

I got married when I was very young, at the age of 19. I think I wanted an easy way out, a Cinderella type of marriage. Then my dream became real and I allowed this charming man who so demonstratively wanted me in his life to sweep me off my feet. Two weeks later things changed radically when I discovered that my new husband resolved his life conflicts with physical violence toward me. I could not convince people of the extent of the physical abuse. This was North Carolina in 1972, and my own experience was that this was fairly common treatment for women then. My doctor accused me of being a "Momma's girl." He advised me to stop making my husband angry. The police claimed they couldn't act unless something was broken, or I had extensive bruises, or there was a witness. Somehow I felt I was to blame. That's part of the dysfunction of co-dependency; because we love somebody so much we can't imagine why they would hit us unless we provoked them.

One particular afternoon he came into the kitchen, upset about the golf game he'd had that day. In the past, when he'd had a bad game, it was my fault because I hadn't straightened the house enough, or I'd upset him in other ways before he went out. We began to argue. Things moved quickly. He came up, grabbed me around my neck with both hands, and pushed me up against the wall, lifting me off my feet. I weigh 105 lbs. He was screaming. He was furious. At that point I realized that I was in a situation where I had no control. He began to squeeze my neck harder, and I struggled to breathe. Then I realized that his rage was beyond his control as well, and a calmness came over me when I accepted the realization that I would probably die. Gradually I felt more peaceful and kind of floaty.

About an arm's length away, on the left side of me above my head, I became aware of a presence. I couldn't see this "being" with my eyes, but I knew it was there. With my mind's eye I sensed a man in a robe. And I felt so loved and so peaceful! My consciousness went over to him. With that he asked me telepathically, "Are you ready?" It was more of a feeling than a thought. I answered, "What about my daughter?" She was close to two years old, and I was very concerned about her life. My physical vision was a blur, fading toward blackness. But to the right of this being I was shown my daughter's life from this point, in the kitchen, onward until she would become a teenager. She would live with her grandmother. She would be loved. I saw highlights, details, episodes in which she would be well taken care of. She would be happy. With that I relaxed even more and felt a release in my heart. Then it was almost like he implied, "Are you ready now?" And I said, "Yes."

Now to the left of him I saw the life I had lived. This was very quick compared to what I had seen of my daughter's future. It was almost like flip cards being flashed. My senses were now almost completely shut down. I could no longer hear my husband's screams. After a surreal glimpse of the stove below, I began to feel myself being drawn upward, like a magnet. With that I wondered "What's going on? Will I float through the rafters?" I became a little scared because I didn't know how to do this!

But with that apprehension the peace returned, and "Poof" everything went dark. I was being pulled upward by my chest through a very warm, very vast, very dark space. It was a nighttime darkness in which I could still see my hands. I looked up ahead, very much above and further out, and in the distance I saw a light around what appeared to be a tunnel opening. As I flowed up toward this I felt so wonderful! It was peaceful and calm and warm! And that feeling of love, just unconditional love! And order. Everything just made so much sense. Not like the order of rules and regulations, but like a tree growing with a natural order.

As I approached I noticed people milling around the light of the opening. And I thought, "Oh, this is the Welcoming Committee." They looked like regular folks in street clothes, and I sensed that their purpose was to greet people coming across. They noticed my arrival and alerted one man who glanced at a clip board. I saw a concerned look cross his face. The next thing I knew he had floated down in front of me.

There we were, floating in space, he about 2 or 3 feet away and I felt wonderful! For some reason I knew this man as "Uncle." And I remember thinking, "I don't have an uncle that looks like him," although I have uncles on my father's side I've never met. And he looked down at me and said very lovingly "It's not time for you to be here." And I think there was even a "Go back." But I had no conscious recollection of earth, though I knew I'd come from somewhere. All I knew was that with all my heart I wanted to be there. I wanted to go Home. So I looked at him with a great big smile and a beaming heart and said, "But I want to be here. I want to go home."

He hesitated, as though deciding about whether to say something. With that he impressed in my mind a picture, a memory of my original agreement for coming to earth to begin with. It was like a contract. And with that I remembered and I went, "Oh, right. Right!" I know this sounds odd, but then I looked down into this picture that was in my mind's eye and saw earth and thousands of others who were like me all over the world, helping people. Then he showed me what was going to happen: that a great Light was going to come down, that every human being would then be touched by this Light, as though by a chain reaction, and that the world would be changed. Then he said, "We need you there." I knew he was right. And with that I felt myself fall back into my body.

All was quiet. I opened my eyes. I could see my husband, still in a rage, screaming. Gradually the sound returned and I heard him screaming, "Aren't you afraid of me yet, bitch?" I don't know how I was able to say anything to him because I had no air in my lungs. But I do remember feeling very calm and certain, and saying, "No, for you'll send me to my Father." I don't even know where the words came from. With that I think he was shocked, as though he got a jolt, and snapped back to an awareness that he was out of control. He withdrew his hands from my neck and I dropped to the floor. He left the building, screaming and muttering, then drove away.

My first impression was of tremendous calmness. Even though I'd just escaped a dangerous situation, I felt no fear. In fact, as I got up and walked around, there was almost a euphoric feeling of centeredness and being in a loving state. This lasted for about 10 to 15 minutes. Then, as I continued to move around the room, I felt all the things I think about in this world, and all my worries, rush in as if the wind had blown a door open and just "whoosh" right into me. And I remember feeling kind of sad about that, thinking, "It's back."

For a while I was so affected by this near-death experience that I got caught up in a sense of being on a divine mission that would somehow protect me, so that my life would go smoothly from there on out. I learned quickly that such was not the case. But then I realized that the worst that could happen in any situation was that I'd die, and that wasn't too bad. That renewed my courage and my sense of invulnerability to life. After almost a year, with no support from anyone, I was finally able to divorce this man.

When I had this experience my impression was that the Light would arrive in my early 40s. I am now 41. My NDE has led me to believe that we all have Love and Light inside each of us, but that we don't listen to this. I see us listening to the fear on the outside of us instead and, like a blanket of fog, we pull this fear around ourselves. Similar to the worst day in a foggy village then, I think we can walk down the street and not even see our neighbor for the fear and anxiety. When the Light arrives, as I saw it in my NDE, I believe we will all become so bright that this fog will dissipate. Until then, with our own Light, we can perhaps begin the slow process of lifting it.