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“We must reassess mediums and spirits in light of the scientific advances of the times so that they can continue to guide us towards (enlightenment).” Chico Xavier (The Great Brazilian Medium)

This is a fabulous book, “orchestrated” by a spirit collective—The Risen—who have guided one of the authors—a “still-embodied” psychotherapist—in his life and even in his clinical practice. It takes trust, curiosity, and time to read this book—and you will be glad you did. The spirit collective—the Risen team—presents what could be seen as a renewed form of eighteenth-century *spiritism* consistent with both modern science and the latest developments in personal psychology. They emphasize that spirits, as people, are real and so their guidance and wisdom, which we can all access, are decidedly personal. They avoid the problems of religions, mediums, and spiritualists who insist that their religious and spiritual views are true for everyone, and instead support all journeys of personal growth.

In my many lengthy conversations with August, I have found him to be a real person who is wise, funny, and very down to earth. He openly discusses real spirits as sometimes assisting him in becoming a better psychotherapist. He does not advertise his mediumistic talents, and typically does not discuss his spirit guidance with his patients—unless the patient is touched by the same spirit energy intuitions and then raises these awarenesses on their own—and then they explore them together. In fact, often spirits will directly tell him *not* to mention their presence around a client. It’s waiting—not patience—that’s needed, he reemphasizes, to integrate spirit with our ordinary lives as well as with therapy.

When I first read The Risen, I realized it was a manual, the first such book I have read that addressed the practical issues involved with integrating unconditional love and spirit advice with the typical problems of everyday life. The issues all the other books seem to forget about, angry ex-wives, ungrateful children, substance abusing relatives who always need some sort of help, and the daily fight against sinking into depression or succumbing to anxiety.

I have studied near death experiences in children, for twenty years. They are truly transformed by the experience, growing up to be adults who see “anchoring the light” in their everyday lives as the most important lesson they learned from their encounters with spirits at the end of life. One man was told to “go back Bobby; you have a job to do”. His job was to run a construction company; that was his mission from the light. As he put it, “those idiots wouldn’t have jobs if it were not for me”. My greatest struggle in understanding these spiritual encounters is how to actually apply these

“lessons of the light” in our ordinary lives. I don’t want to wait until I die to learn the lessons of love that we clearly are meant to learn while alive.

I am frustrated that our society often seems to vacillate between the extremes of 1) treating all problems as if they are behavior issues which can be solved by therapy without spirit, or 2) treating all problems as if they only need unconditional love without boundaries or limits, and our psyches will simply mysteriously heal. The Risen presents a therapeutic model which is practical and focuses on how an individual makes decisions and functions in real life.

The Risen team infuses modern psychology with spiritual understandings, reinterpreting the art and science of the mind for the 21st century. For me, reading the book was similar to watching a brilliant landscape artist take an existing beautiful park and turn it into something astonishing. My wife and I immediately implemented many of the principles of the book in helping our seven-year old daughter deal with her severe oppositional defiance disorder. The Risen discusses problems of ego in which the self is determined to be powerful and “right” at the expense of happiness. The authors clearly outline a strategy which involves placing boundaries on the ego and bringing our daughter’s dysfunctional behaviors to her attention at all times. The crucial point is that she is already in conflict with herself, and confrontation will only fuel the on-going spiritual battle she is suffering, as the ego tramples her “authentic self”.

The authors recommend simply stating “this is something to think about” in a nonjudgmental way. Boundaries and limits should be clear and consistent, and presented with love so that the ego cannot use them as a further excuse to be angry. Before reading the book, we were confronting her with her behavior, and attempting to show her the consequences of what she was doing, (as if she didn’t know already). Our new approach involved simply focusing her attention on her behavior, making her aware without confrontation.

We used our same parenting approach, but dramatically changed our vocabulary in talking with her. We discussed the book with her therapist. Her therapist shared with us her own spiritual analysis of what was going on! We even started a “kindness rewards” program for our daughter at our local Boys and Girls club!

We as a family see a possible future free of her disorder. In other words, she still is a handful, but we have regained control of our family and hope for our future. My wish for the health care professionals and scientists reading this book is for the same kind of astonishment and reinvigoration as well.

It would appear that here is an innovative form of psychotherapy, blending spirituality and science in a way that at first appears to be rather counterintuitive and yet quickly begins to resonate as true on the deepest of emotional levels.

What a breath of fresh air the book is! We are all tired of either seeing a psychiatrist for a 15 minute appointment for medications, or spending an hour with a therapist discussing issues of the soul without ever discussing spirit! Our society desperately needs a new therapeutic model which integrates modern psychiatry, psychology, brain science, and spirituality, in a useful and “real life” way.

