a historian only has one or two testimonies to go on, his confidence is going to be pretty low with regard to how accurate a depiction he can create of what life was like in an ancient city. However, suppose the historian has access to thousands of written records from that same ancient city. Now his confidence is very high that he can accurately describe what life was like there. Luckily, the same is true for NDE’s. We now have thousands of written records of people who’ve experienced an NDE. This is in large part thanks to dedicated researchers who have encouraged people to share their extraordinary stories. The largest collection of such stories is currently posted online in full text by the Near-Death Experience Research Foundation (NDERF).41

Every NDE is unique and the specific contents of any one NDE are highly variable. However, with all the variability, the experiences show many common elements. If you wish to explore some of these elements in detail, I will refer you to my paper entitled *The Near-Death "Experience"* posted on the NDERF website. For now I simply wish to explore the reconnection of individual consciousness with the Source Consciousness, as this is pertinent to our discussion.

An out-of-body experience is a typical beginning of a Near-Death Experience. This is where someone all of a sudden experiences their minds apart from the physical body. This is often accompanied by an enhanced perception with exceptional abilities, including but not limited to being able to see with a 360 degree panoramic view, the experience of being in multiple locations at once, clearer and sharper perception, the ability to think many streams of thought at once, and the ability to see through physical objects.42

Sometimes, but not always, an out-of-body experience is followed by the experience of being sucked through a dark tunnel with a light at the end. The following is a tunnel description from Dr. Jeffrey Long’s book *Evidence of the Afterlife*:

“I then noticed that while it was pitch-dark, it felt as if I was in a tunnel, and all along the tunnel were doorways, but the whole tunnel I could sense was like . . . a cave—sort of rocky, not too rocky but kind of smooth—at least that’s my impression of it. So then I am feeling a little more afraid, like, what’s going on here? It felt like I was like that for an hour. Just there, then, I could see a pinpoint of white light in front of me in the distance, the size of a pencil eraser head—that size. So I sense that I start moving in that direction, . . . like something [is] pulling me there; I don’t feel as if I [am] doing it. At this point I was like floating [in an] upright position, then going slowly toward that pinpoint of light. And then I knew that there [were] little doorways all along this tunnel, and I felt that . . . if I wanted to, [I could] go into any of those doorways, and I felt at the time that if I did, I would not come back, but my attention was on the light.”43

The tunnel is very interesting, resembling a kind of worm-hole that takes you back to the Source. Not all NDEer's who reconnect with the source experience traveling through a tunnel. Others may see the light superimposed over the physical environment or simply pop into a dimension of light without any memory of a tunnel experience.44,45 The reunion with the light is experienced as an ecstatic feeling of the most intense love you've ever experienced and a going home. To explain this I will quote from three of the experiences found at the Near-Death Experience Research Foundation website.

"Everything that I perceived as existing could be experienced as the most intense light I could possibly imagine. I remember it as being a hundred times brighter than the sun, but it was not painful to experience. I had the sense that the light was responsible for everything I had been a part of since leaving my Earthly body. I don't know if I can describe this source of light as God or Jesus or any other divine being. It was far deeper than we can describe in Earthly terms or feelings. I had an awareness of this "source" that needed absolutely no means of conveyance or communication. I had become a part of this "source" to the extent of oneness. Maybe I had become part of this "source".

The thing I remember the most is how distant I had become from the physical body. When we express as humans the hope to one day be reunited with departed friends and family there is no way to explain how we will truly be together again. The reunion is not as Father and Son or as our dear friend. It's as if our souls are part of an atom that had been split with all the destructive force of the universe and then suddenly come back to form a single atom again. This atom somehow contained every experience ever thought felt or imagined. Nothing ever beckoned me to the light or tried to persuade me to come or go. Our souls just know where we belong."46

"I finally came to the end and floated into a place which was overwhelmed by a radiant white light that seemed to embody all the concepts of love. A love which was unconditional and like a mother has for a child. It was definitely a warm joyful presence, the same one that drew me into the tunnel in the first place. It seemed like a giant force field or energy that radiated all the good and noble emotions known to man. [. . .] I knew in my heart that this was God. Words can't describe my awe in this presence. It seemed like I became part of The Light and then the Light became part of me. We were one. I suddenly understood, without question, how interconnected we all are with each other, God and all life forms in the Universe."47

"[. . .] then became immersed in infinite peace; bliss; ecstasy. Unimaginable love; understanding so great, powerful; so awesome as to be humanly incomprehensible. While I was there (and only there), access was given to knowledge; "everything that ever was, is, and will be." The true nature of the universe was suddenly clear as a bell, like a giant jigsaw puzzle. It seemed to have a perfect order to it...in fact, it was evident that I was soon to become part of it. I was about to join the entity which could only be described as... God; so vast in dimension and scope only biblical words can come close to describing. I wasn't able to retain the knowledge given; the human brain is much too primitive and limited to house it. This intelligence requires an entirely different dimension to exist and comprehend. Yet it is part of our three dimensions as well...just hidden out of view of our 5 senses. Yet I retain enough to remember the sheer awe."48

The first experience conveys that we are all a part of this source Light like split off atoms that, when we die, go back to the one Source. We are intelligent light beings that are part of this one intelligent conscious light source. The second experience also shows that we are all connected through this one Light. Furthermore, this light is experienced as Love.

The last experience shows us that the Light contains all knowledge. Everything in existence is connected to the Source non-locally. Non-local means that the information cannot be localized; it is everywhere. In fact, it is everywhere and nowhere because it cannot be localized. Each piece of information is accessible from anywhere in the field of consciousness. Everything in the field of consciousness is non-local. Since all of existence is non-locally connected to Source Consciousness, when we go back to Source Consciousness we have access to all knowledge.

Source Consciousness is the source of all possibilities, containing an infinite amount of energy. It is the basis and source for our consciousness and the material world. As Astrophysicist Bernard Haisch writes in his book, *The God Theory,* creation is a process of subtraction from infinite potential. He compares the creation of the material world to the creation of movies from a projector. From the pure white light of the projector literally any image can be created. In his book, he writes:

"All you have to do to project the picture you want is put in the slide that subtracts the proper colors in the proper places. The white light is thus the source of infinite possibility, and you create the desired image by intelligent subtraction, causing the real to emerge from the possible. By limiting the infinitely possible, you create the finitely real.

Let’s take this optical metaphor one step further. The white light of a projector can convey more than just a static image. Project a series of images in rapid succession and you create motion. Although, on one level, that motion consists of a series of still shots, when those still shots are projected rapidly enough, the sum becomes greater than its parts. The resulting “motion picture” is more than just the sum of the images created out of the white light. People and actions and even emotions are made manifest by acting upon the formless white light in just the proper way, in just the right sequence. A replica of our real world can thus be created out of the unlimited potential of the white light through a process of intelligent subtraction carried out in space and time. A virtual reality is thus created out of formless possibility. In fact, motion pictures are a concrete example of how a filter, the film, by selectively subtracting from a formless potential, can generate a virtual reality."49

So, as discussed before, the Source light exists in a non-local space containing all possibilities. This light creates the material realm with all of its laws as an actualization of its potential. In my mind it's very similar to the collapse of the wave function in physics. All “solid” matter can be expressed as a wave function of spread out energy. What we see as the material world is the collapse of this wave function into one possibility, the possibility that we experience. Quoting from the book *Quantum Enigma* by Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner:

"There is no atom in addition to the wavefunction of the atom. If someone happened to see the atom at a particular spot, that look would collapse the spread out wavefunction of the atom to be concentrated at that particular spot for everyone . . . Accordingly, before a look collapses a widely spread-out wavefunction to the particular place where the atom is found, the atom did not exist there prior to the look. the look brought about the atom's existence at that particular place--for everyone."50

Implying, that from a realm of infinite possibilities, consciousness brings the material world into existence. This world is a conscious projection of the Source Light created by subtraction of infinite possibilities into the world of space and time that we experience. It is constantly being projected and guided by this underlying intelligence. We, as part of this intelligence, are co-creators of reality.

