

The Human Handbook is one human's search for every human's story. Written for the average individual, it's a compilation of the research of many detailing our planetary and biological evolution, spiritual energy, ancient history and documented extraterrestrial connection.

The Human Handbook

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The Human Handbook

Your Extraordinary Story

Tom Crawford

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PROLOGUE

BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND

“We are all confronted with a witches’ brew of ethnic violence, resurgent nationalism, inept leaders, inadequate education, dysfunctional families, environmental decay, species extinctions, burgeoning population, and increasing millions with nothing to lose. The need to understand how we got into this mess and how to get out seems more urgent than ever.”
—Carl Sagan and Ann Druyan”¹

I began writing this book in 1999 and had written much of it by late 2000. The events of September 11, 2001--the destructions of the World Trade Center, the attack on the Pentagon and the resulting conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq--have moved me to complete it. The message and information contained herein are more important than ever before.

This is a reference book for the ordinary person on the human being; it takes one from the formation of the universe and the Earth, through our human physiology, and examines not only history but also our possible future. How did we get into this mess, and how will we get out of it? Take this journey through the basics and beyond with me, and examine the human puzzle through the research and opinions of scientists, historians, philosophers and theologians. This book contains a piece of valuable new knowledge--or thought--for everyone. This is the story of the evolution of us, the Creation.

Can the ordinary person with an average education grasp theories that help explain the formation of the universe, deoxyribonucleic acids (DNA), and cloning? With our scientific advances, are there ways to

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logically consider the possibilities of our psychic abilities and the existence of extraterrestrials? What can we learn about the question of life after death and the nature of our souls, or even about our Creator?

Could it be possible that we were engineered by an advanced civilization that first visited this planet over four hundred thousand years ago--an engineer separate from a universal energy that seems to connect all of us? It seems to me that historical and other evidence now leads us toward that conclusion. This concept suddenly brings logic to the stories of the Old Testament and other ancient writings.

Most of us feel limited by our knowledge of science, philosophy, or by the ways in which we perceive ourselves as human spirits. This is a reference book designed for the non-scientist and non-philosopher who is willing to learn more about human history and human potential. What lies ahead is a simplified yet amazing picture of our place in the universe, of our place as physical and spiritual beings.

The book is written in two parts. Part 1 deals with our present scientific view of the formation of our universe, our human physiology and energy. Part 2 looks at us as human spirits, examines our historical existence, and considers our future potential. Be patient with Part 1. It's important to understand the basic structure of energy and our physical environment.

Would you like to know the answers to the following questions?

- Can an ordinary person understand the processes of dating the universe and the Earth?
- Could humans have evolved from bacteria?
- Is it possible that Pope John Paul II believed that there was a point in time when God placed the soul in an ape-like being once the being had sufficiently evolved?

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- Have doctors identified an area of the brain where the energy we call our spirit or soul may actually connect to the physical body?
- Is there substantial biological evidence of reincarnation?
- Was reincarnation once taught by Western religions?
- Do ancient Sumerian clay tablets exhibited in museums around the world really show evidence attributing their advanced knowledge to a civilization from another planet?
- Did our Creator genetically program us to age after what the Bible identifies as the flood of Noah's time?
- Is it possible that we have discovered two encrypted codes left to us by our Creator or Creators, codes that put forth all of the possible choices available to humanity?

What does it mean to be human? Where are we and what are we? We seem to be a species that seems to take great pride in domination. Our history is cluttered with wars of the righteous where we have attempted to impose our beliefs by force, not logic. The masses have followed political and religious leaders unquestioningly. Moslems, Jews, and Christians have conducted their holy wars around the planet. Even the bodyguards of Buddhist monks once fought for hire, in Korea, to achieve political control. A common message of the world's major religions is The Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."² Yet even in the name of God humans have justified killing each other.

Could our Creator or Creators be judging us as a total human race? At what point do we take responsibility for our own actions and follow what we feel is right in our hearts? Soldiers are taught not to question orders but to trust their leaders. One side presses for the common good while the other defends itself from an aggressor. Perhaps following blindly is not what our Creator intended for us to do. Those of us who recognize our plight must become involved, and must deal with it--if only at the simplest level of just helping another human being in need.

