

Steps backward in time. . . so a new future can be released

As my work advances, people seem to have forgotten the reason why I ever became a researcher of near-death states to begin with. Not by choice. But because of what I was told to do by The Voice Like None Other, which spoke to me during my third near-death experience. Television studios, newspaper reporters, even readers, want to know more about my personal story. Quite a surprise, as I had long ago written ***I Died Three Times in 1977 – The Complete Story*** to satisfy any “need-to-know” (on Amazon.com). Still, the time has come to open up a bit more so you can better understand what “flipped my switch” in life’s living and why research became so important for me. The rest of my NDE particulars is in the book just mentioned. What follows now is memory. Keep that in mind as you read it. PMH

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In 1977 I died three times in three months: January 2, January 4, March 29. Later that Fall I had three major relapses. I was working then with a blood pressure reading of 60/60. Not too good. My job at the time was with the Idaho First National Bank as a Forms Analyst, and taking night classes through the American Banking Institute with the goal of becoming a bank manager. My name then was Phyllis Huffman and I had been a secretary, writer/editor, promotions manager, most of my adult life - with a dedication to exploring altered states of consciousness, esoteric lore, and the transformational process – as things spiritual had been important for me since childhood. I was traumatized as a child with the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Death everywhere. Even though I lived in the small town of Twin Falls, Idaho, our city often had Air Raid Drills, Rationing, Victory Gardens, Making Bandages for Troops, Hitler and his “goose-steppers” during news reels at the movies. Many homes had large gold star decals on their front windows, showing that someone in their family died in the war effort. Walking to school for me meant walking a path of death. I was born with dyslexia and synesthesia, which means I was the only child in my first grade class who could see music, hear numbers, and smell color. As a result, first grade was a nightmare of punishments, kids and teachers accusing me of lying, making fun of me, when all I did was tell the truth. Between the gold star decals and having to wear a tall conical hat that said DUNCE on it, my mornings, every morning, I had to hush my shutters and stop my sobs just to walk in the door of my classroom.

As I grew to womanhood, even as a working mother, it became an imperative for me to dig even deeper into the spiritual and psychic worlds so I could better understand life's extremes. This led me to start Idaho's first non-profit metaphysical corporation by the name of Inner Forum, an organization I ran for years, bringing in speakers and creating opportunities for the public to find out for themselves what was truth and what was exaggeration or falsehood. By 1976, my home life and my business life collided. Divorce freed me to reinvent the life I was living. There is an old metaphysical axiom that says: "When the student is ready the teacher will come." I was expecting a person. I got death. The cause: rape, miscarriage, complications from the miscarriage. My first death was January 2, 1977. I managed to make it to the bathroom, the toilet, and miscarried there. I remember screaming, and that scream shattered my house, the neighborhood, the skies – a piercing scream. Suddenly I found myself floating on the ceiling next to the light fixture. My light was the light bulb in the fixture. It was on and I kept bumping into it, like a moth drawn to a flame. In the air around me, all manner of blobs formed – like ink blots only they were multi-dimensional. They were dark and strange looking and I did not like them. It was now a long way down to tub, sink, and toilet. I saw my body as a bloody mess. I could not relate to it. The more questions I asked myself, the more blobs there were in the air. At that point, I was snapped back into my body, entering through the "soft spot" area I had as a babe (on top of my head), feeling myself being pulled back into my body, squeezing in as if I were larger outside my body than inside. All the way back to my toes. You do not become someone you are not when something like this happens. You are still you. I am a "neat-nick," so my first impulse was to clean up myself and the floor, then stuff myself with as much paper and towels as I could, head for my bed, prop up my legs with pillows, and go to sleep. Never did it occur to me to call a doctor.

My two daughters were still at home. My son was aboard the Captain Scott attending a cruise school in the Atlantic (he had earned a spot in that school, then took out a loan to pay for it). My oldest daughter Natalie shook me awake on Monday morning, asking if she should call my boss that I would not be able to come in, that I was not feeling good. I said yes. She did. When the girls were gone to school, I finally decided to go to our family doctor. His office was in our same neighborhood, maybe seven blocks away. It took me forever to get there as the world around me kept jumping around. There were streaks, like lightning, across my windshield. I could hardly hold the car steady. When I made it to the doctor's office and walked in the door, the head nurse was there. She took one look at me and screamed: "You look as if you're dead." She rushed me right into an office and the doctor came right in. I told him what happened and that I was