The experience of the Source Light is not just an experience NDEer's have. This experience of reunion with the source has also been described in UFO literature, in transpersonal experiences, mysticism, and as spontaneous occurrences in everyday life. I will quote here from a variety of different sources to show the connections all of these experiences share. First from Psychiatrist and consciousness explorer Stanislav Grof, who shares a description of his encounter with the Source after smoking 5-MeO-DMT. This is apparently one of those substances that when the brain is flooded with it, somehow it can severe the connection between consciousness and the brain and send consciousness straight back to its Source. Shortly after taking a 2 or 3 hits from the pipe he describes:

"My only reality was a mass of radiant swirling energy of immense proportions that seemed to contain all existence in a condensed and entirely abstract form. I became Consciousness facing the Absolute. It had the brightness of myriad suns, yet it was not on the same continuum with any light I knew from everyday life. It seemed to be pure consciousness, intelligence, and creative energy transcending all polarities. It was infinite and finite, divine and demonic, terrifying and ecstatic, creative and destructive--all that and much more. I had no concept, no categories for what I was witnessing. I could not maintain a sense of separate existence in the face of such a force. My ordinary identity was shattered and dissolved; I became one with the Source."51

The ineffability of the experience is quite evident from Grof's account. Nonetheless, we see definite parallels to the Source experienced by NDEer's. For one, he describes it as being extremely bright, although of an unworldly sort of brightness. Also, it contains all of existence in an abstract (unmanifest) form. And he too becomes fused with this Source. The next account of an encounter with the Source is described in Robert Hamilton's fascinating book, *Caduceus*. It is an experience that happened to him when he was simply sitting down contemplating some things he had read that day. The onset of the experience is sudden. In his own words:

"Then, all of a sudden, I was seized, as though by some invisible and intangible force. It was an extraordinary feeling, utterly unique and totally different from any sensation that I had felt ever before. To add to the barrage of the senses came with the experience a constant whirring sound, which would not abate and remains with me today. This onset of sudden energy seemed to flood the whole of my person and the dominant impression, and what was so amazing and beautiful, although thoroughly confusing at the time, was the unmistakable sensation of *light*. The whole experience seemed to create an incredible luminescence which is almost impossible to describe as it was nothing like how one would usually envisage light, whether from the light of the sun or from an electricity bulb . . . It seemed that what now 'constituted me' was total consciousness; the focus of my being was entirely of the 'soul', for want of a better description. It was as if the entire experience represented moments of revelation where 'everything' was made known and comprehended, although in a rather indefinable way. Yet, despite the bewilderment and confusion, I felt the presence of an absolute and profound sense of peace which was beyond anything I had ever known previously. And then, quite suddenly, it ended, just as suddenly as it had begun, with a discernible 'return' of my normal self and my normal thoughts."52

Again, we have the experience of an unworldly luminescent light where we are encompassed in "total consciousness" which allows access to all knowledge and is accompanied by an experience of deep love and peace.

The last account of an encounter with Source Consciousness comes from the important work of Ufologist Raymond Fowler, *The Watchers II*. Fowler, a grandmaster of ufology, has written a number of books describing the abductions of Betty Andreasson Luca and Bob Luca. The accounts of her abductions were gathered through the use of hypnotic regression. In his book, *The Watchers II*, Fowler gives evidence that many (not all) UFO abductions actually take place in an out-of-body state; a point also supported by researcher Richard L. Thompson.53,54 Therefore, the person is not physically abducted, but their consciousness is abducted. This means that the experience may take place in another dimension, not the material realm. The experience I am about to quote happened while Betty was in an out-of-body state. She is aboard the UFO with a tall Elder, who is a human like personage who works with, and controls, the typical gray aliens.55 He's somewhat akin to a supervisor; he's the man in charge. While aboard the UFO, he tells Betty that he's taking her to see "the One." Afterwards, the craft comes to a stop and the door opens to reveal a place that is very bright. I pick up the experience as she goes into the light accompanied by the Elder and a grey alien:

"Oh, we're running toward the light now. Oh-h-h! [*breathless*] I can see . . . the Elder is changing to a white light being and . . . the grey is changing into a light blue one [*blows out air*] as we're running closer to the light. Oh, I'm starting to change into a golden-colored light! Oh, this is beautiful! Oh-h-h. [*long sigh, exhales, sighs again*] Oh, this is wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. Oh, there is such love. [*Betty is in pure unadulterated ecstasy.*] Oh, there is such peace. [*long sigh*] I'm just engulfed in light and blending into that light. Oh! [. . .] It is just fantastically beautiful. It's just so much love, so much peace and so wonderful. It's so wonderful. Oh, it's just wonderful. Oh. It is. It is. It is. [. . .] Oh, this is everything, everything, everything."56

As this experience is being recalled under hypnosis, you see her reactions as she is recounting the experience in brackets. Again, we see a very similar experience, just described in different terms. She is engulfed by the light and blends into it (becomes as one with it), it is full of love and peace, and it is everything (containing all knowledge).

The more sources you have pointing to the same conclusion makes that conclusion much stronger than if the knowledge only comes from a single source. We've just examined the knowledge NDEer's come back with of a Source of intelligent consciousness and a few of the other sources that are practically identical to the accounts of this Source given by NDEer's.

However, the NDE gives us not only the knowledge of consciousness, but a whole different way of viewing life from a spiritual perspective. I intend to go through five points of knowledge about life and reality that can be ascertained by studying NDE accounts. For each of these points I will provide at least two other sources that give us the same knowledge.

Multiple Sources - Same Knowledge

# Point 1: The body is a shell

As said before, consciousness is light that uses the brain as an interface to experience physical life. But after we die, this light disconnects from the interface of the brain and is freed from the body. Here is one NDEer's account of what happened when he died:

"After that breath I went black, everything was dark. I don't know how much time had lapsed when I was out of my body. I didn't feel or remember leaving my body but it was like I was just there, I was standing over my body with my spirit/soul feet and ankles in my dead bodies head, I was looking down at myself but didn't remember being hurt, I had no idea I was dead or injured. I was now a translucent shadow with hands, feet, a whole body but it was made of energy, power, and strength. I looked at my right arm and made a fist. I looked at my left arm and made a fist. I felt so strong and powerful. I was energy."57

His body of light/energy is no longer a part of the physical body. It is now free to move about without any restrictions. Here is one more account of an OBE during a NDE:

"I went from lying on the gurney to floating in the air above the doctors. I watched as they pulled out my intestines, carefully laying them to the side of my body, and then they began racing around (I presume in an attempt to revive me). During this, I began rising, and all at once it seemed as though I knew everything there was to know. It seemed as if all the mysteries of the world were being revealed. I understood science, math, life! Simultaneously, I could see people below me in other rooms; I saw my grandmother and great-aunt crying outside the operating area. I saw other patients being treated in other surgery rooms. I saw people outside the hospital. I saw so much, and I continued to rise."58

In her out of body state, her mind is fully functional as she is ascending upwards toward the Source. At the same time she can observe many events happening below. People in the out-of-body state can still perceive, think, and feel, often in a much greater way than we are accustomed to in human life. This points to the conclusion that the human body is simply a vehicle of consciousness. Consciousness, while in the body, experiences and directs the dense energy of the body and brain. However, that consciousness in no way depends on the body and brain for its existence. This knowledge of the body as a shell is not just found in NDE reports, indeed it can be found in UFO abduction literature, past-life regression literature, reports of spiritual encounters with deceased loved ones, and in reports of people who have induced out of body experiences outside of the context of a near death event.

