PARTING VISIONS
USES AND MEANING OF END OF LIFE EXPERIENCES
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CHAPTER 8 (AND LAST CHAPTER)

"Once analysis and judgment are suspended, the link to a universal source of information and wisdom becomes opened and all the positive benefits of such a link become possible. Courage and Faith Are All That Are Needed"

"The great secret of life is that there is no secret"

The secret to proper right temporal lobe function is to suspend judgment and analysis. It is just as simple and as difficult as that. Once analysis and judgment are suspended, the link to a universal source of information and wisdom becomes opened and all the positive benefits of such a link become possible. Good health, a sense of meaning and purpose in life, an understanding of who we are and where we stand in the greater universe order all can become clear. Profound healings, spiritual insights, a sense of wonder and oneness with the universe and access to an unlimited source of information all can occur. We can become aware of our paranormal abilities such as remote viewing (seeing things at a distance), telepathy (the ability to share emotions and feelings), premonitions of the future, and understandings of the past, communications with dead loved ones, and a deeper appreciation of the profound role that something loving and divine can play in our ordinary lives. All of this is possible because of our natural biological ability to link our minds to the timeless space-less energetic patterns of information the make up all of existence.

"So what", one hardened skeptical journalist once asked me. "Those are things I can do all by myself, without resorting to religious and spiritual explanations. I don't need some sort of ritualistic or spiritual explanation for what in the end means simply living a normal healthy life with a love of our fellow man and respect for ourselves. I can eat fresh fruit and vegetables, exercise daily, give money to charity, and feel connected to my fellow man without resorting to exotic explanations of linking my brain to some sort of quantum non-locality that probably only a handful of theoretical physicists understand anyway. Exactly so. The great secrets of life often are right in front of us and involve understandings that we all know anyway, but don't seem to be able to incorporate into our lives. It is easy to say "appreciate the ordinary miracles of everyday life" but far easier to be impressed by dramatic stories of angel encounters and spiritual visions.

I have referred throughout the book to the experience of my professor and mentor Frank Oski MD, arguably one of the greatest American Pediatricians. As a medical student, he was in a state of spiritual crisis, wondering why a "god" would allow children to be born with fatal genetic diseases. He had just spend days attempting to prolong the life of a three year old who was born

with severe heart disease and was doomed to die early, no matter how hard her physicians tried to save her. An angel appeared to him in the night and urged him to understand that such children who die at an early age know secrets to living that cannot be learned in any other way. He was told that he could also learn from caring for such children who are less than perfect.

Oski then urged the rest of us, who had not had his vision, to "pay attention to the ordinary miracles of everyday life"! Yet Oski did not have an ordinary vision himself. He had an angel in white appear at the foot of his bed, instruction him as to the deepest mysteries of life.

I have considered these words of my professor for nearly 10 years. I realize now that he was sharing with us the most important attribute of spiritual visions. This is that they are part of the fabric of our ordinary reality. They are happening to us all the time, everywhere around us. We don't need to wait to see a woman in white appearing at the foot of our bed to understand the mysteries that these experiences can teach us.

The skeptical journalist I spoke to as mentioned above is an excellent example of this. Even though she had no "belief" in spiritual visions and near death experiences, her own life was a nice example of how important it is to regularly use our right temporal lobes as a part of healthy living. She stated that she already lived a good life, that she already incorporated the many traits of healthy spiritual living that I described in a previous book "Where God Lives". She furthermore emphatically stated that she did it without any need of a god or spiritual life.

I then asked her if she had any hobbies. She stated she enjoyed reading. Since this is a left brain activity I probed further. I asked her if she had any activities that turn off the "internal narrator" that exists within our heads which would permit the right temporal lobe to dominate. She told me that she did, that she also painted. Often her mind would wander and she would think nothing particular at all while she brushed paint onto the canvass. During those moments, she would often have deja vu experiences. These are experiences in which we think we have lived these moments before, or connect with what are perceived as past life memories. They are also well documented scientifically as being the result of normal healthy right temporal lobe function.

This journalist was a dynamic vigorous healthy 50 year old woman. She had the body and the face of a 30 year old. She was an example of the power of regular right temporal lobe activities in creating a healthy life where she knew it or not.