still bleeding heavy. He laughed at me – that as an adult I had allowed myself to get raped. He thought I was silly to let that happen. He gave me a shot in my right thigh vein and told me to go home. He said nothing about a hospital. His laughter made everything hurt more. (Months later he was sued for malpractice, his name making newspaper headlines. I decided not to join the lawsuit because I was more interested in the public finding out about him than making any “blood money.”) Once I arrived home, the blood stopped. Just like that. Like a faucet had been shut off. I went to bed and to sleep. I have always been a heavy sleeper. The Twin Falls Police Department often used the field outside my bedroom window, when I was a kid, for gunnery practice. I never believed my dad (a police officer) when he told me they did this, as I never heard anything. I thought he was kidding. I’m not certain even a bomb would wake me up. The next morning a pain in my right leg became unbearable. Thinking I needed help, I began a trek to the only phone in the house, a wall phone in the kitchen. My right leg, the upper half, was bright red. There was a large lump growing out of my right thigh vein. It was hot and boiling. I could no longer walk, so crawled across the house instead, trying to make it to that kitchen wall phone.

I got as far as the dining room, when in unbearable pain, I attacked the lump. It was killing me and it had to go. I did the worst thing I could possibly do – I hit the lump, shoved it, pushed it, did everything I could to make it go away. The lump won. On January 4, 1977, I died again. Only this time I knew I died; I knew what was happening. As I floated up from my prone body on the floor, I passed through pain waves. The pain was outside my body as well as inside, and I could see it – like the water mirage you see on a hot day on hot pavement. I floated back down to my body because I wanted to see if it was really dead. I checked my nostrils, heart, lungs. No movement. I floated back up – this time to the dining room light fixture (it was not on), and I screamed for joy. I was dead. I was really dead. I didn’t have to live anymore. Life was over. I was free of that body and my life. I was so overjoyed I swirled round and round that light fixture as if it were a May Pole. Then I stopped because no one was there. I had always been told that at death you would be met by your loved ones who had previously died. Nobody was there. So I yelled and yelled: hey I’m over here, anybody? As I did this I noticed blobs in the air again, only this time they were fluffy and pastel and delicate and beautiful. They were thoughts. They were my thoughts, lots of thoughts. Thoughts really are things. They are real, and once you think them, they go out and have a life of their own. Once I realized that thoughts are things, my dining room began to fade as a new space/place came down from above and took over my dining room. I did not move, but everything else did. I was now in a place of utter darkness. Nothing there. Nothing. Yet there was the presence of

all things, all sound, all color, all movement. I called it The Void because I didn't know what else to call it. Yet there was "something" there. . . a shimmer, like a jello dish just before you touched it, that feeling of shimmer, of movement about to happen. That shimmer was everywhere, and with that shimmer was the presence of all sound, all life, all color, everything that ever was/existed now/ever would - - except there was absolutely nothing there. In this nothing place of pure creativity/possibility, I decided to create a house, a four-square house, white, with a steeply pitched green roof, green trim around windows and porch, three steps up to the porch to the front door with a brass door knob. Yup, I had a house. Now I decided to create a tree, a huge oak tree with many branches, large trunk, and huge roots. I never felt like any kind of god doing this. Rather, I felt like I was doing what was natural for me to do. Doing this ached, somewhat like skiing for the first time in winter – muscle ache. Then I went "twang." It would take someone in a similar situation to understand what came next, as I went on a creation binge, creating everything I could think of, and it was real and it was wonderful. Then I thought everything away. As I did this, loved ones who had died and gone on before me came and it was wondrous to see them again, including a grandfather I had never met, nor ever saw a picture of. He came forward and introduced himself. This was awesome, as I could see some of my traits in him and discovered where those traits came from. (Years later I was able to find some photos in Kansas newspapers of this man – yes – he was indeed my grandfather, exactly as I had seen him in death.)