Past-life regression is a widely used technique that is very valuable in healing emotional or physical pains that don’t respond to conventional therapy. It is a technique that uses hypnosis to tap into people’s subconscious minds where the memories of this life and past lives are held. Well-known in this regard is the work of Psychiatrist Brian Weiss who has written many books on the subject. In his first book on the subject, *Many Lives, Many Masters,* he describes the many past lives of his client Catherine. Based on his many regressions with Catherine he remarks, “her *experience* of death itself was so uniform, so similar, every time. A conscious part of her would leave the body around the moment of death, floating above and then being drawn to a wonderful, energizing light.”59 Sound familiar? This is practically identical to the reports from Near-Death Experiencers. Psychologist Michael Newton, author of the books *Journey of Souls* and *Destiny of Souls*, also describes how patients who are hypnotically regressed to a past life death experience will leave their body and float above it. His accounts concur that the out-of-body experience is followed by a pulling towards a great Light. One of his clients reliving a death experience reports:

“Oh, my *god*! I’m not really dead—am I? I mean, my body is dead—I can see it below me—but I’m floating … I can look down and see my body lying flat in the hospital bed. Everyone around me *thinks* I’m dead, but I’m not. I want to shout, *hey, I’m not really dead!* This is so incredible … the nurses are pulling a sheet over my head … people I know are crying. I’m supposed to be dead, but I’m still *alive!* It’s strange, because my body is absolutely dead while I’m moving around it from above. *I’m alive!*”60

Another patient of his who was killed in a past life from an arrow to the throat describes being “ejected out the top of my head . . . it’s as if I shed my skin … peeling a banana. I just lose my body in one swoosh!” She describes the energy coming out of her head as “Like a … pinpoint of light … radiating.” She describes herself as weightless and her energy appears as a transparent white. She too describes being pulled into a “bright whiteness.”61

We see from these accounts that whether it’s an OBE reported after a Near-Death Experience or one reported by someone reliving their death under hypnosis, the reports match up identically. They show that consciousness can get by just fine without a body. The body is simply the suit of armor consciousness wears to battle through the world of physical reality. After the battle of life is over consciousness drops the heavy armor, freeing itself to return to the peace and comfort of Home in the Source.

Now, we will look at examples compiled by Ufologist Raymond Fowler of OBE’s that occur during the initial stages of what is known as an alien abduction. As mentioned before, Fowler made a detailed study of Betty and Bob Luca's abductions, the details of which were uncovered via hypnotic regression. In his book, *The Watchers*, Fowler writes about a shared abduction that the two had together. The details uncovered about this incident under hypnosis show clear evidence that the abduction was not a physical one, but one in which they were taken out of their bodies and brought aboard the UFO in a non-physical state. Here is Betty's account of what happened:

"Bob and I were upstairs in our bedroom. And I was in the bathroom brushing my teeth. And he was over by the bed. And he was putting on his socks or taking them off. He was down on the floor kneeling. And there came a loud, [*pause*] dull *whirring sound* over the rooftop over the bedroom. Very, very loud. And I turned to look at Bob and he glanced up at me and suddenly, [*pause*] he came out of his body so that there were *two* of him! And he rushed toward me and toward the bathroom and stopped abruptly at the door."62

Later, she describes "I see myself *coming out of myself too*! And I'm reaching out to Bob. I'm holding on[to] him tightly.”63 As she is taken up in her OBE state she describes that her whole body becomes light and then she enters a room where there are a number of other human forms composed of light.64

Interestingly, the whirring sound experienced by Betty before her abduction is a common occurrence for out-of-body explorers. Out-of-body explorer William Buhlman, in his book *The Secret of the Soul*, describes many out-of-body experiences that he has collected from ordinary people all over the world. Often energy sensations of some sort precede the OBE. One woman from Rochester, New York reported that: "I would feel a whirring sensation in my head. Next I would see my body and the bed from above.”65 Another respondent reports that: "I would hear a buzzing noise--this is the only way I can describe it. Then it felt like an electrical line with electricity running up and down my body. I could feel myself lifting out ...”66 Now, compare the last OBE report to this abduction report which is included in John Mack's book *Passport to the Cosmos*:

"She was awakened by a humming sound that seemed to surround the house and a flash of bright blue light [...] she could not move, and her whole body began to vibrate. She recalled seeing two small thin beings with huge heads, large eyes, and long arms and legs, one of whom was holding a stick or rod that he pressed on the back of her ear. "They're very skinny," she remembered, and "they look like they're made of light. But then underneath there's some physicalness to them like bones. They're not bones though." Then the light seemed to surround her. One of the beings made strong eye contact with her ("his eyes are on my eyes") and this seemed somehow to get her up out of the bed."67

She then reports floating through her glass window and high over the trees outside of her house. This high level of energy and associated whirring noise, whether it occurs seemingly spontaneously as in OBE experiences or is facilitated by an intelligent being, seems to play a key role in separating ones consciousness from the body.

All of these reports suggest that consciousness can be released from the physical body like the shedding of armor or peeling a banana. The body is an outfit that we inhabit, but it is only one vehicle of conscious expression. In the words of out-of-body explorer and researcher William Buhlman,

 "We possess and function with multiple energy bodies. Each energy body functions as a vehicle of soul in the various dimensions of the universe. Each subtle energy body acts as an essential transformer and conduit of consciousness. The high frequency energy of soul is progressively stepped down through the various energy bodies so that soul can interact in the dense outer world of matter"68

The vibratory and electrical sensations reported just before OBE's is the transitioning of consciousness from a lower energy body (the physical) to a higher frequency body of light. To conclude, the physical body/brain is a conduit of consciousness, allowing consciousness to express itself and experience in physical form. However, this body is only a shell or container of consciousness. Consciousness in no way depends on this body to function. Consciousness is released from the body after death and also may be released while still alive.

