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WHERE THE  
*Light*  
BEGINS

Stories of Near-Death Experiences and  
After-Death Communications by Children and  
How They Experience Them Differently Than Adults

Daniela Klose and Ralph Klose

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### Where the Light Begins

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Daniela Klose and Ralph Klose

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## How Children Experience Consciousness Differently

Sometimes children say things that defy explanation. Remarkable observations of what happens when consciousness loosens its hold on the body. They speak of a light that is not brightness, but presence; and describe moments in which their familiar sense of self dissolves while something else quietly emerges.

The accounts might begin quietly. A child says over breakfast:

“I think I came back into something that no longer fits me.”

A gaze lingers as if reaching beyond time. They draw circles of light or a bridge that leads nowhere and everywhere. And when they recount what they have experienced, their language is sensory, intuitive, and image based—yet the words carry emotional coherence and extraordinary depth.

Near-death experiences have long challenged the boundaries of medicine, psychology, and neuroscience. They occur under extreme conditions, such as cardiac arrest, trauma, or terminal illness, when we might expect consciousness to be absent. And yet, the reports from those who survived—detailing radiant light, panoramic memory, or lucid perception—are consistent across cultures. Their descriptions of

these experiences open a window into a deeper layer of life, one that transcends the traditional boundaries between self and other, between body and spirit.

Children speak differently about death. They do not describe it as a boundary, an end, or an enemy but as a space, a meeting, or a return. They often speak of it unprompted, without fear, and with a clarity that unsettles and illuminates. In some cases, the child's experience does not come with a clear narrative but reflects a presence—or more precisely, a resonance, a tone, perception. They might describe not only what they saw or remembered, but also how the experience has shaped the way they interact with the world.

Children's words are also quieter, deeper than any argument. Unlike adults, they often speak without religious, metaphysical, or doctrinal framing. Their descriptions are direct; yet they are symbolic, sometimes beyond language, and notably constant. Children's words do not seek persuasion. They simply describe what they experience, without context or expectation. They might not have a memory of what was learned, but a sense of something returned to, the kind of knowledge that comes before language can shape their ideas.

This kind of remembering moves in a dimension where rational thought falls silent. When we truly listen to them, something rare opens—a light of stillness where concepts give way to contact, and a new understanding of consciousness begins.

In transpersonal psychology, such experiences are sometimes described as *pre-symbolic*, felt and known before we have words, concepts, or explanations for them. In children, this mode of awareness is especially visible.

Young children have not yet fully developed the cognitive structures responsible for linear thought, self-reflection, and moral evaluation. They might not yet experience a sense of self in the way

adults do. Perhaps this openness, the absence of internal filters, allows more directness. What in adults is overlaid by fear, narrative, or belief appears in children in its most essential form. Sound becomes color. Light becomes presence. Time softens. The boundary between inside and outside dissolves. And what remains is the kind of knowledge that cannot be taught: “I was there” or “And that was good.”

### What Science Tells Us

Near-death experiences occur regardless of a person’s religious background, including in people who are unfamiliar with terms such as heaven, angel, or life after death. The children’s statements are not to be understood as formulations borrowed from others, but rather as emerging from within themselves. For this very reason, because they are not shaped by belief systems, children’s near-death experiences are considered particularly insightful in research. They arise from direct, immediate experience.

This directness is not naïve. It is unfiltered. It reveals a dimension of experience that resists classification because it requires none. What children describe is a form of knowledge and a memory of something that lies deeper than words. They point to a mode of perception that exists beyond neural patterns or cultural conditioning, a form of awareness that they encounter.

Classical science has offered us many answers about children’s thought processes, through measurements, electrical impulses, neuronal activity patterns, and chemical signatures in the blood. And yet one question remains, one that no instrument can fully answer: What do children truly experience? What about the inner world that cannot be captured in a diagram?

Experience rarely follows a formula. A child says: “It was light, but it wasn’t bright” or “It was quiet but not empty.” And sometimes, these

sentences appear: “I was no longer me” or “Everything was there, all at once.”

How can we explain that? Perhaps not through neurochemistry, or through synaptic networks. Perhaps only through something deeper, which we might call resonance.

Many children also describe impressions that feel like a remembering, but of things they could never have lived, such as colors, spaces, voices, patterns, or a unique kind of light. Perhaps memory is not a function of neural storage, rather access to a deeper pattern that is remembered because it was never lost. When children say those sentences, they are not confused. They speak from a zone beyond language.