I find that most people have already had profound spiritual visions and yet are unaware that they have them. One way to know if someone has had a valid and important spiritual experience is that they often preface the experience by saying "you will think I am crazy but. . . " or "I know this didn't really happen but this is what happened to me. . ".

This is because as a society we have lost any sort of collective understanding of what these experiences mean and how important they are. They are often trivialized, dismissed and ignored by those who have them, simply because we don't understand them. This is why our study of parents who had premonitions that their babies would die of Sudden Infant Death never got published. There was no way to understand them from a scientific point of view. Now we can understand that these parents were simply using their right temporal lobes to access the energetic

source of information that we are part of and surrounds us. Since this source of information is timeless, of course they access information which only occurs to us as a future event, since we are biological beings with a built in time clock.

I have a close friend who does not believe in spiritual visions. In fact, most of my friends don't believe in spiritual visions, as they are men and woman of science, which they perceive as being opposed to an understanding of spiritual events in our lives. I asked him if he had ever had any sort of unexplainable experience, which might remotely be called "spiritual".

He told me that once he was driving home from the hospital late at night and that he stopped at a traffic light at a deserted intersection. The light turned green, but as he was about to drive through the intersection, he was suddenly seized with severe abdominal pains. He felt certain he would be sick and he stopped the car, waiting to see if they would pass. Then a car came speeding through the intersection against the light. If he hadn't had these stomach cramps he would have been in a severe car crash. I asked him why he considered this to be a spiritual experience, and he just shrugged and said that it was the only thing that came to mind when I asked him the question.

What my friend doesn't know is that I have well over three hundred examples of this experience in my files. They are organized under the heading "Experiences Associated With Avoiding Car Crashes". They are generally of four different types. Sometimes it is visual: an angel in white appears and warns the driver not to go on. They can also be auditory: the driver will hear a distinct voice stating that he or she should stop, or pull over or otherwise told to not go on. Most often they are a "knowing" or a distinct type of feeling, unlike ordinary feelings. People will tell me "I just knew" I shouldn't drive on. Finally, they are often physical visceral feelings, such as my friend had.

These are the four ways spiritual visions present themselves to us. 1) Visual experiences of a being or angel in white superimposed over this reality. 2) Distinctly real auditory experiences, again superimposed over this reality. 3) A sense of knowing or intuition without any other sort of visual or auditory aspect to it. 4) Physical feelings such as smelling unusual smells, or having profound intestinal symptoms. The latter is in fact so well known that in medicine, we have the term "gut feeling" for those times when we suddenly have an intuitive inspiration of how to diagnose or heal a patient which is not entirely logical.

My friend is a brilliant physician. He is one of the top physicians at Seattle Children's Hospital. When I pointed out that he had a "gut feeling", he laughed and laughed, and said "maybe so Melvin". What he had forgotten is that many times with particularly hard cases, he would point to me or the medical students and say "what does your gut tell you about this case". With his intensely rational scientific mindset, if an angel in white had appeared to him at the intersection, he would probably have driven right through. These experiences present themselves to us in ways that we can best understand them.

We are at a point in time when we need science to help us to explain and understand these spiritual visions. Many of us cannot believe in them even if they occur to us, without the intervention of some sort of scientific explanation. In my friend's case, he finally acknowledged

that he had a spiritual experience, only after I explained to him that premonitions of future events has been documented in the laboratory.

Dean Radin's research at the University of Nevada Los Vegas has clearly documented that human beings can anticipate future events. They do not have clear thoughts or words which describe these events, as thought and words are left temporal lobe events. We have to turn off our left temporal lobe to allow this sort of information to appear. Instead they had physical feelings that heralded unpleasant future events.

Radin hooked students up to machines that would measure their heart rate and blood pressure. He then showed them a series of photographs, some of which were pleasant scenes of nature, and others were gruesome pictures of traffic accidents and other unpleasant images. He found that he could document distinct changes in heart rate and blood pressure before students saw the unpleasant images. Since a computer randomly chooses which scene to show the student, they had no way of knowing when they were going to see something unpleasant or something beautiful. Yet they obviously did know, on some unconscious level, as their heart rates and blood pressure changed only before the unpleasant pictures.

I have another extremely scientific friend who also had a spiritual experience that he would not believe, until I explained it with science. He states that one day he was driving down a divided freeway that had a concrete barrier between the two freeways. Suddenly, he heard a voice that said "turn left". Without even thinking how stupid it was, he turned left, and thought he passed directly through the concrete barrier. Regardless of how it occurred, he suddenly was on the entire other side of the highway, finally stopping his car on the grass that was completely on the other side of the road he had been driving on.

