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*Book Review by Jim Ward
for the monthly "Echo" of Central Virginia*

[Coming Back to Life](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater, Citadel Press Books, USA, 2001, 240 pp, \$12.95, pb.

According to a recent Gallop Poll, over 8 million American adults have had a near-death experience (NDEs). Charlottesville resident PMH Atwater chronicles many of the miracles and nightmares associated with these events in her recently revised and updated book, *Coming Back to Life*. These ND experiencers usually find themselves floating up out of their body and 'looking' down on their prostrate form from above. They then often head off to various other realms, if only temporarily.

The commonality of the NDE suggests most of us probably know someone who has been through the experience. I met one unexpectedly at breakfast today (late January) in the Pancake House on Pan Tops in Charlottesville. Quite normal he seemed. Ate his pancakes just like everyone else.

Unlike my breakfast companion, many experiencers and their friends are too fearful to talk about their NDEs. PMH/s book provides a picture window view of the nature of the experience, the changes taking place into the experiencer and their reactions of loved ones.

Among other things, the ND experiencer loses their fear of death. They realize their existence does not end when their body dies. In fact some of them would rather their experience had been permanent, a Full NDE. Only reluctantly did they return from what they considered to be their true home, reentering their bodies, by squeezing down in through the top of their head. For them, reincarnation became a fact of life, and of death too.

PMH (as she is popularly known), writes grippingly about her own three harrowing NDEs, each a major challenge and adventure in itself. She has also distilled the results of interviews with thousands of other NDE survivors. Seeking out the commonalties among survivor experiences, she organizes them into three broad categories. 1. major after-effects, 2. spiritual implications, and 3. the shifts that have taken place in the brains of survivors.

One of the most important after-effects of ND experiencers is their different perception and experience of love. To quote the book, "The vast majority of near-death survivors have positive, uplifting experiences. There is both the opportunity and the thrill of being totally engulfed by overwhelming love, a kind of love beyond precedent, beyond description there is nothing else quite like it -- a feeling, a knowing of oneness and worth, of total freedom and total acceptance. No demands. No conditions. No criteria. just love boundless, infinite. All-encompassing love -- a love so forgiving, so total so immense, nothing can contain it."

"Love encountered on "the Other Side" makes any kind of earthly love dim by comparison." PMH comments on the quality of love after an NDE. "It is not emotional ...it is not personal... It is a level of consciousness

beyond human reasoning and believability ...experiencing this kind of love dissolves all emotion, feelings, needs, and relationships."

Apparently, the love streaming from the ND experiencer is very difficult for loved ones of the experiencers to live with. It makes the adjustment to the new circumstances difficult for everyone. NDE survivors themselves positively and lovingly validate each others knowledge.

Though it was thoroughly researched, the book is not written in that dry academic style so typical of researchers. It grabs you and takes you into domains beyond 'normal' experiences. Those who wish to know more about the subject and understand its implications for all concerned would do well to turn to this book. They will probably thoroughly enjoy the read too.

P.M.H.Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.) is the author of many books concerning near-death states, the latest being FUTURE MEMORY, CHILDREN OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, and THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE. Check out her website at www.pmhatwater.com for more information about her other books and her "Brain Shift/ Spirit Shift" model for exploring transformations of consciousness.

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