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This adventure we know of as life is, I believe, the greatest adventure of all. The human race has progressed further and faster than ever before. We have the technology to clone, and scientists have already completed the task of identifying all of the genes in our DNA, leading us toward eliminating disease and extending our physical lives well beyond present limits. At the same time, with other scientific advances, we have achieved the capability of destroying all that we have gained in a matter of minutes. Some believe other humans may have reached similar heights in the past but, through their free will, chose the road to destruction. Perhaps the civilization of Atlantis is only mythical. Perhaps not.³ Factual bases have been found for many of our myths once we applied our newest scientific technology.

Sadly, it has been estimated that as of April 2006, 781 million adults worldwide are illiterate, while 100 million children are not attending school⁴ That leaves 67 percent to direct the planet's technical and philosophical advancement. Then consider that, of the 67 percent who can read, most have little or no desire to direct and lead the lives of others. Simply put, the fate of our Earth and of our human race is in the hands of a very few leaders while most of us follow like sheep.

With or without an education, communication is our world's most powerful tool. Combined with a charismatic personality, communicators can achieve the most good or do the most harm. Adolph Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi exemplify the extremes. How often in our history has one ethnic group attempted to preserve its heritage by eliminating another ethnic group also trying to preserve its heritage?

I believe we must dissolve our prejudices and evolve with reason and ethics, not just with instinct. Perhaps with greater knowledge of ourselves we will awaken to realize that our human identity is the only thing that counts. Our human spiritual essences are identical and without feature or color. Knowledge and communication advances will not further human civilization without an ethical conscience. It will only take one human being to set off a nuclear device that can unleash

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our destruction, and the "educated" of this planet that allow that to happen must bear the full responsibility.

So how are you carrying your share of this responsibility? Are you developing a better understanding of humanity as a whole and of yourself as an individual? Without understanding ourselves we will never reach our full potential. This book attempts to help you do this from a scientific and spiritual perspective. We must demonstrate to our Creator or Creators--to Him, Her, or to Them--that, with the tools given to us over the ages, we can manage our species and our planet. This book will provide the ordinary person a basic knowledge of the human species and our place in the universe, and will, perhaps, provide some new insight to our Creator. It is intended to be a collection of condensed pieces of the works of many credible individuals. This book proposes the building of a logical path explaining our place in the universe, stimulating the reader's desire to learn more about his or her physical and spiritual existence.

What are the facts? What are the possibilities? Keep turning the pages. By the time you're done, you should be part astronomer and physicist, part geologist and anthropologist, part biologist and physician, part theologian and philosopher, part historian and archaeologist, and maybe a little psychic. Life is a puzzle much like the parts of a car. You know that the car needs an engine, transmission, suspension, wheels, and a frame, and runs on fuel. It's not necessary for you to understand how to build an engine or transmission or how to make the fuel. It's only important that you know that it consists of components and that you know how to drive it. This book will give you the components of our human existence. You need only to live it. All together, I hope it will help you to be a better, more informed human being; to stretch your mind to consider new possibilities, and to become newly confident in yourself, and in humanity. Consider the words of motivational speaker Tim Autrey:

"And toward the outer-most edge, past the known...beyond the realm of flatness, 'Here There Be Dragons.' The fifteenth-century navigational charts foretold it. Any soul of even moderate learning knew it as truth. Once over the edge ventured...fiery doom be certain! Where is your horizon?...Take pause to consider that the world is changed by those who push onward...by those who, with quiet resolve, stay the course...in spite of the weariness, in spite of the pain, in spite of the sacrifice.⁵

The Independent Thinker

If I open myself and clear my head,
Do I dare to use my mind?
Can I take that step and find my place,
On my own, within mankind?

The heat, the gas, the whirling mass,
Then stars, then Earth, then me;
Could it be a fact: we all evolved,
To all that we now see?

A soul's an unknown energy,
Maybe not the same as life;
And maybe God just took a while,
'Till man got past some strife;

Then maybe He put this soul in man,
To begin our civilizations;
Then modern man, he soon began,
Developing into nations.

And now we've gone beyond the Earth,
And landed on the moon;

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And still we think about our God,
And if He's coming soon;

This life is hard to understand,
Though most of us will try;
While others seem content to watch,
Simply letting life go by!

And if God comes and takes a count,
Of all that we've achieved;
What, in the end, will be your fate,
From all that you've believed?