Well over two-thirds of alcohol and illegal drug use are not from true genetic forms of addiction but are in fact a form of self medication for grief, anxiety, anger and rage, feelings of injustice, depression, and addiction, which clearly now overwhelm most of society. More than one half of the drugs prescribed worldwide are for these issues. *The Risen* presents what could be called an innovative therapeutic template for integrating spirit into our daily struggles with this of angst and suffering. Interestingly, many of the newest evidence-based therapies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, EMDR, and ACT, contain the same underlying concepts inherent in this book.

The greatest initial barrier for me in reading the book was that it is asserted that the main author Tim as well as the Risen Collective are in fact spirits. Real spirits, talking to the author in a real way, not the sort of metaphysical spirituality our society has embraced for the past 100 plus years. Metaphysics means outside or above the physical world, Tim and The Risen are in fact actual spirits existing in this reality.

I don't know why I initially could not accept the concept that real spirits are dictating this book. As a Critical Care Physician, I studied children whom I personally resuscitated from physical death. They commonly see spirits, angels and a real god. They are emphatic that the experience is real, in fact “realer than real”. One child wouldn't tell anyone of her experience until I talked to her, as she was afraid others would think she was crazy for talking to a “real god, as real as us talking now”. Another boy told me that he met a real wizard who talked to him, “exactly like we are talking. Except I knew he was god, because of the knowledge in his voice”.

Studies of these experiences have been published in the most prestigious medical and scientific journals. The weight of the scientific evidence strongly suggests that the mind survives the death of the brain. A large portion of our brain is dedicated to processing spiritual perceptions and creating our understanding of them, in precisely the same way that we access visual information from our eyes, for example, and create a visual image of reality. With the discoveries of dark energy and dark matter, there is plenty of room in our current model of physical reality for real spirits to exist; after all, dark matter is made of precisely the same subatomic components which make up our bodies.

I think one problem is that in the past spiritualists, mediums and devout religious believers have too often tried to convince us to accept their beliefs. Our society is sensitized to immediately reject anyone who claims to know god or talk to spirits or angels. Most of us are put off by the typical approach that what a

spirit says must be true and should be immediately imposed upon the client (and often on complete strangers.)

Ultimately I overcame my personal barrier of having a hard time accepting that real spirits wrote this book for the following three reasons:

1) My wife Pauline pointed out that spiritual wisdom can only be obtained by the temporary suspension of judgment and analysis, left brain functions. It is our right brain which connects us to spiritual realities. Reading The Risen is very much a spiritual experience.

2) I discussed the book with my colleagues and was amazed to learn how many physicians, scientists and other professionals have spirit guides that help them in their work and daily lives. “Real spirits?” I asked them incredulously, and they would say “well, hmmm, uh, well, YES, real spirits”.

3) I had an experience several days after reading the book which, for me, proved the existence of spirit. This happened in the context of a remote viewing session that my wife and I did. Remote viewing is the ability of individuals to be able to draw and describe buildings and landscapes anywhere in the world without having any prior knowledge of what the “target” is. Remote viewers argue over whether or not they actually leave their bodies to view targets on the other side of the Earth, or whether their brains simply access that information from non local reality. It reminds me of a young boy, who in describing his near death experience told me “It was kind of like leaving my body, but also like walking into my mind”.

In 1995 I developed a theory of how our brains could actually physically link to this “god” (as my wife calls it) or source of all information. Now there are several well developed theories of how this could actually take place. I felt I had to learn how to remote view, to prove to myself that my theories are true, otherwise they would be just that, theories. My wife and I remote view as a team, and often work with another husband and wife team Mike and Susan, who live 2000 miles from us.

Several days after reading the book for the second time, Pauline and I successfully remote viewed an object at Mike’s house in Colorado. He then successfully remote viewed a small doll we placed on our dining room table. However, what made this experience unique was that suddenly we felt prickling sensations at the back of our necks, cold spots in the room, and many of the other features of spiritual events described in the book. Suddenly our two year old daughter looked up at the ceiling and we saw her eyes track something moving across the living room, and finally sitting at our dining room table. She jumped up, got her tea set, and started to serve our unseen visitor “tea”! Remember she is only two, too young for the imaginary friends seen in 3 and 4 year olds. Furthermore, she had never served tea to imaginary visitors before.

This all occurred at the exact time that Mike was remote viewing our home.

We have pictures of our daughter watching her unseen visitor and pouring him tea. We find this a perfect metaphor for what we have learned from this book. No skeptic would be convinced by this story or the pictures, as they easily could be faked. Spiritual encounters are highly personal. Science can help us to realize that they are possible, but our own lives provide the proof that they are real. The information in the experiences must have important to us, and give us real insights on how to live our lives.