# Convergence number two: Everyone has a purpose they must fulfill before death.

Evidence from NDE accounts, past-life regression, and LSD Psychotherapy also suggests that the physical world is like a training ground for our souls. A general life plan is written for us in the spiritual world of events and circumstances that we will experience in our physical lives. Starting with an NDE account, we will learn that our circumstances in life are chosen in advance based on what we need to learn as souls. This woman describes the knowledge she was given about her life during her NDE:

“I knew I got this body because my mother and father had this little body and all their close spirits were used up.  It was going to be a very weak, sick female body, but it was what I needed to experience what I (the spirit) needed in order to grow spiritually.  It was like taking a college class that you hated, (like calculus) but you knew you had to get a passing grade in it in order to graduate.  So I reluctantly agreed to take this body that belonged to a family I had never been with before.  I also knew that I had been in a previous body that was a huge mean man who abused women and children.  I needed to experience what it felt like to be a small, sickly woman.  I understood why the body was dyslexic.  Now that was a real challenge back in the 40-50s when you were humiliated and punished because you didn't know right from left.”69

This account suggests many things, including the fact that we choose our families and the circumstances of our life in order to learn as souls. As a large man who abused women and children in a past life, her lesson in this life is to learn what it’s like to be a weak sickly woman who is abused. Psychologist Michael Newton, in his book *Journey of Souls*, also writes that souls choose their bodies before they're born in order to learn the lessons they need to learn.70 His knowledge of this process stems from hypnotically regressing people to past lives as well as in-between lives. In one of his cases a woman remembered a past life in New England in the 1800's. At the age of six in that life she had fallen out of a horse-drawn carriage and subsequently run over by one of its wheels. The wheel crushed the bones of her legs just above the knees leaving her unable to stand or walk again for the rest of that life.71 Upon inquiry it was found that this incident had been planned in the spirit world before she was ever born. The reason she chose to become crippled was to gain intellectual concentration. In her own words, "being unable to walk made me read and study more. I developed my mind ... and listened to my mind. I learned to communicate well and to write with skill because I wasn't distracted. I was always in bed.”72 She also comments on why she chose the family she was born into, saying that she "picked a family in a well-established, settled part of America.”73 The many libraries in the place she chose along with the loving care of her parents allowed her to devote herself to scholarship. So again, we get the impression that our lives and life circumstances are planned and there is a purpose for them.

Psychiatrist and consciousness explorer Stanislav Grof also relates a personal story in his book, *When the Impossible Happens*, about the purpose he found behind one of his relationships. After immigrating from Czechoslovakia to the United States and establishing his professional life at Spring Grove state hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, it was time for him to meet a mate. After many unsuccessful attempts he finally met Monica, who he had an instant deep attraction for and connection to. He describes how he fell in love with her quickly and they developed a passionate and unusually stormy relationship. Furthermore, he states:

"Monica's brother Wolfgang hated me from the very first time we had met. He and Monica had an unusually intense relationship that seemed to have distinct incestuous features. Wolfgang was violently opposed to my relationship with Monica and treated me like a rival.”74

During this time in history LSD was being tested for its psychotherapeutic potential. Grof, having done extensive research in this area and realizing the powerful psychological agent that LSD is, decided to volunteer for a high-dose LSD session at the hospital he worked at. At that time, it was open to professionals to have these sessions for training purposes. During the session it was his intention to unravel the complex dynamic that was going on in his relationship with Monica. As the session progressed, he found himself in a past life as the son of an aristocratic Egyptian family. While walking in a hall of an ancient Egyptian palace, his brother in that lifetime approached him. Grof relates:

"As the figure came closer, I recognized that it was Wolfgang. He stopped about ten feet from me and looked at me with immense hatred. I realized that in this Egyptian incarnation Wolfgang, Monica, and I were siblings. I was the firstborn and, as such, I had married Monica and received many other privileges that came with that status. Wolfgang felt cheated and experienced agonizing jealousy and strong hatred toward me. I saw clearly that this was the basis of a destructive karmic pattern that then repeated itself in many variations throughout ages."75

This explains the instant connection and deep love he felt for Monica shortly after they met in his current lifetime, as he was married to her in the Egyptian lifetime. It also explains the “distinct incestuous features” of Monica’s relationship to Wolfgang in this lifetime, as he had been her sibling before and had desired to marry her. Finally, it explains Wolfgang’s instant hatred for Grof in the current lifetime, as Grof’s relationship with Monica stirred up the unconscious memory of his hatred for Grof in the Egyptian lifetime for marrying Monica. It’s just one big giant puzzle to which the past is the key to unlocking. We clearly see that Grof’s current life experiences are in no way accidental; there is a purpose and reason for them.

While experiencing the intense hatred coming from the past life figure of Wolfgang, he decided to try and dissipate this hatred somehow. He telepathically communicated to Wolfgang that he had taken a powerful mind altering drug which allowed him to time travel and that he would like to do anything possible to dissipate this hatred Wolfgang had for him. He then stretched out his arms in an open position and telepathically relayed the message: "Here I am, this is all I have! Please, do anything you need to do to liberate us from this bondage, to set both of us free!"76 Next, Wolfgang accepted his offer and Grof experienced Wolfgang's hatred in the form of two intense rays of energy which burned his body and caused him great pain. Finally after some time the rays of energy lost their power and faded away.

Now, skeptics might chalk something like this up to a psychological fantasy imagined by Grof. However, an intriguing synchronicity suggests otherwise. Shortly after his LSD session, Grof received a phone call from Wolfgang who wanted to discuss a problem he was having in a relationship with a woman. Grof writes:

"He thought about discussing the issue with me, but had rejected the idea because of his strong negative feelings toward me. But then his attitude toward me suddenly changed radically. His hatred dissolved as if by magic, and he decided to call me and seek help. When I asked him when this had happened, I found out that it exactly coincided with the time when I had completed the reliving of the Egyptian sequence."77

It's one thing for Grof alone to experience psychologically the resolution of this ancient karmic pattern, but quite another for another player in the karmic pattern, who had no knowledge of what Grof was doing at the time, to experience the resolution of the same karmic pattern at the exact same time that Grof did. This suggests that something much deeper was going on beyond the confines of Grof's own psyche. It also suggests that Grof was indeed going back to the source of the karmic pattern that was playing itself out yet again in this life.

We can see from the previous account that Grof's relationship with Monica and Wolfgang was no accident. It was meant to happen, as it was part of a karmic pattern that had been repeating itself since his days in ancient Egypt. The plan for Grof's life included this relationship. Somehow this hatred between Grof and Wolfgang needed to be dispelled. Possibly this resolution could have occurred through later interactions in this life. However, Grof did it via an alternate route. In an altered state of consciousness, where his psyche had access to the information of his past lives, he went back to the source of the hatred between him and Wolfgang.

# Convergence number three: Life is about Spiritual Growth

Many times we get caught up in Karmic complexes, like the one Stanislav Grof found himself in. The key to life is not the experiences that you have, but the choices you make and how you deal with those circumstances. Psychiatrist Brian Weiss makes this point clear in his book *Same Soul, Many Bodies*.

"True, some soul chose to come back as Saddam Hussein, another as Osama bin Laden. I believe they came back to maximize their learning opportunities, the same as you and me. They did not choose to come back initially to do harm, to cause violence and blow up other people and become terrorists. They came back to *resist* that urge, probably because they had succumbed to it in previous lifetimes. They came back for a kind of field test in this school we live in and they failed miserably.

This is all speculation, of course, but I believe their souls came back to inhabit them in an effort to find alternatives to violence, prejudice, and hatred. (The abusive parent's soul comes back for the same reason.) They amassed money and power, and faced the choice of violence or compassion, prejudice or teaching, hatred or love. This time we know their decision. They will have to come back again, face the consequences of their actions, face the choices again, until they are able to move forward."78

Once we master the lessons, such as learning to show compassion even in the face of violence, then we advance spiritually. Our souls continue to reincarnate to learn these lessons, as one lifetime is not enough to learn them all. The lessons themselves are endless ranging from learning courage, bravery, standing up for what you believe in, compassion, forgiveness to everything in between. Each lifetime gives us the opportunities we need in order to learn our lessons and advance spiritually. The lessons you've mastered continue to influence you in future lives, while you work on other lessons.