How did you treat your fellow man,
How did you spend your time?
And did you think once for yourself,
Or simply fall in line?

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
As we place them in the hole;
It's life we love and death we fear,
Uncertain of our soul!

The Author
2002

CHAPTER 5

HOW DID WE GET HERE ANYWAY? A CASE FOR EVOLUTION

“Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.” —Albert Schweitzer

Think of the poor turtle kidnapped by an inquisitive youngster during a vacation. Once at the children’s home, the turtle finds himself in a strange enclosure. Occasionally, he gets a trip to the back yard, and daily he is blessed with a pile of lettuce that just appears in front of him. There can only be one question in his mind, “How in the world did I get here?” If he’s lucky, he’ll eventually be carried to some vegetated area and, through the mercy of his master, set free. So, like that turtle, how did we get here? Were we, too, placed in a garden and set free by our master to roam and live out our lives--as the biblical story goes?

How old is Our Species?

By using the various dating techniques, scientists know that:

- our species is hundreds of thousands of years old,
- the genus homo is millions of years old,
- primates are tens of millions of years old,
- mammals are over 200 million years old, and
- the earliest forms of life are about 4 billion years old, and
- our planet is 4.6 billion years old.

The oldest written records take us only a millionth of the way back to the beginning of life.²⁶ We know that every atom here on Earth was once in space and that the sun is our primary source of energy. We know how the chemical elements were formed and how they began coming together to form the stars and the planets. As the universe evolved, so did life here on Earth. Earth, 4.6 billion years ago, was too hot for any life to form, but all the ingredients were coming together.

New Life Forms Develop

Molecules represent the smallest particle of a substance still having the specific chemical properties of that substance.²⁷ Molecules play an important role in the way life formed on Earth.

Imagine a loaf of bread. It is a substance that you can slice into a number of pieces, but it is still a piece of bread. To make that bread you used varying amounts of flour, water, yeast, salt, and sugar. Any one ingredient by itself is not a piece of bread; bread takes form only when the ingredients are combined in the right proportions. The smallest piece of bread you could make is a molecule of bread--the smallest part of a substance that is still that substance. You could also look at each of us as a molecule of humanity.

In the same way the ingredients came together to make the bread, atoms or chemical elements came together to form the molecules of various substances like water, soil, and the atmosphere, which led to the five kingdoms of living organisms. Water is defined as H²O, or two parts of hydrogen coming together with one part of oxygen. Stars in space generated some of these molecules or elements, and some were formed from the interactions taking place on and inside Earth, as it was forming. Recall how hydrogen led to helium, and so on. One combination of atoms making up a molecule--a new chemical substance--eventually led to other combinations making other molecules of new substances. All of this took time--somewhere around

a billion years--and, by then, living organisms were well established on this new world.²⁸

As this new life was developing, the continents were growing and gracefully colliding with one another, crushing and wrinkling like pieces of aluminum foil as the mountains were formed. For hundreds of millions of years, Antarctica, Australia, Africa, South America, and India were joined together in one region known as Gondwana. As these southern continents came together, North America, Europe, and Asia were separate pieces floating in what was then the world ocean. Eventually, all of this came together about 270 million years ago, becoming a super-continent known as Pangaea, or “all Earth.” About 255 million years ago, Pangaea began to fall apart. Texas, Florida, and England were then at the equator. The climate was also changing, and ice ages were coming and going about every 2.5 million years.²⁹

Our Ancestors: Bacteria

Around 3.7 to 3.9 billion years ago, the first life forms appeared on the planet. We've already examined how scientists know the age of the rocks containing the remains of our fossilized ancestors. Our oldest ancestors aren't the ones most of us think they were. Oh, they were cave dwellers all right, but they were also ocean dwellers, and everywhere-else dwellers. We're talking about bacteria. They've been around longer than any humans.

Bacteria are living machines capable of performing tasks way beyond our present capabilities. Whether or not they emerged as the result of chemical reactions here on Earth or were planted or seeded from meteors or comets, is anyone's guess. Considering that our planet is only 4.6 billion years old in a universe that is estimated to be at least 13 billion years old, perhaps intelligent extraterrestrials seeded the Earth with all the ingredients for the recipe of life. Could extraterrestrials somehow be a piece of the puzzle leading to modern man?