What if what we call the self does not reside in the brain, but in a nonlocal field, a conscious structure beyond space that manifests through the brain but is not produced by it? When the self dissolves and yet everything is felt, we might enter a realm where particles have no boundaries, and the light is a remembering from within.

Current neuroscience locates consciousness in neural networks, electrical patterns, and biochemical processes. Under general anesthesia or during cardiac arrest, when brain activity falls below the threshold of integration, conventional models predict that consciousness ceases completely. However, the studies by critical-care physician and near-death researcher Dr. Sam Parnia on cardiac arrest survivors show that vivid and structured inner experiences do occur, even in the absence of measurable cortical activity.

Researchers such as Melvin Morse, Pim van Lommel, and Bruce Greyson have documented cases where children reported details they could not have seen or heard, such as descriptions of deceased relatives they had never known or scenes they had not witnessed. Some researchers interpret these experiences as neurological artifacts

## How Children Experience Consciousness Differently

such as oxygen deprivation, brain chemistry shifts, or psychological defense mechanisms. Others suggest that such experiences challenge the assumption that consciousness arises solely from brain function. The idea of nonlocal consciousness, which researchers in transpersonal psychology, quantum theory, and philosophy of mind explore, opens a space of wonder.

What if consciousness is a current rather than a possession? We are neither its origin nor its goal, but rather, a shining point in its flow. Carl Jung spoke of the *collective unconscious* as a shared psychic realm where archetypal images, symbols, patterns, and human forms reside that are not learned but remembered. What if this collective field is psychologically and physically real? It would be a consciousness space in which we are all connected, through pattern shapes of being.

Perhaps we sense this field most clearly when matter falls silent, because the brain stops filtering, death approaches, or life momentarily pauses. Perhaps what we call “near-death” was never an end but a brief glimpse into the order behind all things.

### How These Stories Reached Us

The accounts that follow came to us gradually, over years, through conversations, drawings, and recollections. Time and again, we were struck by the clarity of the simplest sentences and statements. Some of the most vivid reports emerged from our long-standing work as palliative care counselors in hospices. We heard these stories in quiet moments with families, caregivers, and sometimes the children themselves. Based on our experience in the fields of psychology, cognitive science, and consciousness research, we began to ask ourselves a question: What underlying causes could give rise to these accounts?

Children have described near-death experiences, after-death communications, and the precognition of future events across cultural, familial, and medical contexts. *Where the Light Begins* addresses all three. Some of these accounts stem from structured interviews and research while others are from personal accounts or therapeutic conversations. All names and identifying details have been changed to preserve privacy. What remains is true. Each case is accompanied by a scientific commentary that helps contextualize what the child has experienced and explores possible causes. The reflection that follows each thematic set of cases invites contemplation.

Our work grounded in psychology, medicine, the humanities, and personal engagement is not seeking proof, and this book does not present a theory. It is a movement toward experiences that resist language and yet call to be shared. The cases discussed in this book invite us to rethink how we talk about life, ourselves, and reality. We do not need to name everything to recognize it. Sometimes it is enough to pause and listen to our inner voice. What if the child within us was never lost but just silent? What we know most deeply might not be knowledge but a light that sustains, recognizes, and provides orientation: a movement, a breath, a glance at the sky, a calmness within us.

We approach these stories with an openness to hear what calls from within. We are listening to what these experiences suggest about consciousness, identity, and time.

It is now an invitation to you: to pause, to listen, and to remember.

## Family Members, Nature, and Animals

When children recount their near-death experiences, their words are vivid and clear, yet not analytical. They are lived moments. They do not explain; they touch. And perhaps because of this, they move us more deeply than explanation ever could. Their power lies in what they awaken within us: an echo, a resonance, and a quiet recognition that we never fully lost.

Perhaps children do not recall specific events but an in-between, a state without names. A presence beyond time and space.

In many accounts of near-death experiences, individuals report profound encounters with nature: endless skies, flowing rivers, or radiant, all-encompassing sunlight. In such accounts, nature does not merely serve as a background but as a vivid and meaningful force.

Likewise, many people describe encounters with other beings during these threshold experiences. These beings range from hard-to-describe entities to deceased loved ones who appear as comforting companions, often bearing reassuring messages or simply offering a silent, yet deeply felt, presence.

Animals also have their place in some near-death experiences. Beloved pets that have passed away make an appearance, or animals emerge in symbolic forms: snakes, bears, lions, or horses such as those described in the accounts of indigenous cultures, where they play a significant spiritual role.

In accounts of adults' near-death experiences, animals tend to be just one part of a broader scenario, often together with deceased relatives or other beings. But when children relate their near-death experiences, animals or deceased pets often appear as central attachment figures and emotional companions in the transition from life to death.

