

Lessons from a Near-Death Experience (Complete Version)

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It was May 17, 1988 and a typical sunny, hot and humid spring afternoon. I was driving home from work later than usual and noticed dark clouds in the direction of my home. I knew I'd have to get there quick if I was going to make it home before the heavens cut loose. That's the last thing I remember...

... I was in a ditch in a torrential thunderstorm with people holding umbrellas over me. A van hit me head on, crashed through my windshield directly into my head. Not much face left. Scalp torn off. Blowout fracture of my left eye with glass embedded everywhere.

The first thing I remember was the faint sound of voices and fuzzy light. I was in the emergency room. Little skin covered my face and with no eyelid, the bright ceiling lights hurt like hell. When I woke up 2 days later, I was told I had two 6-hour surgeries in the first 24 hours. One to remove the mud, grass, glass and the van's white paint from my open head, and to stitch up my quote "hamburger" skin and scalp. They opened me up again to fix what they could: broken bones, severed muscles and nerves; and to re-create my shattered left eye orbit. Yep, my eye was just hanging there.

That began months that stretched into years of physical and emotional loss. Loss of my face and vision in my left eye, loss of my short-term memory (too bad they didn't know about TBI's in those days), constant panic attacks (too bad no one told me about PTSD), loss of my husband (yeah, he left), loss of my family (yeah, they didn't come around), loss of my job, and a huge 22-acre farm that had only me for its care. Real hard to find the blessings in that, right? But when you're brought to your knees, miracles begin to happen.

The emotional pain of so much loss left me pleading to God for answers. Why did this happen to me? Why do I have to suffer so? I said to myself daily "I don't know if I can take one more thing", and then something else would happen. It was a stripping of my ego, piece by piece. My tormented human self was ripped wide open allowing Grace to enter.

To survive, I had no choice but to reach out to others, and to my amazement, perfect strangers did what my own family and friends could not do. These surprises of kindness and generosity were the greatest miracles in my life. I didn't get what I wanted, but I got what I needed in spades.

The memory of being on the "other side" didn't come right away, but I knew I was different. I felt AWAKE. My senses were blasted open to a hyper-awareness of everything. I felt more compassion for others, a deeper connection with nature, a need for more quiet and contemplation, and I was acutely conscious of why we're here. I felt complete empathy with the wellbeing of ALL life here on Earth and the Cosmos. Both suffering and enlightenment were happening simultaneously. I was experiencing a spiritual awakening.

Within me was a "knowing", an understanding of the interconnectedness and Oneness of all of life. My thirst for information was insatiable as I delved into metaphysics and energy healing with a passion: reading, sharing with like-minded people and studying Energy Medicine therapies, where I not only learned to heal, but I also received countless healings! Miracles overflowed.

Memories of the other side came in bits and pieces. Immediately I knew my deceased grandmother was with me when I died; I felt her presence often in the months following. My first actual memory of death was total darkness and quiet, feeling free of all pain and suffering. I knew the Light was on the other side of the curtain of darkness, but I wasn't allowed to continue. I pleaded to go to the Light, but I was "told" I had to go back.

Later in 1990, while receiving a profound healing session, I had a vivid experience of standing in a doorway threshold up in the sky. Behind me was total darkness and in front of me was blue sky with puffy white clouds. Suddenly my grandmother appeared in front of me, floating and holding her hands out to me. I knew she wanted me to come with her, but I was frozen in place not knowing what to do. She "said" don't be afraid, that everything would all be alright. So I reached for her hands, and as soon as our hands touched, I landed hard back into my body. It was extremely painful to suddenly be in a physical body after experiencing complete freedom from it. The physical mind/ body are dense and slow; being free of it allows Divine Intelligence/Love to flood your consciousness! The same out-of-body experiences can be reached through meditation, dreams and with the guidance of a qualified practitioner.

I still feel my grandmother's presence. And reflecting on what I experienced on the other side has been a great comfort to me over the years. My rebirth into a new life of being wholly awake continues to unfold in ways that amaze me. It's challenging sometimes especially now with so much violence and hate in the world. But to this day, I'm so grateful for what happened to me. If it hadn't happened, I wouldn't be sharing this with you.

Namaste.

Anne Christine Tooley has studied, researched, practiced and taught **Vibrational Energy Medicine** since 1991. She resides in North Carolina and may be reached at www.energyandvibration.com and www.luminanti.com.