As he looked back where he had been driving, he saw a truck speeding the wrong way down the divided freeway. It slammed into oncoming traffic and several people were killed.

He was not sure what happened to him. Initially he thought that perhaps he had some sort of subliminal response and knowledge that the truck was approaching, and somehow flipped over the barrier. He thought that perhaps he hallucinated the voice, even though it seemed vividly real.

I point out to him that his experience was in fact a graduate student physics problem. The space between the molecules in our reality is far far greater than the space between the planets. It is entirely possible for one solid object to pass between another, if the various combinations of molecules line up properly. There is only a one in a trillion chance that this would happen, of course, but it can happen.

This explanation gave him the confidence to believe that what actually happened to him was in fact real. It is a far better scientific explanation of what happened to him than supposing that somehow his car miraculously jumped over the barrier without him being aware of it. In fact, he felt he passed directly through the barrier, and that is almost certainly what happened.

Now it is an important time for spiritual/religious intuitions and beliefs and scientific

understandings to become reunited. There were important and legitimate reasons for the split in the first place, which served mankind well. Now, however, we have become unbalanced and have lost touch with our spiritual side because of this centuries long break between these two important ways of perceiving and understanding reality.

Many scientists such as the late Carl Sagan argued persuasively that to return to a blending of science and religion is a return to superstition and ignorance. Science fought for hundreds of years to free itself from religion so that our minds would be free of the irrational aspects of religion. For example, only several hundred years ago, thousands of woman were burnt at the stake and had their property taken away from them because they were thought to be witches. Superstition and religious belief systems at the time allowed dark emotional forces to be unleased. Of course, those who controlled religion benefitted as the murdered witches property went to them. Carl Sagan felt strongly that science permits a freedom of the mind and would prevent this sort of horrific social behavior.

Furthermore, with the rise of science as a separate discipline, there was no more reason to yoke religion and science, from Sagan and others point of view. For example, there once was a time when an understanding of genetics and religion was intermingled and very functional. There is an American Indian story about a tribe that for many years had a prophecy that a boy would be born with blue eyes. When such a child was finally born, it did not create social chaos, but rather was accepted as a natural event, as a previous tribal leader had predicted that it would occur. This prediction was handed down through the generations as a vision.

Virtually all Native American Indians have brown eyes. However, the Vikings, who had blue eyes on many occasions had contact with Native American Indians and there were multiple times when the blue eyed gene could have been introduced into the Native American Indian population. The blue eyed gene is recessive, meaning that if a person has one brown eyed gene and one blue eyed gene, they will always have brown eyes. After many generations however, two people would meet who would each give their child a blue eyed gene, so that child would have two blue eyed genes and have blue eyes. So, the prophecy would seem to be fulfilled. In this case, this prophecy was no more than a genetics prediction wrapped in spiritual terms.

Now we have a separate science of genetics and we don't need to cloak scientific knowledge in spiritual terms. Similarly, ancient peoples used giant stone astronomical devices to mark the movement of the stars, sun and moon. Religious leaders who had the only access to the scientific knowledge of astronomy would then use this knowledge to predict events such as eclipses of the sun. They would often use this information to their own advantage and to continue their power over the people. Sagan believed that scientific information should be free and available to everyone so that religious leaders could not use scientific information to manipulate and control other human beings.

We need to acknowledge that just as our individual consciousness grows and evolves as we get older, so does our collective consciousness. We no longer have priest-kings who rule our lives. Many human societies have democratic structures where freedom of information is considered to a fundamental value. Science is already a well established source of free information available to everyone and no longer has to struggle to define itself from religion. The lives of such

scientific martyrs as Copernicus to died because he insisted that the earth revolves around the sun were not in vain if we now begin to reunite spirit and science.

Science is already heading in the direction of defining spirituality, not only in my own research, but in the research of many others. Chaos mathematicians now speak of developing equations which define the face of god. They are doing extraordinary work demonstrating that even such random events such as water dripping out of a faucet or traffic patterns in large cities can be predicted and described by simple mathematical equations. Think of the fascinating implications of this research. Human behavior can be predicted by mathematical equations. As individuals, we seem to have free will. Each one of us can choose to drive on the freeway or not. Yet as a collective group, apparently we are predestined to behave in predictable ways.