A specific example of learning a lesson comes from the book, *Same Soul, Many Bodies.* Psychiatrist Brian Weiss explores not only the past lives, but also possible future lives, of his patients. One patient, named Chitra needed to learn to balance compassion and love, which must be received as well as given. She reviews a number of lives where she’s either giving love and compassion without really receiving much back, being on the receiving end without having to give much, or where she strikes a balance between the two. These are future lives which depend on her choices in this life. In this life, forced to care for her Hindu mother, she was being suffocated by having to give up her own goals and happiness to constantly care for her aging mother. Chitra had to learn not to sacrifice her goals because of cultural values, individual circumstances, or guilt. As a result of her regressions, “she was able to express her anger and resentment toward her mother and her siblings for trapping her in the caregiver role—despite the cultural taboos prohibiting such rebellion—and by so doing freed herself.”79 As Brian Weiss concludes:

"If Chitra continued stuck in her present family pattern, then she might have to experience a future as the paralysis victim forced to receive love [being on the receiving end]. If she just gave up, abruptly ending her relationship with her mother, abandoning her without a reasonable compromise, she might have had to come back as the mother of the seriously impaired child [having to give lots of love but receive little]. Because that is how it works: We face similar situations again and again as we seek to learn the proper balance between giving and receiving, between sacrifice and compassion for ourselves--until we achieve the state of harmony"80

Once learning is achieved, we may go on to learn other lessons. Another good example of a lesson that needs to be learned comes from the fascinating Near-Death Experience of Amy C. While in the spiritual world, she meets a guide/teacher who has mastered the lesson of Humility. He is with a group of people who had "casual disregard for life" or who took "flagrant and selfish risks" that interfered with the lessons they had to learn and eventually led to their demise. The Guide/Teacher is there to teach them the valuable lesson of humility in the spiritual world before they go back to be tested while in another body on earth. Quoting from Amy's experience:

"The teacher continued to offer more information.  He explained how in aborting their own lives, these people would have a rest period, but that learning what they needed to learn would be difficult.  I came to understand that as much as they were taught and infused with good and helpful information there, and even if they agreed "wholeheartedly" with what was being taught.. or what they needed to learn, that learning without a body is like learning to get over an addiction to drugs with no opportunity to do the drugs!  Or like learning to love one's own enemy without having enemies to deal with.  He explained how he needed to teach this group of people how vital it is to let go of themselves.  How to lose their obsession with themselves.  How they will be stagnant in all progress if they cannot unchain themselves from their own self-obsessions.  He had to teach them the importance of humility.  And yet, he shook his head, smiling slightly, and he implied that there was still very little he could help them with, without their bodies.  His hope was to instill more of a passion for what he had to teach, strong enough that it would leave a seed of Light that might stay with them through their sojourns."81

After being taught the lesson in Humility by the Master, these souls will then go into new bodies to test their learning in specific situations on Earth. The fact that life is about learning is also found in the annals of UFO research. Under hypnosis Bob Luca uncovered a conversation between him and a "white-robed Elder" during a UFO abduction. He comes to understand that:

"Life is wonderfully fair. Those of us in this plane just don't understand it. When you see a small child that becomes ill and dies, people weep, they cry, they grieve. They grieve for themselves. The child does not need to be here any longer. The child has already advanced, much as you would skip a grade in school. It is not a bad thing. People that are sick or injured . . . their faith is being tested. The reactions are recorded. This determines whether or not they need more teaching. They need to advance spiritually. Can they go to the next step? Is there more they must learn?"82

# Convergence number four: The Problem of Evil

This inevitably brings up the question of Evil. Why do some people live in slums while others live as kings? Why do some people grow up in loving families, while others suffer at the hands of abusive parents? As we have already learned, the basic experiential complex of our lives is predetermined to some extent in the spiritual world before we're born. The circumstances that we're born into are the circumstances that are conducive to our learning needs. But disregarding all of that, at the most basic level Evil is a necessary precondition for Good. As we live in a world of polarity, without evil good could not exist. I will discuss the insights into the operations of evil on the physical plane as found in Near-Death Experiences, Consciousness research, and UFO experiences.

Consciousness researcher Stanislav Grof does an excellent job at explaining why there is evil in the world in his magnum opus *The Cosmic Game.* He explains that "the existence of the shadow side of creation enhances its light aspect by providing contrast and gives extraordinary richness and depth to the universal drama.”83 This is a very telling and accurate statement by Grof. People just don't understand what the world would be like without the existence of evil. In one sense, it seems great if we could instantly gratify any and every desire we had. But if you really think about it, would there really be any desires at all without evil? We desire food because we're hungry, sex because we haven't had it in awhile, drink because we're thirsty. But without hunger, sexual desire, or thirst there would be no need or desire to fulfill. And further think about being able to immediately satisfy any desire. At first it would be great, but after awhile you would see that it is a very boring way of existence.

Grof further explains how the eradication of evil would at the same time eradicate the good in life. In his own words:

"Together with the [elimination of] diseases we eliminate the entire history of medicine--medical research and the knowledge it imparts, the discovery of the causes of dangerous illnesses, as well as miraculous cures for them, such as vitamins, antibiotics, and hormones. There are no more miracles of modern medicine--life-saving operations, organ transplants, and genetic engineering. We lose all the great pioneers of science, like Virchow, Semmelweiss, and Pasteur, the heroes who dedicated their entire lives to a passionate search for answers to medical problems. There is also no need for the love and compassion of all those who take care of ailing people, from physicians and nurses to a variety of good Samaritans. We lose Mother Teresa together with the reason to award her a Nobel Prize."84

You easily see that the existence of evil is actually a very valuable part of creation, for without it there would be no need for creation. We could just all rest in a state of bliss as perfect Cosmic Consciousness. To put it simply, if life is to be about learning and growing spiritually, then evil is necessary. How could the spiritually advanced be tested without evil? How could we learn without any evil? These sentiments are clearly expressed in the writings of UFO researcher Raymond Fowler. While under hypnotic trance, Bob Luca recounts the following message:

"Without those who are detrimental to society, those who are advanced cannot be tested. Hussein serves a necessary purpose. Evil serves a necessary purpose. Without all evil to overcome, the righteous could not advance and triumph. It's all...part of the system--I guess you could say--the order of things, just as the planet must rotate about the sun. There must be a degree of evil. There must be sorrow. There must be suffering, because without these things, there is no advancement and nothing to overcome."85

Without evil there is no growth and no advancement. In retrospect, there couldn't even be good without evil. For, to define something you must have something to define it against. I can define what a table is because I can separate it from other things. But if there were no other things, then all would be table without definition. Evil is just part of the plan, part of creation. There's nothing to worry about because in the end everything serves a higher purpose and all is Good. As one Near-Death Experiencer explains:

"I remember I knew that everything, everywhere in the universe was OK, that the plan was perfect. That whatever was happening--the wars, famine, whatever--was OK. Everything was perfect. Somehow it was all part of the perfection, that we didn't have to be concerned about it at all. And the whole time I was in this state, it seemed infinite. It was timeless. I was just an infinite being in perfection. And love and safety and security and knowing that nothing could happen to you and you're home forever. That you're safe forever. And that everybody else was."86

In the Light, everything becomes united in the perfect Good. While in physical reality we constantly judge things as either good, bad, or neutral. We are stuck in this sense of duality. But all is just experience and our judgments of good and bad mean little in the end. We are here to experience, learn, and grow. For that to be possible we need the "good" and the "bad".