This thought seems far-fetched, for most folks, but this possibility has been proposed by a number of scientists including Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the structure of deoxyribonucleic acids (DNA).³⁰ Don't forget that people laughed at Galileo.

Again, as I have already suggested, consider the possibility that life and a spirit or soul (our human conscience) may not have been one and the same in the early development of man. There may have been a point in time where our Creator or Creators gave early man a brain capable of a conscience. We'll explore this further later in the book as the puzzle comes together.

The Earliest of Five Biological Kingdoms

Scientists divide the biological kingdoms of living organisms into five groups. These are shown below, along with the time when they first appeared here on Earth. The dates reflect the appearance of the earliest ancestors of each group. For the sake of brevity, we won't get into all of the sub-groupings within each group. There are various species within each kingdom and different types within each species. Our closest ancestors, *Homo sapiens*, appeared about two hundred thousand years ago, and more civilized man developed about fifty thousand years ago.

THE BIG FIVE

3.9 Billion Years Ago: **BACTERIA** (MONERA)

To

1.7 Billion Years Ago: **PROTISTS**
(PROTOCTISTA or PROTISTA)

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To

600 Million Years Ago: **ANIMALS**

To

500 Million Years Ago: **PLANTS and FUNGI**

Almost 4 billion years ago, bacteria developed: These were the first life forms to live on air, water, and the energy of the sun. Bacteria are single-celled organisms. The major distinction between bacteria and the four remaining kingdoms of life is that bacterial cells have no nucleus; no center within the cell. This type of cell is a prokaryote (pro-carry-oat). A cell that has a nucleus is called a eukaryote (u-carry-oat). Only bacteria are prokaryote cells, and all of the other kingdoms are made of eukaryote cells.

Animals and all members of the plant, fungus, and protista kingdoms have a centerpiece in their cells, a nucleus. Protists cells of the protoctista kingdom include microscopic life forms like amoebas, paramecia, and algae. Seaweeds also fall into this category of kingdom, instead of the plant kingdom. The next time you spray that shower with a cleaner to get rid of those dark areas, just remember that you're killing some poor little colony of protists!

Bacteria have other distinctive aspects. Bacteria cells reproduce a little differently from the rest of us. Bacterial DNA is loose within the cell, not contained inside strands of chromosomes as ours are structured. When bacteria reproduce, the amount of DNA the male and female contribute is not equal. Most bacterial cells reproduce by dragging some of their DNA along behind them. During this process a new membrane forms, making the cell look more like a long sausage. This eventually develops to look more like two sausage links that will split into two equal cells. Others reproduce from bumps or nodules that form

on the surface of the cell membrane and eventually break off as new, smaller cells containing all of the genes of the parent.

Bacteria don't need equal amounts of genes from each parent in order to multiply, whereas eukaryotic cells with a nucleus do. Sometimes the sex gene from the male bacteria is traded in all of the excitement, and, if this occurs, the male becomes a female. (This confirms that sex has been confusing from day one.)

Lynn Margulis and Dorion Sagan put it this way in *What Is Life?:* "Bacteria trade genes like a pit full of commodity traders in the Chicago Mercantile Exchange."³¹ So, while they don't trade even amounts of DNA in the beginning, they make up for it as their lives go on. Humans get all their genes up front when their parents' chromosomes come together in that moment of passion. Unlike eukaryote cells, however, after bacteria reproduce they continue to trade genes and are always changing from their initial hereditary traits.

Think about Margulis' and Sagan's example: "Imagine that in a coffee house you brush up against a guy with green hair. In so doing, you acquire that part of his genetic code, along with perhaps a few more novel items. Not only can you now transmit the gene for green hair to your children, but you yourself leave the coffee shop with green hair. Bacteria indulge in this sort of casual quick-gene acquisition all the time."³² This ability enables bacteria to evolve, and this is the reason that some types of disease-causing bacteria eventually resist antibiotics. They keep changing until they become immune, and then we must find new medications to fight them. (Our U.S. Defense Department contractors do the same thing. They create a weapon and immediately begin the creation of another weapon to counter it as a defense strategy.)

