

Extract

A big surprise, sometimes coupled with confusion, or disorientation, arises when those affected suddenly realize that they are no longer within their own body. One hovers above the scene of the accident, the operating table, the hospital bed, or whatever, and shows no interest in one's own body any more. It lies like a cast-off, no longer needed, piece of clothing. The I-ego, the personality, the soul has obviously separated itself from the body, and this extra-something has impressive capabilities: it can see, hear, register, think, retain etc., and all this in a much clearer measure than it is possible for us during the period that we alone are used to calling "life". Our senses allow us to recognize reality, but also restrict it, as Kant has already claimed. In near-death experiences our ability to recognize is obviously extended. Those who have experienced this out-of-body activity claim that they are considerably livelier than ever before. Dying is obviously really something different.

One can leave a room, think about being somewhere else and go there instantly. Walls and other objects offer no hindrances or limitations to the possibilities.

What makes these out-of-body experiences so tremendously interesting and important is the fact that the reports can be verified as to their accuracy. One of the first to do this was an American heart surgeon, called Michael Sabom. Admittedly he didn't do this to document the accuracy of these experiences, rather for a completely different reason. He wanted to show and prove to the world, that all these near-death experiences were nothing but humbug, brought about by a hiccup in the brain's metabolism. He was convinced that an examination of the out-of-body experiences would establish these as hallucinations of one sort or another. Possibly even a confused dream. How can it be possible, he asked himself, for a person in deep narcosis or other form of unconsciousness, whose eyes are covered and who is suffering from cardiac arrest or some other complication, nevertheless perceive something which corresponds to reality? This is simply not possible. For this to happen the central nervous system must function, which surely does not occur under the circumstances described above. This was his unshakable opinion. And it is of course clear, that if the verified reports from

the status of the out-of-body state aren't accurate, then one can confidently discard all other experiences, including those which are to be presented later in this text.

He arranged all the appropriate examinations and was, as he said in a ZDF program, as if struck on the head with a club. The reason being that just about everything his patients had told him about out-of-body experiences was confirmed by the appropriate investigations. What had impressed him the most was the exactitude of the patients narration. Since that time there has been an abundance of examples which have been repeatedly confirmed by Sabom's work. Now Sabom had been hoisted by his own petard. What right, he asked himself, had he to maintain that that which is non-provable is absurd, when the verifiable all transpire to be correct? None at all! This was the only honorable answer. Thus one of the fiercest critics of near-death experiences became one of its staunchest and most competent supporters. These experiences are not concerned with wool-gathering or other illusions, rather about illustrations of one of a largely unknown new sort of existence. I am much more than just my body.