# Convergence number 5: We exist in a multi-dimensional universe

Finally, a vast body of knowledge from UFO research, NDE research, and consciousness research suggests that there are multiple dimensions that can be consciously experienced. We're all familiar with the material dimension that we experience on a daily basis. This is the dimension we know best, and some naively conclude it's all there is. But we should not be so naive to think that the reality our brains are trained to reconstruct inside of our skulls is the only reality that exists.

In fact, we all experience an alternate dimension when we sleep at night. During our dreams we have fantastic adventures. We experience a whole other world complete in and of itself. We interact with people and do all sorts of things in our dreams. And while the dream is going on, it is our reality. It is only when we awake that we realize “it was all just a dream.” Our minds, it seems, are capable of constructing a whole different reality inside our skulls while we are asleep. Our dreams for the most part are a subjective reality, constructed and existing only in our minds. However, other dimensions could well be freestanding dimensions created by Source Consciousness, or the combined consciousness of a number of beings. These dimensions would be places your consciousness could connect to and experience.

Near-Death Experiencers often enter just such a dimension after death. There are a great number of accounts describing heavenly paradises, typically with green grass, crystal clear water, and rolling hills. One Near-Death Experiencer describes the following:

". . .then I noticed this rotating hole in the wall like a tunnel with the most beautiful blue and whitest light that offered so much peace that I followed the white light down the blue crystal tunnel then I entered into the most peaceful green valley surrounded by trees on both sides with the morning dew and fog still present the vegetation was so lush and the air was of a[n] angelic almost dreamy like pleasure to breath it was effortless and then my grandfather met me and I was so happy to see him he had already died, but he was as real [as] when he was alive. I am still in shock today but it is and still is wonderful to dream and remember the experience. My grandfather was wearing a long white rob that almost glowed or was illuminated with the whitest white you could believe . . ."87

He emerged from the tunnel into a whole new world. It has many characteristics of our physical world, but chances are that it is not located in the physical universe we know of, but in another dimension altogether. It exists on another plane that your consciousness can travel to, but not your physical body. Another NDEer, David Oakford, even describes visiting a spirit city during his NDE. There he saw spirits working and playing as if on Earth.88 Conversely, sometimes people experience hellish realms, such as the following NDE:

"Soon I came to the entrance of a tunnel in the black. The tunnel seemed to be constructed of gray cloudlike material and wound far away and up to the right. Then it branched and I couldn't see where it led. From the branching on the right extended a yellow white light that helped to softly illuminate the tunnel. I glanced down at myself and noticed that my body was gone. It had been replaced by a blue white light sort of equilimbed cross/star that pulsed. This seemed" natural and pleasant to me at the time. It was very freeing to no longer be attached to a weighty form.

Looking back into the tunnel, I noticed there were doorways in both sides of the structure. A few other cross/stars were wandering about in the tunnel, some blue like myself, some amber colored. Two other blue cross/stars appeared beside me and gently propelled me into the tunnel. I floated along and up observing that some "door-ways" were open while others seemed to have been shut. The first doorway I peered into resembled a classic Hell. There was the sound of shrieking and agonizing screams. Naked human beings were strewn about a blasted landscape with pools of bubbling excrement and jagged boulders. Devils and other animals were torturing people in all imaginable ways; and people were also torturing each other. As I neared the doorway to this sinister scene, I felt a sucking sensation drawing me in like a whirlpool, and I found myself "flying" above the miserable landscape. The smell was putrid and the heat was almost unbearable but a part of me was fascinated by the seemingly infinite varieties of pain and anguish that was being inflicted on the inhabitants of this realm. Most of me wanted to leave so I had no difficulty and my feeling was that anyone could leave if they wished. I felt that no one or nothing had put those people in captivity except their belief in the agony they continued to suffer. I "flew" back to the doorway which was clearly visible from everywhere in the "Hell" I left with nothing but joy, but I still had a sense of myself as apart from that joy. The next doorway in the tunnel wasn't much better. As far as the eye could see people walked on barren yellow ground with their heads down, completely engrossed in their own depressed self- pitying thoughts, unaware that anyone else was around them. A great feeling of loneliness and isolation emanated from the scene, and I shied away from getting too close, although no sucking sensation was felt near this opening in the cloud tunnel."89

Sarah also experiences a tunnel, this time with doorways or passages leading to different realms. These are other dimensions that seem to exist independently; they are freestanding. Different souls, no doubt, are attracted by their very nature to experience different dimensions whether hellish or heavenly. All dimensions are essentially conscious creations. Even your very thoughts are a sort of dimension, created by your own consciousness. But other dimensions are often a collective effort; the creation of many units of consciousness. As out-of-body explorer William Buhlman explains, "the creative energies of consciousness create the various dimensions. Each dimension is an expression and extension of consciousness." He also says, "there are countless nonphysical realities or heavens. Many exist as consensus realities created by the thoughts of large numbers of beings.”90

Indeed, the specific "reality" that you experience immediately after death can take many forms. To show the variety of dimensions in the afterlife, I will include here one more NDE account from Doctor Jeffrey Long's book *Evidence of the Afterlife*. This NDEer also saw doorways in the tunnel which he felt he could go through if he wanted. However he kept his attention on the Light. He thought about his Grandma who had previously died and then found himself in the Light. After entering the light, he describes the following encounter with his Grandma:

"She invited me to sit and have coffee like we used to all the time at her house. Her table was there, the chairs. She looked like she did when she was in her thirties. She had on a purple dress, like a nice one she had with flowers on it, except that the flowers seemed to glow a fluorescent yellow. Then I noticed that there was a fluorescent light that emanated from the top of the room [. . .] I then kind of got a little panicky 'cause I noticed that there was no light source; it was just there. That's when she touched my hand, [and] I noticed that I looked down and could see my hand also. It was there, but it looked white, almost fluorescent [. . .] And she said, let's drink the coffee. I did. But I notice[d] that it was not hot and had no taste. It was lukewarm, but yet there was steam coming from it, like it was hot but was not. It's like when you are sick and there's no taste [. . .] And then I noticed that the room was domelike, that in one section, the left side of that domed room, was like a curtain, and I saw my grandfather on my mom's side peek through, and I [saw] another lady, heavyset, short, with a long black ponytail. I wanted to say something, and that is when my grandmother told me, "You have to go; you can't stay here; it's not your time.""91

The tables, chairs, and coffee all resemble things like they were on the physical plane on Earth. However, these things are simply conscious creations in the afterlife. In the afterlife, where things are more energetic and free-flowing, your thoughts can be projected to create different realities. This is evident in the fact that many of the deceased individuals encountered during an NDE have an appearance of themselves as they were in their prime, not just before they died. This is because they choose what image to project in the afterlife. Therefore, the most likely explanation for this room is that it is a conscious creation (projection) of his Grandma and maybe some other individuals who also desire this kind of setting. It could be meant to make the NDEer comfortable.