Another neat trait of prokaryote bacteria is immortality. When the eukaryote cells developed from the bacteria they lost that trait. Bacteria are not programmed to die; although, they can die when their

environment is altered or when other cells or drugs kill them. Even if we were in a perfect environment, our eukaryotes are programmed for death, but this is not the case with the prokaryote bacteria.

How do bacteria differ from viruses? Viruses do not meet the definition of living organisms. They are considered non-living units. Viruses connect to living cells. Acting like computer programs, they change the instructions to the host cell. The cell then begins manufacturing the necessary parts for the virus, and then we're in trouble.

Origin of Eukaryote Cells

It's believed that eukaryote cells came into existence as the result of what's known as a symbiotic merger between colonies of bacteria. A symbiotic relationship is where one group needs the other to survive. The planet was becoming crowded with bacteria that wouldn't die, and chemical compounds produced by so many bacteria were making significant changes in the environment.

Oxygen was developing and increasing on Earth, and the amounts of other chemicals in the environment were also rising, while new chemical compounds were still forming. So, some creative bacterial gene traders made the big trade by combining everything in a merger. Colonies of bacteria came together feverishly swapping their genes looking for a solution to their survival. These colonies were successful and created a new cell that could handle the level of oxygen on Earth, and life would never be the same. So all of you attorneys and accountants who think that you are the sole experts on mergers and acquisitions, forget it. It all started about 1.7 billion years ago.

Many of those independent bacteria that chose not to merge have managed to survive anyway. They are the masters of symbiotic relationships. They got so good at it that they have not only lived side-by-side with one another; they have also created what's known as endosymbiotic relationships. These are relationships they have

developed by merging with other organic beings from the other four kingdoms. They actually live inside these other beings, and both parties survive to the benefit of one another. Our intestines contain bacteria that help us digest food and synthesize vitamins like B and K. Protists help termites digest wood, and there exist many other examples of bacteria in endosymbiotic relationships.

How do we know that our cells developed from bacteria? Our eukaryote cells contain mitochondrial organelles. There are different types of organelles in our cells. Just as our bodies have organs like the heart and lungs, eukaryote cells have functioning structures called organelles. The mitochondria organelle actually has its own genetic structure, but it can't survive outside of our cells. This is the part of the cell that allows it to convert oxygen into energy, enabling the cell to breathe. It even looks like bacteria.³³ It is a descendent of that early merger surviving in a changing environment. The DNA of eukaryotic cells reveals segments that clearly and specifically come from bacteria.³⁴ There's a clear link between each of us and bacteria.

Can you imagine some old-timer bacteria cell saying, "It wasn't this way when I was growing up. We had the whole place to ourselves. We lived forever and we had it all."? We, the eukaryotes, have never had it all, and we never will no matter how hard we try. Perhaps this will help us understand that, as part of the human puzzle, we will always need each other. Since we can't have it all, we should quit trying to get it all and begin to share the available resources.

Knowledge: Made in His Image

The way in which our surroundings have physically evolved would be something that our Creator would want us to understand. If we believe we are made in His image and likeness, wouldn't that include intelligence and our ability to apply it? As humans, we have a uniquely enhanced ability to reason and to improve our surroundings.

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Parents want their children to learn and to grow to independence, while always hoping they will remember their home and family. Our Creator would want the same. Some of us have difficulty with this independence and feel threatened by newly acquired knowledge. Knowledge fosters independent thinking, challenging many preachers and teachers who are locked into more limited curriculums.

Modern science has brought us television, radio, synthetic fabrics, medicine, cloning, and the space shuttle. It has given us cars, electricity, computers for surfing the Internet, telephones, and who knows how many other technological advancements. It has also revolutionized what we know about biological evolution.

Most of us have been raised to equate life with having a soul. We grow to believe that this independent soul comes into the physical body at some point and leaves it at another. Could it be possible that our Creator first developed the physical habitat and the body, allowing these to evolve to an acceptable level before actually placing the human spirit or capacity for a human conscience in the body?

Further Reading

1. *In Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, Carl Sagan teams up with his wife, Ann Druyan, and together they spin the most fascinating factual story of our world. They describe what may account for much of our human nature. They take the reader on an eye-opening adventure, from the early beginnings of Earth through the evolution of modern man. Sagan and Druyan put forth a scientific explanation of how we are physically and emotionally connected to our earliest ancestors. Carl Sagan died recently, but he lives on through his books and through the videos of his PBS series, *Cosmos*, where he explains the universe and our place in it.