The theoretical physicists tell us something similar about quantum theory and the nature of reality. They tell us that if we are not astonished by their findings, it is because we don't understand them. They have explained to me that everything that seems to be so real, disappears into difficult to defines energetic fields the closer one looks at the nature of matter. Furthermore, most of the matter in the universe, which has been measured by its effects for example on the movements of the planets and stars, doesn't seem to exist! Or least exists in ways that we currently understand.

It is clear that science needs spirituality to help to translate this remarkable scientific discovery into societal structures and institutions that reflect these new understandings of the universe.

Religion and spirituality similarly need to understand and integrate with this new science. Religious and spiritual influences on our daily lives continue to shrink. We long for morality and spirituality, and yet feel that the old religions are not relevant to our daily lives. This is reflected in the United States where church attendance is at an all time low and continues to fall.

More worrisome is the dominance of religious extremists, fundamental believers which have harsh and strident views that are not shared by mainstream society. Increasingly, in the United States and world wide, they are dominating the religious debate. As mainstream religions seem increasingly irrelevant, the fundamentalist sects start to become more and more influential as there is no one to check their views with any sense of moderation. As often occurs with any system out of balance, anger and intolerance have replaced spiritual values of love and harmony.

Even the new religions such as the New Age religions have become imbalanced. It is very ironic, as these religions were often started on the concepts of personal spiritual revelation and they were instrumental in popularizing for example the reality of near death experiences. As their ideas have been rejected by the mainstream, they have become sects with the imbalance and intolerance inherent in such sects. The Father of the science of Near Death Experiences, Raymond Moody, dramatically discuses this in his book "The Last Laugh". He describes the devolution of New Age beliefs in Near Death Experiences from a comprehensive vision of world peace and harmony to a sect-like intolerance of anyone who disagrees with their narrow belief systems. He calls them New Age Fundamentalists, just as extreme and out of balance at Fundamentalist Christians or Muslims.

It is now up to the science of spirituality to clarify the many contradictory religious and spiritual voices currently in society today. Just as science has evolved, and we see ancient scientists such as Aristotle as revered men of science who have little place in today's scientific progress, religion needs to do a similar housecleaning and put the older spiritual and religious views in their proper historical perspective.

Once this is done, religion and spirituality will become more accepted. Our society will become more stable once we have a new sense of religion and spirituality which reflects modern scientific principles.

People often ask me how we can develop our right temporal lobes to access this new understanding of spirituality. As stated above, the first step is to understand that these intuitive and spiritual events are already happening to us all the time. They are already happening to us, we just need the faith and courage to believe them.

How can we develop this faith and courage to believe in ourselves? I have explained that this area of the brain functions no differently than any other area of the brain. However, it is easier to believe in the function of our occipital lobes which generates visual images. We all have the same consensual view of visual reality. When I see a table, other people see roughly the same table, and we describe it to each other in ways we mutually agree upon.

Right temporal lobe perceptions are highly personal. When we describe them to others, they are often bewildered by our experience. For example, children often have very different near death experiences, and difficult ones to understand when only the surface descriptions are shared. For example, one child who is a boy scout describes his heavenly experience as being in a tent in a golden field. Another child who loves video games had the experience of meeting a wizard dressed in white who told him to "struggle and he would live". A third child, who has a very religious background, had the experience of meeting a person she thought was Jesus who "was very nice". It is only when we study all of these experiences as a group that we can make sense of them.

Spiritual visions are not like describing a table to each other to assure ourselves that a table is real. In fact, reflecting the societal confusion over the many ways that spiritual experiences can present themselves, many people are deeply troubled that their spiritual experience cannot be compared to someone else's in a way that both can recognize that they have the same experience.

There is, however, a simple spiritual exercise called Remote Viewing that any of us can do which can bridge this gap between the personal aspects of spiritual experiences and our shared reality. It was developed by the United States military during the cold war with the Soviet Union to see Soviet missile bases at a distance. It was part of the decision by President Carter to reject developing a mobile missile system as military planners advised him that Soviet Remote viewers could locate those missiles as they shuttled around the country. They were a large part of the successful effort of the United States military to find and capture Sadam Husseim. It is scientific proof that we have the ability to access the timeless space-less information in non-local reality.