However, we don't have to die to gain access to other dimensions. An alteration of brain chemistry may also do the trick of releasing our consciousness to experience other realms. Now, many people because of their conditioning that the material realm is all there is will suggest that if it's a chemical causing the experience, then it's not real, just a hallucination. However, a quick study of the literature on psychedelic substances will show that the experiences people have while on these substances are not always hallucinations. I will give one example, written about in *When the Impossible Happens* by grandmaster of consciousness research Stanislav Grof. It involves a patient named Richard undergoing LSD treatment for psychological problems. In one of his sessions, he enters another dimension:

"He suddenly found himself in a space that had an eerie luminescence and was filled with discarnate beings who were trying to communicate with him [. . .] One of the discarnate beings implored Richard to connect with the being's parents in Kromeriz, a city in Moravia, and let them know that their son Ladislav was doing all right and was well taken care of. The message included the couple's name and telephone number; this was information that was unknown to both Richard and me and had no relevance to either of us. [. . .] After the session, I decided to do what certainly would have made me the target of my colleagues' jokes had they found out. I went to the telephone, dialed the number in Kromeriz, and asked if I could speak with Ladislav. To my astonishment, the woman on the other side of the line started to cry. When she calmed down, she told me with a broken voice: "Our son is not with us anymore; he passed away; we lost him three weeks ago.""92

The simplest explanation for the above experience is that his consciousness gained access to another dimension where a discarnate being conveyed specific information to him. Hallucination is not even a possible explanation in this case because the information is both specific, accurate, and previously unknown to the recipient. But how can a chemical like LSD allow you to gain access to other dimensions?

A new conception of how the brain works is of course needed. And a predominate theory has emerged. Aldous Huxley in his famous work *The doors of Perception* says that the brain is like a reducing valve, only allowing a measly trickle of reality to get through. Our brain, then, is trained to only pick up information from the material realm and relay that to consciousness.93 But, certain substances such as LSD may alter the brain's receiving capacity so that information from other realms is allowed through to consciousness. Moreover, these substances may fundamentally change the reality that is picked up by the brain so that one loses touch altogether with the physical world and experiences only another dimension.

Psychiatrist Rick Strassman takes a similar view in his book *DMT: The Spirit Molecule*. In his view, the brain is like a TV set tuned into "Channel Normal." Channel Normal would be equivalent to everyday material reality. However, the brain is capable of tuning into other "channels" or dimensions that always and continuously exist, but that we are usually unaware of.94 The reason for Strassman's startling conclusion is because of the experiences of people who were injected with Di-methyl-tryptamine (DMT) in a controlled study conducted by Strassman at the University of New Mexico. DMT, like LSD, is a psychedelic substance which can allow one to access other dimensions of reality.

One of his subjects, Sara, reported going to a void of darkness and meeting beings there who were glad to see her and wanted to learn more about physical bodies. Then after coming down from that "trip" she took another dose where she was again blasted off into never never land and made contact with the very same beings again. She says, "They knew I was coming back and they were ready for me. They told me there were many things they could share with us when we learn how to make more extended contact. Again, they wanted something from me, not just physical information. They were interested in emotions and feelings.”95 Other times, the entities on the other side of the veil wonder what this newly arrived being is doing there.96 His subjects often found themselves in alien environments, but some experienced environments that resembled Earth. Intriguingly, the "volunteers not only saw these things, but felt an unshakeable certainty that they actually were there. Opening their eyes at any time superimposed this reality with their now-manifest but previously invisible one.”97

Taken at face value this evidence is suggestive of the reality of other realms of conscious experience. Considering the fact that they communicated with beings who in some cases were waiting for them to come back in another DMT session and the fact that they continued experiencing this reality even with their eyes open suggests that their brains were indeed picking up information from another realm and transmitting it to consciousness, just as our brains normally pick up information from the material realm and transmit it to consciousness. Strassman comments that he repeatedly thought: "This sounds like nothing I've ever heard about in my therapy patients' dream life. It is much more bizarre, well-remembered, and internally consistent.”98

The UFO mystery also provides us with rich evidence of other dimensions. Most intriguingly, UFO's seem to be craft that can manifest in this dimension from another. It's a reversal of how DMT or LSD takes us into other dimensions. Now, it's beings and craft from other dimensions manifesting in our world. UFO abductee Jim Sparks, in his book *The Keepers*, describes a time when a UFO manifested over a beach he was at.

"I turned, and for some reason I knew exactly where to look. Right there, hanging stationary in the sky in broad daylight was a diamond-shaped ship. It looked as though the sky had partially opened up to let it in because directly behind the ship was a streak of bright white light with a hue of blue. It was beautiful, just hanging there. [. . .] Then, in a flash, it disappeared."99

The craft had a bright white light behind it and then disappeared in a flash, like it just winked out. This is not just Sparks who reports these things. Another UFO reported by Jacques Vallee in his book *Confrontations* is said to have "remained in position for three minutes and vanished on the spot, “as if someone had turned off the light.""100 Again in his book *Dimensions* there is a case where a doctor observed a UFO that sent a shaft of light which lit up his front yard and shone right into his face. Immediately afterwards, "a bang was heard and the disk went away, leaving behind a whitish glow which was slowly blown away by the wind."101 Likewise, the apparitions at Fatima of the Virgin Mary follow the same pattern. Regarding Fatima, Vallee reports that on one occasion "a clap of thunder was heard, followed by a bright flash. A small whitish cloud was forming around the tree."102

This flash of light and the sudden appearance or disappearance of a craft or ball of light suggests that these things are popping into this dimension from somewhere else. It reminds one of the sudden appearance and disappearance of electrons or other minute "virtual" particles in the microscopic realm. We also have other correlative evidence of this flash of light and a sudden manifestation of a being from another realm. One such case was reported by a police officer on the Coast to Coast radio program hosted by George Noory. This officer found the dead body of a deceased sexual predator after he failed to show up for work for many days. At the time he found the body, he actually saw the ghost of the man standing over his dead body. Then one night, the officer woke up from something slapping him on the foot. He describes that in a flash, another spirit came into the room and got between him and the other spirit and he fell back asleep. The officer reports that a psychic later told him that his grandfather was the spirit who intervened between him and the other spirit of the deceased man.103

Describing the coming of this other spirit as "in a flash" suggests a flash of light. And where would his Grandfather come from, except from the dimension of the afterlife? It's time we remove our naiveté that the material reality we see with our physical eyes is the only reality and recognize that there are other realms of conscious experience. Furthermore, crossover is possible. One can access other dimensions while in a physical body and conscious entities in other dimensions can manifest in ours. There is ample evidence for this. It is only the mechanics of such manifestation that are unknown. How do UFO's manifest in our world from another? This is the mystery.

We can not leave this inquiry into dimensions alone without mentioning UFO abductions. Although some abductions suggest an actual physical taking of the individual, there are many instances where it seems more likely that what was abducted was the individuals conscious mind, not their physical self. A prime example of this is an event in the life of Sequoyah Trueblood, as reported by Dr. John Mack in his book *Passport to the Cosmos*. One day while relaxing by the pool, Trueblood was compelled without knowing why to go to the airport where he boarded a plane to Oklahoma City. There, he contacted a friend who drove him to the home of another friend in Norman, Oklahoma. Feeling a little strange, Sequoyah asked to lie down and rest. After lying down, "he saw a kind of vortex of swirling lights "like a rainbow," into which he was sucked.”104 These swirling visuals of intricate color are also described by many of Strassman's volunteers who were injected with DMT. After going beyond these visual displays his participants found themselves in other strange worlds.105 After being sucked through the color vortex,

"Sequoyah then found himself standing in a beautiful garden surrounded by hedges. He was now wide awake, "no different than me sitting right here with you now." In front of him was a silvery saucer-shaped craft and a shimmering small silver-looking being standing on steps that were coming down from the bottom of the craft. The being looked grayish and had a large bald head with large eyes, and Sequoyah sensed it was "androgynous," neither male nor female. The being communicated telepathically that it was from "another place" and had been sent to take him there because "they" wanted to talk to him."106