Then Jesus came – my elder brother. I had always wished to see him someday and say thank you for the example he gave us of a way to live that was good. There he was. I ran to him and hugged him. We both laughed and cried and hugged and laughed. He was my elder brother and was so much joy between us. Then everyone left and I was alone. Suddenly, this place burst open and my life review happened. Everything I had ever said, done, or thought since birth reappeared, from birth to death, everything, including every person I had ever met or seen or walked by – my effect on them, whether we met or not – and the effect of my ever being alive on the soil, the air, the plants, the water. I got the total gestalt of my ever being born/existed. If there is such a thing as hell, this is hell. I had been told that how we act, what we do, what we say, affects others. I did not know that even our thoughts affect others including strangers, the environment, the world we live in. Nobody told me that. I was horrified at the sum of what I had once said and thought. But I also realized something good: I was someone who always did something. Never needed anyone else to ask me. I jumped up and did what was needed when it was needed. I liked this character trait I had; I forgave myself for my mistakes. My life was okay. On a carpet of

sparklers, like on the Fourth of July, I floated back to my living room and back to my body, re-entering it. Instead of going another 3 or 4 feet to the wall phone in the kitchen, I crawled back to my bed and lay there in a stupor until the next morning. The only logical thought that occurred was money. Yes, money. I needed to get back to work as it was my only source of income. How I dressed, got in my car and drove down to where I worked in downtown Boise, Idaho, I do not know. But I did. When I arrived, I tried to walk up the many stairs ahead of me, to reach my work station. I'd walk up a few stairs, and then fall back. It took forever to reach the top. When I did, my boss was there. She took one look at me and screamed. It was because of her that a specialist was called and I went to a doctor. During examination, he said there was no way I could be alive. Not possible. Yet I was. I just looked at him. He sent me home, saying the worst was over and to take a drug labeled dangerous, one every four hours, round the clock, and eat a meal before taking it. And do this for seven days. I got time off at work and spent that time on my sofa in the living room of my house. The girls took care of themselves. I never turned on the TV, though, because three things happened: I could hear people's thoughts at the same verbal range as I could their regular speech. Because people seldom if ever say what they mean, and I could hear what they thought, I quit answering anyone, and was silent. I could also hear and see all the cells around in my lower body and legs. They were like armies trying to repair all the damage I had done. If I had just made it to the phone, maybe all of this would not have happened. I apologized to all my cells and did what I could to help them. The third thing, I could see a "bridge" develop across my chest – like a hologram. Going from left to right, everything and everyone I had ever been in previous lives and past situations, paraded past me, walking across that sparkling bridge, as if it were rainbow bridge from my past to my present. I was so transfixed by this that I never bothered to turn on the television set. I did everything doctors told me, every exercise, every deed, still, my right leg dragged and it was painful to even exist, let alone move around. I worked only part time as the pain was too great.

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, the man who raped me knocked on my door. He could not believe all that had happened, that a simple act of sexual intercourse with me could have been so devastating, or that he had raped me. Even though I had never given consent and was asleep in my bed when he forced his way in, he felt violated and insulted and angry that I was so needy. He felt what had happened was my fault, that he had done nothing to cause my problems. He was half-crazy and mad at me that I got pregnant, miscarried, and died two times. It was all my fault according to him. I should have known he wanted sex, even though I was sound asleep and knew nothing at the time, nor was there foreplay,

foreknowledge, fore-contact, fore-arrangements. We weren't even dating, nor was there any reason for me to think he wanted a relationship. He screamed at me for embarrassing him and stomped out. I couldn't believe what had just happened. Something inside of me exploded and I fell onto a nearby overstuffed chair. I died again. (It took me 20 years to scream. I had long since forgiven him by then, but I had not forgiven myself for the part I played in this drama. When the scream came, it lasted over 15 minutes until I had no voice left. I shook for several days, then I felt really really good – clean.)

Everything was in slow-motion - rising above, going through the ceiling, the attic, the roof, and out into the night sky, leaving earth and going far out beyond all beyonds. I didn't ever want to go back to earth, back to a body, back to any kind of life. I was through. As I traveled, there was a lip of light open up in the sky. It's like I was sucked into that lip, and the light I found there was beyond belief. I hesitate to call it light, beyond light, a brightness beyond bright. Then I stopped mid-way. In front of me was a gigantic pair of cyclones inverted over each other. I called them that. The figure looked like an hourglass. But where the two cones should have touched, they did not. Out from the middle place was a powerful radiance like atomic energy, like what I saw coming from rods taken from reactors just off-line at the Arco Testing Station back in Idaho. I went there several times. Loved the place. Never could get enough of the radiation, even sticking my head into the open core of a reactor off-line for maybe two or three hours. They didn't know then what we know now about atomic energy. In this strange place, that energy coming out from the middle of those two spinning cones was similar. The top cyclone spun to the left like a clock does, going right to left. The one at the bottom spun to the right, going from right to left. The spins were unbelievable. The radiance, the force, the presence of all of this was beyond light, beyond anything I could imagine or say. I determined to go to the middle because I believed that was the way to God and I wanted to see, to know what God was/is. I had the sense that this whole incredible scene was the place where creation/consciousness originated/was created/happened, where it came from, what it was. I only got halfway there, when I turned. I heard my son talking to me.

