

MESSAGES

by Kris Williams

"Who am I?" That's what they wanted to know in the hospital when I regained consciousness. Who am I? How does one answer that? A woman, I could say. I could also answer that I'm a person who did plumbing and electrical work to support herself through school. I've travelled all over the world; but I tell any that listen that I travelled more during what I now know is a "near-death experience" than I have in my entire life.

On April 27, 1993, I was admitted to Northwest Hospital's emergency room in a coma, unable to keep down food, with a temperature of 101. My blood-sugar level had soared to 976. For a diabetic, a sustained level of 950 is almost certain death. My blood pressure dropped down to practically zero.

I didn't travel through a tunnel. I was just "there." And there to greet me was Uncle Al, who had died of diabetic complications when I was ten. At that young age I had also had diabetes, and had believed my life would be like his, that I, too, would eventually die of diabetic complications at the age of 40. In the coma, at the hospital, I was now 40. The first thing he said to me was, "This isn't your contract! It was my contract!" "Furthermore," he went on, "I didn't die of diabetes. The real cause of my death was that I missed Joyce." Joyce had been his wife, who had died of tuberculosis a year prior to his death. "I needed to go see her. And so I did. But I was not tied to that 40 year limit if I didn't want to be." Then he added, "But the year I left you discovered something physically about yourself that was also true about me. And because of that, you took on all the contract, and you don't have to have that contract."

It seems like I'm describing "talking," but that word, and the other words of our sensory world, like "touching" and "seeing" are not even close to what I experienced. Communication seemed to take place all at once, not divided by words, and barely divided by individuals. "Seeing" was vivid, so much so that being here is like participating in a black and white movie after having experienced color. What I "saw" wasn't bodies, the way we think of bodies, but only shapes, as in shoulder profiles and head "shapes." There weren't any faces as we recognize them, they were more like shadows, or a thumbprint or a scuff.

Yet, I knew exactly to whom I was speaking. I was speaking to my Uncle Eldon, who had died when he was three years old, before I was born. He talked to me about his life on earth, what it had been like, how short it had been. He talked about why he had come.

I was amazed that in terms of their "essence," there was no difference between "people" I encountered here, and those on the earth plain. I was with many of my father's siblings: Mary, Ann, and Hank. My Grandpa, Mitchell Shults, was there, with his brother Issac. Each of them gave me messages for their children who are alive, and said "since you're going back," and I hadn't agreed yet, "we have some things we'd like you to tell them." They told me things that only they and their children would know about.

During the entire near-death experience, I felt as though I was standing in a high place, surrounded by thousands of people as far as the eye could see, holding out their hands to me, in loving connectiveness, offering support. The closest comparison I can give is that once I was in a crowd of 200,000 when Pavarotti sang in Central Park, New York City. It was like all of those people together listening to me. They seemed to be saying, "Do what you need to do," while loving me no matter what choice I made, to stay or return. I had total choice, 100%. At the same time, I could also feel a tremendous amount of caring coming from the four people who took turns staying by my bedside at the hospital: my husband Hunter, my sister Kae, and Judy and Elizabeth.

A choice. I looked at it and decided that when you're from eternity, you know it's not going to be very long before you're back. So I said, "Sure, I can do that. I can deliver those messages." I returned to that cold slab of meat defined as my body. It was painful. There was now too much that was me stuffed inside too small a container. I searched through the files trying to find words that BEST expressed what I knew.

Learning to speak again, learning to be here again, was like learning to be on what I call, "The Flat Planet," a pancake reality where everything is kind of ironed out and two dimensional. And feelings. Even though I've been empathetic to other peoples' feelings my whole life, my sensitivity was boosted even more by my NDE. Around many people, for instance, I pick up what seems like a blaring boombox of four or five different radio stations of emotion at once. There have also been times, when my husband and I have been driving down the road, that I've not only been aware of the emotions of the people in the next car, but have been able to tell Hunter their complete life story. For a while this made me feel like I was going crazy.

I called my cousin Edith, who lives in Dallas, Oregon. My intent was to get together with her and communicate the messages she should receive. Unbeknownst to me, she had called all the relatives on my father's side of the family. When we gathered in June I was speaking to 35 of my relations at a picnic lunch.

My life's observation has been that Christian secularism can be very divisive. It has been so in my family. The three uncles for whom I was carrying messages had been excommunicated from the same church attended by most of those at this picnic. It was a surprise, then, to discover that what I had to say became a healing experience for everyone. An unspoken message seemed to be heard by all, that we are part of a larger family.

It was interesting that my cousin Susan, for whom I had the most pointed message from my Uncle Al, was also the one who most easily tossed aside what I had to say, just as he'd predicted she would. But he'd said, "Tell her anyway. She'll think about it." Some of the telling was poignant. My cousin Edith, who misses my Aunt Mary very much, needed to hear what Aunt Mary said to tell her, that, "The glass is very thin, and you're just on the other side of the one-way mirror. I can always see you. It's just sometimes you only see yourself when you look out at the mirror." Then there was the message from my Uncle Al to me. That I had chosen a path I didn't need to chose. That believing I would die at the age of 40 from diabetes could bring it about.

One of the memories I returned with from my near-death experience was of almost dying when I was three days old. I asked my mother about this and she said, "Yes, we came into your room, and you weren't breathing." My parents were very devout Christians, and threw themselves on their knees, begging God to let me stay. And I did, only for them. But in coming back and being here, I remembered that it is not my first choice, but my second choice to be here. And it is only a little time.

Editor's note: Kris Williams died on November 16, 1993. Her husband Hunter said that her death was caused by a heart attack, brought on by diabetic complications. In the hospital, when it became apparent that all vital signs had ceased, both he and Kris' sister Kae approached her body at separate times. On each occasion her heart beat resumed momentarily, but was not sustained. At that point Kae and Hunter informed the medical team that they believed they were not only dealing with a broken organ, but a spirit that acknowledged them, but wasn't desirous of returning.