He then boarded the craft and traveled to "a beautiful white city in what he felt was another planet in another realm or universe.”107 While in this city he communicates with one of the persons there, who are described as having fair skin, wearing white robes, and having hair that glowed like sunlight. This figure tells him about his mission in life to teach people "about the great peace and love that fills all creation.”108 They relate to him that the events of his life have been preparation for this task. Finally, Sequoyah returns the same way he came, by boarding the craft, traveling back to the garden scene, proceeding through the vortex, and awakening on his friends bed. Sequoyah dismisses the possibility of this being a hallucination because he had had drug induced hallucinations before the experience, but they were more fragmented and recognizable as a symptom of toxicity or withdrawal. His account of what happened, however, was much more clear and coherent. Could it have been a simple dream? This of course is possible, but then we have the problem of his sudden impulse to leave his house and travel to another state. This uncharacteristic behavior suggests that something of a higher order is going on, like a higher intelligence is influencing him. At face value a more likely explanation is that his consciousness was sucked through the vortex and taken to another dimension through the influence of some higher intelligence. This would be to suggest that we do indeed live in a multi-dimensional universe that is populated with other intelligent conscious entities. Also, it would suggest that our consciousness is capable of connecting to and experiencing these other dimensions.

Another UFO abductee, Jim Sparks, also describes the dimensional nature of his experiences. His abductions, as described in his book *The Keepers,* would be preceded by "a low-pitched whirling sound, which slowly got louder.”109 This would be followed by "a tremendous rushing feeling" and acceleration as if he were on a rollercoaster.110 Then everything would stop, the whirling and acceleration, and he would find himself in an alien environment. Then when he was finished there, the whirling and acceleration would come again and he would find himself back in bed.111 So, just as people experience energetic sensations preceding an out-of-body experience, we have the same phenomenon occurring in regards to UFO abductions. Whatever is happening in the body as such moments must be tied to a releasing of the consciousness of the person. Or at the very least it is a reorientation of the conscious mind to "tune into" and experience a different dimension.

To explore this idea further, it is useful to look at one abduction where Sparks did his best to try and keep conscious awareness during the abduction. Usually, he blacked out sometime after experiencing the whirling sound and intense energy going on in his body. Then he would wake up in an alien environment. But on one occasion, he fights to keep his awareness through the whole experience and reports the following:

"The living room furniture started turning transparent. My television, chairs, sofa, then the walls themselves started to fade away. I discovered that I could turn my head to the right, left, up and down. The whirling sound became so loud I almost blacked out. I could feel the soft fibers of my carpet against my bare feet. I could also feel my rear end sinking into the foam rubber sofa cushion. Slowly my feet began to feel cold as though they were dangling in the air. At the same time I could feel cold hard metal under my butt. I looked down. my feet were dangling in the air as if propped on a hospital table. Yet at the same time I could see my feet firmly planted on my living room carpet. How could this be? Then I glanced down at my lower torso. I could see and feel myself sitting on a metal table, and I could see and feel myself still propped on my sofa. Somehow, I could also feel the cushion of the sofa at the same time that I could feel cold hard steel under my rear end."112

One reality, that of his living room, is slowly fading away, while another reality, that of sitting on a hard steel table, is slowly coming into focus. He finds himself for a time able to see both realities at the same time. However, later on the reality of his living room fades to nothing and he is completely immersed in this new setting. It's not as if his consciousness is necessarily going anywhere, but that it's tuning into a new reality in a different dimension. If one were to walk into Spark's home during this experience, they would most likely find him sitting on his couch in some sort of coma or sleep like state. His consciousness at the time being totally immersed in this other reality, he would not be aware of you walking in the door. However, if you shook him, his conscious awareness may snap back to the material world, leaving the other world behind. This is of course conjecture, but the question has been addressed in the book *The Watchers II* by Raymond Fowler. Under hypnotic regression, abductee Bob Luca is asked what would happen if someone came into his home and jostled him while his consciousness was in this other plane. His was asked if his consciousness would be returned to "Channel Normal," or the material realm. He responded affirmatively and added that "it would be done in an instant--a flash of an eye.”113

Considering this rich bank of evidence, from NDE accounts of going to heavenly or hellish realms, psychedelic trips to other worlds, UFO's suddenly appearing and disappearing in the material realm, and abductees claims that they are consciously transported to another dimension during their experience, we need to consider the definite possibility of the existence of other dimensions. Otherwise, what explanation for these experiences are we left with? Hallucination is an unlikely candidate when you consider that people sometimes come back from these other realms with information that they could not have previously known. Also, the accounts are coherent and not fragmented. Dimensionality is the most likely explanation if we eliminate the hallucination theory. If we consider reality like a giant radio, then the material world is a specific narrow set of frequencies, like one radio station of this giant radio. All about us, other bands of frequencies are broadcasting other realities just as real as this one. Our brain, which our consciousness interfaces with, is trained to pick up only the frequencies of the material world. However, whether chemically induced or guided by higher intelligences, our brains may be re-tuned to pick up a different range of frequencies, or bypassed altogether allowing our conscious minds to freely escape from the body for a time and travel to other dimensions. And if we can travel to other dimensions, then it's no leap of imagination to think that beings in those other dimensions can travel to ours, as UFO's seem to be doing.

# Conclusion

A supreme intelligent consciousness underlies reality. This consciousness manifests all of the energy in the universe and provides the information necessary to create stars, galaxies, planets, and life. In other words, it forms and directs the matter of the universe. This explains the creation of DNA and cellular structures which show clear signs of intelligence. It also explains how the mind can control brain and bodily processes.

Near-Death Experiences provide clear-cut evidence that after death, consciousness continues to exist. Our individual consciousness is part of a larger Consciousness and may experience union with this Source after death or while alive. Experiential union with this source consciousness is experienced in terms of love, light, and knowledge.

Accepting the underlying consciousness, or intelligence, to the universe opens up a new paradigm. Not only is consciousness fundamental and eternal, but life begins to resemble a cosmic play in which every individual aspect of consciousness plays a part. The human body/brain allow our aspects of consciousness to experience the material dimension. As I have shown, however, the body is only a shell. Consciousness can disconnect from the body.

Life, far from being a meaningless accident in a far off corner of the universe, serves a purpose. Since our individual aspect of consciousness is ultimately identical to the Source, we have created the material universe to experience. A vast body of knowledge from NDE's to LSD psychotherapy shows us that life is about spiritual growth and everyone serves a purpose. And indeed this makes sense in light of the new paradigm. Why would you create a universe that served no purpose?

Because life is partly about spiritual growth and learning, evil serves a necessary purpose in the universe. Whether we like it or not, the sword of logic tells us that there can be no good without evil. Without evil, there can be no learning, no growth, no test.

What people need to learn is that there is nothing to worry about. Our ultimate home is in complete love and bliss, which we return to upon death. Even though evil exists on the material realm, we exist as multi-dimensional conscious beings capable of experiencing in many dimensions. We can connect with other dimensions while alive or after "death." Conversely, conscious entities from other dimensions may cross over into this one. The material realm is simply a dimension of consciousness. It is created by Consciousness and sustained by it. There are many more creations of consciousness which may be experienced.

If nothing else, this new paradigm will help us to expand our ideas about what's possible. The true power, though, is that it empowers us. We, as co-creators of reality, have a duty to accomplish in the universe. We are all here to serve a valuable purpose. We need no longer fear death, for it is only a new beginning. Instead, we may embrace life and ask the universe to guide us on our journey. And all the while, we must know that no matter what troubles we have in this life, after it's over we will return to the Light.

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