2. *What is Life* is written by Lynn Margulis and Dorion Sagan. Interestingly, Margulis was Carl Sagan's first wife, and Dorion is their

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son. This book provides a detailed biological history of life on Earth. Written with an energetic and descriptive flow, it turns the complex subject of biology into a story filled with excitement. It contains numerous visual explanations and charts. This is a great biology book for the non-scientist.

CHAPTER 11

MAKING THE CONNECTION: NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES

"That best portions of a good man's life are his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love." —
William Wordsworth

Considering the electrical aspects of the human body and the existence of a human magnetic field, let's take an adventure into another dimension. Make your own decisions as we explore our spiritual side. Here begins the part of this book where you must keep an open mind and consider all possibilities. This chapter will help you to consider more clearly the possibility of a human spirit and how it may connect to the physical body.

Remember, most religions teach that the spirit, or soul, is separate, independent of the physical body. Scientists and physicians generally avoid discussion of "Spirit" since it cannot be seen or measured. Technology will continue to bring us closer to understanding many aspects of our existence; discoveries that may lead us closer to our God, our Creator. We may discover the energy of our soul and how and where it connects to our physical body. Have we already discovered the energy of our soul in our body's electrical energy? Perhaps we just don't yet see the two as one and the same. In Chapter 1 we learned that Joseph von Fraunhofer didn't realize the importance of his discovery of the "fingerprints" in the light of the various heated chemical elements. William Huggins was the one who made that connection. Later, Edwin Hubble used the information to identify the various chemical elements in the stars. So, consider the question—have we already discovered the energy of the human spirit?

Near-Death Experiences (NDE)

Probably the best-known author on the subject of near-death experiences (NDEs) is Raymond A. Moody Jr., Ph.D., M.D. He coined the term. He has described fifteen of the most common elements of NDEs.⁵⁷ He says that many people who have experienced NDEs report eight or more of these fifteen common elements in their experiences, and a few individuals have reported as many as twelve. To summarize these elements, Moody created a theoretical person whose experience was as follows:

"A man is dying and, as he reaches the point of greatest physical distress, he hears himself pronounced dead by his doctor. He begins to hear an uncomfortable noise, a loud ringing or buzzing, and at the same time feels himself moving very rapidly through a long dark tunnel. After this, he suddenly finds himself outside of his own physical body, but still in the immediate physical environment, and he sees his own body from a distance, as though he is a spectator. He watches the resuscitation attempt from this unusual vantage point and is in a state of emotional upheaval. After a while, he collects himself and becomes more accustomed to his odd condition. He notices that he still has a "body," but one of a very different nature and with very different powers from the physical body he has left behind. Soon, other things begin to happen. Others come to meet and to help him. He glimpses the spirits of relatives and friends who have already died, and a loving warm spirit of a kind he has never encountered before, a being of light, appears before him. This being asks him a question, nonverbally, to make him evaluate his life and helps him along by showing him a panoramic, instantaneous playback of the major events of his life. At some point he finds himself approaching some sort of barrier or border, apparently

representing the limit between Earthly life and the next life. Yet, he finds that he must go back to the Earth, that the time for his death has not yet come. At this point he resists, for by now he is taken up with his experiences in the afterlife and does not want to return. He is overwhelmed by intense feelings of joy, love, and peace. Despite his attitude, though, he somehow reunites with his physical body and lives. Later he tries to tell others, but he has trouble doing so. In the first place, he can find no human words adequate to describe these unearthly episodes. He also finds that others scoff, so he stops telling other people. Still, the experience affects his life profoundly, especially his views about death and its relationship to life."⁵⁸

Moody is frustrated with the arguments between parapsychologists, scientific skeptics, and religious fundamentalists. He writes, “[And] wouldn’t it be productive to undertake a serious, scholarly exploration of the ordinary paranormal, as opposed to the paranormal that the big three have devised out of their linguistic and contextual distortions?”⁵⁹

Moody believes that there are three primary groups who have very different views of the same experiences. These are, first, parapsychologists, who acknowledge the existence of certain spiritual or energy-based events and individuals with unique abilities, but who are unable to explain these phenomena.