My son Kelly was away at a cruise school in the Atlantic aboard the Captain Scott square-rigger. It cost him a lot of money to go and the school turned out to be no more than a floating high school. He was very discouraged. I had written him many letters, telling him what I had learned from dying, that life is like a school, and that everything that happens to us is like another lesson in the grade we are in. Kelly had suddenly come home from the ship, and that night he was at the Black Angus Bar tossing a few with friends. He told me what happened a year

later. He said he had a mug halfway to his mouth when he slammed it down and said outloud "His mother was in trouble and he had to go home and help his mother." He did just that and found my body, started talking to me. You have to understand how we raised our children – never to trust authority, always find your own truth yourself, do your own research, consult your own heart. Kelly did just that. His inner being told him to sit opposite me and start talking. It didn't matter what he said, just talk. Later on we learned that if he had gone to the phone and called an ambulance, I would have fully died. No time for that. When dying, the last faculty lost is the ability to hear. I could hear him and the love in his voice. He put me to bed that night. The next morning I did a daring thing for me. I took myself out of the care of a medical doctor and into the care of a naturopath/homeopathic natural healer, Dr. William G. Reimer. In natural healing, you get worse before you get better, because the process backs out of your body the problem the way it went in. This is called a "healing crisis." In my case that healing crisis became quite serious. After almost a year of treatments, classes, relearning how to live, everyone became very worried about me. I was not getting well.

With my doctor's permission (he got up at 5 am to give me an injection and medication), my friends took me to Seattle to attend the Mind Miraculous Symposium at Seattle Center. It was early November, 1977. The first speaker paid for my trip. He was Dr. William Tiller, physicist from Stanford. His topic was "The Eternal Now." I don't remember his talk, but at the end he said he felt it was possible to chart simultaneity, that everything existed in the same place at the same time. He then flashed on that giant scream his chart – a giant hourglass shape of two spinning cyclones inverted over each other and in the middle spewed out an unexplainable bright-beyond-bright radiance. This he said was the Eternal Now, what it looked like. I jumped up and ran out into the foyer and collapsed under a wall light, into the fetal position, and I cried, "He saw it too. I'm not crazy. He saw it too." From that moment on I began to get well and quickly. I had thought I was crazy but now I knew I was not. The next year, 1978, I left Idaho and journeyed to the Washington, D.C. area. Because I was told during my third death, when I was almost to the center, by a voice I came to call The Voice Like None Other, that I had a job to do. Quote: "Test revelation. You are to do the research. One book for each death." Book one was not named, books two and three were: ***Future Memory*** is book two and ***A Manual for Developing Humans*** is book three. I was shown what to do but not how to do it. Since I was a cop's kid, I used police investigative techniques as my protocol – the kind practiced in the late forties and early fifties when I was a kid. Dad always said "The body says more than the mouth does." That means in police work you

observe everything carefully and test what you find. This became my research protocol.

I left Idaho in 1978, zigzagging across our country, going first to see the sun set silver in the Pacific, then later to see the sun rise golden in the Atlantic. There was so much joy in me, I had to follow my joy. Before I left Idaho, I was able to spend a week with an Aunt and Uncle near Chicago. At O'Hare airport is where I met Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. Her plane to Europe was late, so we sat on a bench and chatted like school girls. I told her about my three deaths and what happened in each. She said I was a near-death survivor. She did not use the word "experiencer." She told me what the phenomenon was. She never mentioned Dr. Raymond Moody, nor had I ever heard of him or his book, *Life After Life*. All I knew was what Elisabeth said, what guided me, and that I was to research all of this and find out what it was. When I found work in the D.C. area, I began my real job – by giving talks about my three near-death experiences everywhere I could. Invariably other experiencers came and we talked. Then more talks, more experiencers, time with experiencers, getting into their homes whenever possible and interviewing family, friends, health-care providers. More and more, hundreds and hundreds of people. In the early 80s, word got around about what I was doing.