Here is an example of a simple remote viewing experiment that anyone can do. Draw a picture

of something that has great emotional meaning for you. For example, I drew a series of concentric hearts with my fiancés name in the center. Pin it to the wall of a room that has hardly any furniture or obstructions to walking, with the picture facing the wall so only a blank page can be seen. Pin many other similar pieces of paper to the wall that don't have drawings on them. Have someone blind fold you, and spin you around in a circle.
Then, immediately think where the picture is, and mentally record the very first thought that comes as to the location of the picture. Don't analyze. Don't wonder if this is possible. Don't judge. Don't wonder if this is a ridiculous experiment. Don't wonder if people think that you look stupid. Don't wonder if the very first thought really represents the location of the picture. Don't accept your second or third guess. If you become confused, and have a lot of competing ideas of where the picture is, stop the experiment and start over. Just go with the very first thought that feels absolutely right.

When I did this experiment, I immediately thought that the picture was to my left, and casually walked over and put my finger directly in the center of the picture. I have done this experiment successfully with dozens of people. My favorite type of person to do it with is that person who claims that they have no psychic abilities at all. I love the look of wonderment and astonishment on their faces when they realize that they have correctly found their picture, just by viewing it in their minds.

If you are having trouble with this experiment, ask a child under the age of ten to do it. Tell them firmly that it is possible. For example, one reason that I was certain that I could do this was that first I saw my 10 year old son Cody do it again and again. Once he did it within seconds and then laughingly asked me to blindfold him again, and then went and found my picture. My 8 year old daughter Michaela also was able to do this, on her third attempt. Remember, put lots of blank pictures on the wall, and thoroughly spin the person around so that there can be little chance of finding the picture by coincidence even after the third try.

class=Section2>
Spiritual healing is also a right temporal lobe talent. It is extremely difficult to achieve, for the simple reason that it is extremely difficult to suspend analysis and judgment when dealing with your own life threatening disease. This is why many cases of spiritual healing occur after someone has given up any chance of recovery.

Conversely, the ability to listen to others without judgment or analysis can be extremely healing. Again, this is why it is often easier to be spiritual healed by strangers than by friends or family members. If, for example, someone needs to be healed of the effects of childhood sexual abuse, it can be very difficult for those who love such a person to suspend judgment and analysis and be part of the healing process. This explains the need for therapists in our lives, people who can distance themselves from us emotionally and be part of our healing process.

class=Section3>
There are numerous textbooks which explain more detailed ways of learning to remote view. One of them is by Joe McMoneagle called "Remote Viewing Secrets." I have found it a powerful

way to learn the basic techniques needed to connect with something spiritually aware people call "the divine" and spiritually handicapped people such as me call energetic fields of information that make up all of reality.

We all have a right temporal lobe, and we all have the ability to connect with this divine source of inspiration and information

SO ARE SPIRITUAL VISIONS AND INTUITIONS REAL?.

Spiritual visions and intuitions are as real as any other human experiences. We can trust the information in them, just as we can trust the information we receive from any other source. It usually is of a non-verbal and emotional nature, so it is often difficult to interpret. It often takes practice to understand how to use it to full advantage in our ordinary lives. It rarely contains logical and verbal information which explains why it rarely can be used to make money on the stock market or in the casino. Furthermore, they come from a timeless source, so using it to predict the future is difficult as there is no accurate sense of time contained in them. Their main purpose seems to be to give meaning to life and to anticipate and explain the events in our lives, particularly emotionally painful ones such as the loss of someone we love.

The nature of the experience is in itself proof of its realness. The information gained from the experience enhances and generates meaning and understandings within our ordinary lives. It is not information that can be created in the laboratory, and does not lend itself to scientific analysis. We can study the science of how we have these experiences, but just like information from any other source, we have to be the ones to learn how to apply it and understand it. I can read the Wall Street Journal everyday, but unless I understand how the stock market works, I will not be able to best use that information to wisely invest my money for my retirement. Spiritual information is no different. In the final analysis, spiritual information comes to us in a way that we can best understand it, through spiritual visions and intuitions that have meaning to us. How else could we best understand the real nature of it. The type of information needed for spiritual understandings is best packaged in spiritual visions and meanings. In the final analysis, that is the only proof that we have of a spiritual visions reality: Does it have a real meaning for us in our ordinary lives.