Animals and pets can also play a significant role after a child returns from the threshold of death. Some children who came back from this brink form a connection with animals that goes beyond the usual child-animal bond.



*Eli*

## The Boy and the Girl in the Light

At the age of ten, Eli's life came to an abrupt halt. An accident happened on his way home from school. It was a winter day with wet roads and poor visibility, and a driver failed to see the child on his bicycle.

In a single moment, everything changed. Eli sustained severe internal injuries, a concussion, and a brief cardiac arrest. He was resuscitated at the scene. In the hospital, doctors placed him in a medically induced coma to stabilize his condition and to protect his brain. For thirty-nine hours, he remained unconscious. During the state of unconsciousness, something happened that no one could explain.

When Eli awoke, he was calm and quiet. He was not disoriented or crying. At first, he did not speak. Later, when he began to talk, his words were simple, clear, and undramatic.

"I was in a bright place," he said. "There was a girl and she knew me. And I knew right away she was my sister."

He described how the girl smiled at him and held his hand. There were no words—just presence and light.

"I had the feeling," he later added, "that she was there to tell me everything was okay."

For his parents, the story was unsettling. Eli was considered an only child. He had never been told of a sister. However, that night while he lay unconscious in the hospital, his half-sister—a child from one of his father’s earlier relationships—died in a car accident in another city. Eli had never met her. He had never heard her name. Her photo was not present in the home. The news of her death reached the family only after Eli had already been admitted to the hospital.

Later, when he was cautiously shown a photograph, he responded without hesitation.

“That’s her!” he said. “That’s how she looked when she held my hand.”

He never spoke much about the experience, and he did not ask questions. However, he seemed more attentive than he had been prior to his accident. He listened with greater calmness, and he responded with fewer words and deeper clarity. He noticed things more quickly. When asked whether he was afraid of death, he paused and replied with quiet certainty:

“No. Not anymore. It doesn’t feel like an end. It feels like meeting again.”

### Scientific Commentary

Eli’s experience belongs to the rare but strikingly documented cases of so-called “Peak-in-Darien” reports, near-death experiences in which persons see deceased individuals whose death was unknown to them at the time of the experience. These cases are considered particularly difficult to explain as they appear to access information that would not normally be available to consciousness under ordinary circumstances.

From a clinical perspective, Eli was unconscious due to a traumatic brain injury, internal bleeding, and a medically induced coma. Such states are considered devoid of perception. Cortical activity is reduced

and sensory stimuli barely register. However, Eli reports—in a clear, specific, and emotional way—an encounter with a deceased person whose existence was previously unknown to him. He recognized the girl as his sister, who coincidentally died at the very same time. He knew who she was without any connection, prior knowledge, or external indication.

From the perspective of conventional neuroscience, such a case presents a serious challenge. There are no neurological mechanisms to explain the reported content, nor any known biochemical or electrical processes that would allow a transmission of information of this kind across spatial distance and without any sensory input. Even episodic memory has no explanatory basis here. What remains is the possibility of nonlocal perception, a form of consciousness which is not based on neural storage, but on connection.

In quantum physics, there are models that—at least theoretically—allow such phenomena. Concepts such as *entanglement*, *nonlocality*, and *morphic fields* point to a reality in which information is shared simultaneously. Biologist Rupert Sheldrake describes these fields as *patterns of resonance*: structures that remain connected across time and space, while being capable of influencing one another. In this sense, consciousness might not arise in isolation within the brain but be part of a larger field with which the brain sustains relationship.

Eli did not say much, and he did not interpret or seek explanations. His words were precise, shaped by certainty. This is exactly what makes children's near-death experiences so unique: They are calm. They do not interpret—they reveal. They do not describe ideas of an afterlife but instead testify to an experience.



*Tiago*

## The River That Knew My Name

This transcultural account from the Brazilian rainforest concerns Tiago, who was eight years old when a severe infection brought him to the edge of life. Tiago lived with his family in a small, remote village near the Amazon River. Community life followed the rhythm of that river. The days rose and fell with the movement of water. The nights were shaped by the voices of insects, owls, and unseen things in the jungle. When Tiago became ill, no one spoke of fever. They said: “His body is resting.” His breathing grew weaker and his skin turned cool.

During the night, his mother placed her hand on his forehead and began to sing. The melody was not formal or learned, and it was transmitted more through rhythm than words. Later, she said that in that moment, “He was no longer with us.” Days later, Tiago spoke of his experience with a voice that sounded not as if he had invented something, but as if he remembered it.