Then there are scientists who are skeptics and will try and find scientific reasons to explain that these are simply some type of anomaly. And, finally, there are religious fundamentalists who acknowledge unexplained spiritual events and individuals with unique gifts or abilities, but they believe that these are things we should not attempt to decipher; that they are beyond man’s knowledge—only God understands. Moody believes that all three groups should join forces and carry out the sort of research that leads to a better understanding.

Seat of the Soul

Taking up Moody's gauntlet is Melvin Morse, M.D. Morse conducted extensive research on the NDEs of children. Moody says that Morse and his team have proven two important aspects of NDEs. First, a NDE can only be had by a person who is truly near death. Second, he notes that a specific part of the brain has been identified where all of this takes place, the "seat of the soul." Dr. Morse credits much of the work related to identifying the anatomical source of these experiences to Dr. Jerrold Milstein.

So what is this specific part of the brain that, when stimulated, creates an out-of-body experience similar to a NDE? It is the Sylvian fissure in the cortex, located in the right temporal lobe. Neurologists in Chile have confirmed this finding.⁶⁰ If this is where the spiritual and physical connect, as we experience our actions, could a record of them be simultaneously transmitted to some super-storage facility in another dimension? Could a record exist of the collection of our human experiences in this physical life?

Powerful Experiences

Dannion Brinkley's story is probably one of the most famous stories of not one but two NDEs.

On September 17, 1975, after being electrocuted by a bolt of lightning, Dannion Brinkley died. When he revived, twenty-eight minutes later in a morgue, he had the story of a lifetime to tell—a profoundly moving account of what happened to him during his near-death experience. It is a tale of a dark tunnel, a crystal city, and a "cathedral of knowledge" where thirteen angels shared with him 117 revelations about the future—ninety five of which have already come true. Even though he now possessed the ability to read minds, no

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one believed his story of the spiritual transformation that changed his life—except others who had died and come back. A second near-death experience reunited him with his angelic instructors. This time, they revealed that he was to use his new psychic gifts to help the dying. Since then, he has dedicated his life to working with the sick and elderly and sharing his fantastic story with people everywhere.⁶¹

ESPN covered a recent near-death experience on the morning of February 25, 2000. Jeffrey Bodine was interviewed as he recovered in the hospital following his accident during a race before the Daytona 500. With tears in his eyes, he stated that, at some point either during or after the crash, he met with his father who had died two years earlier. He emphasized that it wasn't a dream, it was a real conversation. His father told him that, although he was glad to see him, it wasn't his time.

As technology improves, scientists and physicians are identifying where the physical and the spiritual seem to connect. Someday, they may identify a new type of energy—the energy of our souls. Perhaps scientists will discover that this is our own electrochemical energy. As long as humans keep trying to find the answers, we are acknowledging the possibility of a higher or universal power. Where there is possibility, there is hope. You might want to read the books which I have listed as references.

Further Reading

1. The most current information on the study of NDEs is found on the Internet. See the website for The International Association for Near-Death Studies, (www.iands.org). This site contains information on publications, programs, meetings, and support groups for anyone who has experienced a NDE or anyone facing death or the loss of a loved one. Public libraries offer Internet access if needed.

2. *Life After Life*, by Raymond A. Moody Jr., Ph.D., M.D., was a ground breaking best seller published in 1975. Moody studied over one hundred cases of clinical death, identifying a number of striking similarities in the stories of those who lived to tell them.
3. *The Last Laugh*, by Raymond A. Moody Jr., Ph.D., M.D., published in 1999, is a companion to *Life After Life*, offering Moody's perspectives and feelings about the paranormal. Moody remains pessimistic that religious fundamentalists, parapsychologists, and scientific skeptics will ever get together for serious research.
4. *Closer to the Light*, by Melvin Morse, M.D., reviews studies of near-death experiences of children and how these affected their lives as they grew older. It contains a bibliography referencing other medical research.
5. *Saved by the Light* is the autobiography of Dannion Brinkley. His two NDE experiences are detailed. His life was transformed as a result of his new psychic abilities and knowledge obtained from the Beings of Light.

The Human Handbook is one human's search for every human's story. Written for the average individual, it's a compilation of the research of many detailing our planetary and biological evolution, spiritual energy, ancient history and documented extraterrestrial connection.

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