August shared with me that one of his clinical suggestions to help people get in touch with spiritual realities is to have them sit silently in a park or natural setting, for 15 minutes. The usual response is that nobody has time or the inclination to “just sit and wait for nothing to happen.” However, everyone who has done this has reported that after a few minutes of initial boredom, they commenced noticing many things that begin to emerge, things that they might never have seen if they hadn’t waited. Curious little bugs dancing across a leaf; birds heard communicating intelligently to one another; the lights and shadows on the bark of a tree revealing intense coloration that hardly seemed possible five minutes ago. What happens is that at first, the physical senses are allowed to fully activate, bringing the awareness of being immersed in a physical environment. And then, because of waiting, the spiritual senses begin to unfold further out from the physical ones, extending, enlarging, and enriching the experience of that immersion. In this very organic and calm way, one becomes more aware of one’s physical reality, and in turn, one’s higher-vibrating spiritual realities.

This is also an excellent description of the processes of remote viewing. Remote viewing has the advantage that it is the one non-local perception which we can objectively validate, as the targets exist within this reality, but hidden from our ordinary senses.

Our culture has denied spiritual matters for so long that we lack a common understanding or context for encounters with spirit. Sadly, and far too often, the hallmark of the authentic spiritual experience in the 21st century begins with “you’re going to think I’m crazy, but—”. We have trivialized spiritual issues and turned them into medical pathology. In turn, this trivializes the human spirit and stunts its ability to heal, grow, and transform.

As a medical scientist, I can well understand the anxiety that may arise from discussing real spirit people as giving us advice in our daily lives. In his brilliant book, *A Candle in the Darkness*, Carl Sagan best summarizes the concern that irrational beliefs will cause us to lose all of the hard fought advances of science and rational thinking in the past 200 years. As he points out, it was only a few hundred years ago that over 40,000 women were burnt at the stake as witches. This occurred because of superstitious irrational thinking, where one system of religious and spiritual beliefs permitted people to kill and persecute people with different ideas about reality. It was the science of the last great Age of Enlightenment that raised mankind out of the superstitions of the Dark and Middle ages. The authors of *The Risen* assert that it will be the science of a new dawning Age of Enlightenment that will raise mankind out of the superstitions of scientific materialism.

I have a good friend, Pierre Jovanovich, who was an investigative journalist. He wrote the definitive book on the reality of angels, *An Inquiry Into the Existence of Guardian Angels*. He frequently speaks of his angels as being present in the room, constantly giving him advice. Since his “angels” once saved him from a sniper’s bullet, then helped him make a fortune on the stock market (as well as avoiding losing,) and then become a successful publisher, they clearly are *functional* for him. I strongly suspect that most rational scientists and psychiatrists would give anything to be able to communicate with Pierre’s angels. By the way, he concludes in his 647-page book on angels that they are “real, powerful, and funny.” If you doubt the existence of angels in your life, he challenges you to spend 30 days paying careful attention to even the tiniest details of your life—keep a journal of everything that happens to you. Almost everyone I know who has taken Pierre’s challenge now believes in angels.

In my discussions with August, he has stressed that spirit communications are for personal growth and understanding. By listening to the wise suggestions of spirit guides, we can gain extraordinary understanding of ordinary problems, and advance ourselves to even greater understandings of the true meaning of life for us. It is this sense of meaning that is so often missing in modern life. The lack of meaning and connectedness to our spirit self is, in fact, a common reason for mental dysfunction and unhappiness. In other words—and bluntly—perhaps the lack of angels and spirit guides in our lives causes us to become crazy.

I once remarked to August that this book takes patience to read. His response was that it’s really a matter of *waiting*, meaning allowing one’s own personal and authentic sense of time to enable the process of understanding to organically unfold. “Patience” implies impatience, which reveals the duality-seeking ego-mind—which cannot wait, for it insists on instant gratification.

The Risen will give you the knowledge and courage to believe what you already know is true. When I was a medical student at Johns Hopkins University, the Dean of American Pediatricians, Frank Oski, spoke to us of how an angel helped him to be a better doctor. We had just seen a patient die of heart disease at a young age. We were so discouraged that we no longer wanted to be pediatricians. Dr. Oski told us that when he was a medical student a similar thing had happened to him, where a patient died of heart disease at age 3, in spite of the team’s best efforts. He shared with us that that night an angel appeared to him, and told him that children who die at an early age know secrets of living that cannot be learned in any other way. The angel told him that we continue on, again and again, our mind being eternal and existing in a series of physical realities. In this model, the brain does not create the mind, but rather the brain exists to allow the mind to interact with this reality.

Dr. Oski also said that he was not asking us to believe his story, but rather to open our hearts to the possibilities of angels and spirits in our lives. He affirmed that it stretches our sense of humanity to understand that life is filled with such “ordinary miracles” as seeing spirits and angels.

Consider *The Risen* to be a travel guide for the ordinary miracles waiting to enrich your life.