Dr. Kenneth Ring picked up a little book I had self-published called *I Died Three Times in 1977*. The title interested him. After reading it, he tracked me down by phone, called, and said he was going to a meeting in my area soon, could he stop by, stay the night with me and my new husband. He was welcomed. We talked all night. I told him what I was doing and what I had found. He was aghast, and said I knew more about the near-death phenomenon than anyone else. He said it was time for me to journey to Storrs, Connecticut, where he taught Psychology, and go through the archive of a newly formed group called the International Association for Near-Death Studies. I was given permission by their Board, and stayed a week, sleeping on Ken's front room sofa, going to his office and IANDS' archives, listening to and reading everything they had, then inventing a way to test our two research bases, what was true and what wasn't. I found out so much that it fueled the rest of what I would do. I joined IANDS, became a regular contributor to their newsletter "Vital Signs," and redoubled my efforts, keeping my full time job while having another "full time job" researching near-death states.

That was over 40 years ago. All the time, everything I did, was fueled by this Voice, this push, to do what I was told to do and agreed to do. My energy level seemed to double, triple. My husband and I almost went bankrupt three times. My first book sold gangbusters, but I got to be part of the first major

takeover by a corporate raider of an old-line New York publishing house, Dodd, Mead & Co. The raider insisted my first real book, ***Coming Back to Life***, didn't sell well, so he paid me peanuts. An employee of his, the one counting books at hand, said the opposite. My book sold out twice nationwide and was on its way to a third printing, when bookstores around the nation found out about what was happening, pulled books from their shelves, and mailed them back to the company, to get their money back. I didn't have a chance. I finally received a small settlement. This bought me a desk and some supplies. This kind of thing happened to me twice more. Just when things might be better, the floor fell out. Finally I had a website, published papers, and was the first to isolate the pattern of physiological and psychological aftereffects of near-death states, what happens with children, as well as adults. I reached out farther, did more, wrote more. But because I did not use the scientific protocol, my findings were often ignored. Of course I did not use that protocol. It's too biased. You cannot use a word before the individual does. If you do, you bias your work. A good cop, if there's an accident and witnesses, always says did anyone see or hear anything? Only when an individual says "car," can the cop then say car. Every word must come from the experiencer first. And you must observe, study, get in the homes, listen carefully. You cannot ever, never, depend on questionnaires. Yes, I've used some, but only after I had first researched that area and the people involved. Questionnaires were only used to double-check what I had already learned.

I have been put-down, slapped, yelled at, ignored, and accused of lying or insanity, again and again. Never returned in kind. I have objected a few times, though. Stayed the course because that's my job. The Voice is a living breathing part of my life. After the publication of ***A Manual for Developing Humans***, my mission ended. The incredible energy I was given at death to do the job up and left, including my ability to sing. Took me two weeks to get over the shock, then I discovered I can now choose. Never since dying had I felt this. Don't laugh. . . but I chose to write four more books. My 18<sup>th</sup> comes out September 3, 2019 - from Inner Traditions (the first of the new batch). It is a ground-breaking study of near-death experiences during the birth experience, with babes, toddlers, kids up to five, plus womb memories – and – both ways: with the young looking forward and with those in the later years of life who could verify having had such an experience when hardly a tadpole, looking back and answering the question: did this experience as a tiny one make any difference in your life? If so, what? The result surprised even me. This new book, ***The Forever Angels: Near-Death Experiences in Childhood and Their Lifelong Impact***, will change the conversation – about near-death, about life and death, reincarnation, the life continuum. What child experiencers tell us changes everything.

Looking back I call my own experiences “the heavenly sledge-hammer effect.” If that doesn’t tell you how stubborn I was to begin with, I don’t know what will. Yes, I experienced worlds beyond this one, discovered a joy-filled love that still fills my days. Yes, I went through extensive treatments, classes, to be a human being again: had to relearn how to walk, run, climb stairs, tell the difference between left and right, hear properly, see properly, and rebuild all my belief systems. Yes, I’m a researcher, doing the job by myself, without knowing anything about Raymond or his book, knowing only what Elisabeth had said, to discover and verify what happened to people who met a new type of life at death. Yes, I stayed the course when it seemed like there was no course to follow.

I now have the privilege of sharing my life with an angel of a husband. And, in these my latter years, “going back in order to go forward,” becoming more personal instead of just being a researcher.

To know more about my own NDEs, please read the book I mentioned. Visit my website at [www.pmhatwater.com](http://www.pmhatwater.com). All kinds of articles and opportunities exist there. Thank you for reading this missive. Many blessings, PMH