“I wasn’t in the house,” he said. “I was in the river.”

He described how the water carried him. The soft water was not cold or fast, as if it knew how to hold him. There was light that did not come from the sun or the sky. It shone from the current itself.

“It glowed from below,” Tiago said. “And it knew my name. It called me, not with voice, but with waves.”

Then an animal came: a large, silent jaguar. Its eyes were luminous, not in a threatening way but in one that conveyed awareness.

“He knew that I knew him,” Tiago said. “And I wasn’t surprised. I was just quiet.”

Together, they moved through a jungle that was not the same as before. The trees seemed to breathe, and their leaves murmured names. The air had a pulse. Everywhere, life was not separate but connected, expressing itself through scent, warmth, or mere presence. At the edge of a clearing stood an old woman without a face. Tiago knew that she was his grandmother. However, it was not the one he had known in life.

“She smelled like fire that no longer burns,” he said.

She did not speak. She simply placed her hand on his chest, and at that moment, Tiago heard the river again. However this time, it no longer called his name but his mother’s. The call was not spoken aloud but conveyed through vibration and memory in the water. Alongside the call, the light returned.

“It was as if I had brought something back that belonged to her,” he said.

Tiago awoke a few hours later. He was still weak and pale but calm. His breath was slow and even. His words were few, but he smiled more frequently. When his mother asked if he had been afraid, he looked at her and simply said:

“No. I was with everything that lives.”

### Scientific Commentary

What children in Western accounts describe as light, beings, or spaces appears in Tiago’s case as a river, an animal, and an old woman without

a face. However, the essence is not diminished. It is only remembered or embodied differently through resonance. In many indigenous traditions, what Western psychology calls “consciousness” is not an isolated mind-state. It lives in the breath of the wind. It pulses in the animal. It rests in the tree trunk. A child who leaves their body briefly does not step out of life but enters a deeper form of it. The boundary between the living and the transcendent beings is circular.

From a psychological perspective, these experiences may be described through the concept of *archetypes*, deeply rooted forms of awareness that appear across cultures and epochs. The jaguar, the grandmother figure, the river that speaks are expressions of what Carl Jung called the *collective unconscious*, shared symbolic structures that emerge where language ends and perception deepens. They appear not to inform but to reorient—not as metaphor, but as lived structure.

In developmental psychology, such experiences are sometimes referred to as *preverbal memory*: experiences stored before the acquisition of language. These memories are accessed through sensation, inner pictures, or rhythm. Many spiritual traditions recognize this kind of memory as well, describing it as “seeing without eyes” or “knowing without words.” It is a different kind of realism that was never formed by language and therefore it is not bound by it.

## MEET THE AUTHORS



**Daniela Klose** is a medical writer and professional translator specializing in neuroscience, psychology, and consciousness-related topics. For more than ten years, she has worked as a ghostwriter and editor for researchers, clinicians, and academic institutions across Europe, supporting the development of scientific articles and nonfiction books.

Her work focuses on bridging complex scientific material with accessible language and emotional depth, with a particular interest in the intersection of neuropsychology and transpersonal psychology. Over the years, Daniela has contributed to a wide range of projects dealing with trauma, perception, altered states of consciousness, and the psychological dimensions of healing.

Besides her writing career, Daniela gained direct practical experience in retirement and nursing homes, where she encountered the subtle and often unspoken realities of transition and end-of-life

awareness. These experiences continue to shape her approach to storytelling and research, especially when exploring the inner worlds of children and the ways consciousness expresses itself beyond conventional explanatory frameworks.

**Ralph Klose** is a retired neuropsychologist with more than thirty years of clinical and academic experience in the fields of cognition and consciousness research. Throughout his career, he worked with complex neurological and psychological conditions and developed a long-standing interest in the deeper mechanisms of perception, identity, and awareness.

Alongside his professional career, Ralph has spent decades supporting the development of academic and spiritual publications as a ghostwriter and research collaborator. His work includes contributions to books and articles across multiple disciplines, often helping authors translate scientific findings into precise, understandable, and intellectually rigorous narratives.

A defining part of Ralph's life has been his long-term volunteer work in hospice care, where he accompanied both adults and children in their final stages of life. These encounters offered him immediate insight into the psychological and existential dimensions of dying, as well as the remarkable accounts that sometimes arise at the threshold between life and death.

Now writing under his own name, Ralph combines scientific reflection with lived experience, exploring consciousness not only as a neurological phenomenon, but also as a profound human condition.

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