

Introduction

What is an out of body experience? Maybe you picked up this book in the hopes that it would help answer that very question. Maybe you know someone who has had such an experience, or maybe you have had one yourself and you want to learn more about what happened to you. Or maybe your interest has been sparked by a personal study of psychic phenomenon or a recent venture into ways of expanding your consciousness. Whatever your reason, understanding the out of body experience is the beginning of a wonderful spiritual and intellectual quest. This exciting

phenomenon, popularly dubbed OBE, occurs when a person finds his or her consciousness floating above or beyond the physical body. In the out of body, the mind literally sheds its skin. But that is only the first step.

Out of body travellers frequently describe this state as a place of higher spiritual consciousness. The out of body journey is characterized by feelings of loving acceptance, heightened awareness and enhanced understanding. The trip is always easy and joyful.

Throughout human experience, those who have made the out of

body journey have universally reported a variety of common sensations and shared experiences. Travelers recall their OBE's in vivid and verifiable detail. They describe their ability to view their physical body from spatially independent vantage points while in the out of body state. They explain that the OBE gives them immunity from earth's gravitational pull and leaves them feeling lighter than air. This buoyancy is often accompanied by sudden explosions of light and sound. Spots of blinding brightness and disquieting buzzing and ringing in the ear are sensations that often mark the onset of the out of body state. Some travelers, especially beginners, tell us they are carefully escorted to this state of heightened sensation by a transitional stage. Slightly disoriented as their consciousness passes from the physical body, they feel heat at the crown of the head, the navel or even the feet -- from whichever spot their

consciousness has chosen to take flight. Others describe the presence of a silver umbilical cord--a sort of silvery lifeline--connecting the conscious mind with the physical body, again, usually at the point from which the spirit takes flight.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the OBE is that it occurs consciously. When you are out of body, you experience all five senses just as you would if you were in your body. OBE is not a fantasy, a sign of mental illness, or your imagination playing tricks on you. OBE is a real-life, totally conscious experience.

In this book, we'll examine the various types of OBE,

discuss how they occur, and explore ways to use the experience in ways to enhance spiritual growth. We'll discover the mysteries of bi-location (literally, the ability to be in two places at once), dream-state OBE, spontaneous OBE and near-death OBE. We will discover that OBE is a state that can be achieved in many ways. Meditation, specially designed exercises and near-death trauma all bring on a predisposition to the out of body state.

But, before we go any further, let me tell you a little bit about my own experiences in the out of body. I have been happily travelling out of my body since the age of five. Unlike most children who have imaginary playmates, I grew up with a real one. I had an astral body. It was a second projection of myself which some have termed an etheric double - an Alex 2, so to speak - which at times literally existed outside of my own body. I could see Alex 2 as clearly as my reflection in the mirror. My astral body wasn't frightening. In fact, it was comforting to know that Alex 2 was by my side. Instead of trying to imagine myself doing two things at once, I could actually see myself doing them. It was like playing with a trick mirror in which I made one move and my reflection gamely made another.

I guess I've always known that I was different, a bit gifted. My parents knew of my gifts as well, they were tipped off before I was born. Their good friend Kahil Gibran, the renown mystic and author of THE PROPHET, foretold they would have a psychically gifted child. Being psychically gifted themselves, my parents weren't particularly surprised by his predictions. As Lebanese immigrants, they had a healthy, old-world respect for

the paranormal. Almost as soon as I was weaned, they began to help me develop the usual abilities God gave me.

By the age of two, I was able to discern the personal vibrations of people from the objects they touched or owned. By the age of five, I had encountered my etheric double, Alex 2. And, by the age of nine, I was able to diagnose illness and impending death just by shaking a person's hand. At first, I immediately relayed this knowledge to the shocked "handowner." Unfortunately, my psychic talents developed a great deal faster than my social skills.

Years later, in 19⁶⁷~~70~~, I met Dr. Karlⁱvs Osis, who was then Director of Research at the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR), an organization established at the turn of the century. It was and is the purpose of this institution to not only explain psychic phenomenon, but also perhaps more importantly to authenticate the phenomeon through established scientific method.

Born in Latvia, Dr. Osis received his PhD from the University of Munich in 1950. He was one of the first psychologists to write a thesis on the phenomenon of extrasensory perception. Thereafter, Dr. Osis has widened the sphere of his pioneering efforts in this field of study to conduct groundbreaking work in the areas of near-death OBE phenomenon. His work was wide ranging, taking him from clinical settings to the testing grounds of the laboratory and providing scientists and parapsychologists with a wealth of valuable evidence. It wasn't long before I became one of Dr. Osis' chief guinea pigs.

He tested me in the controlled environment of the ASPR lab. Together we attempted to prove scientifically the existence of the OBE phenomenon. You will read about the results of our work in the pages to come.

I have also had extensive experience with the OBE outside of the laboratory. I have used it to help solve crimes, find missing people, counsel patients, lay ghosts to rest, and cure disease. All of these experiences have been documented by third or fourth parties. You will have a chance to read about all of these later in the book as well.

The OBE has been an important, irreplaceable experience for me. Through it, I have gained innumerable insights that not only satisfy the intellectual need for verifiable truth but, more importantly, the need for faith. I firmly believe it is possible for us all to experience the OBE state. And, once we have experienced it, to use the knowledge it gives us to help ourselves and others. Simply put, that is the purpose of this book.

I begin with a brief overview of the experience and trace the history of it in recorded history from ancient civilizations to the present. Next, we'll examine various explanations for the phenomenon, including both the psychological and parapsychological. I describe various types of OBE and relate a little of the results of the experiments conducted with Dr. Osis. Finally, you will learn how to develop your own OBE abilities. I'll give you an easy to follow flight plan for taking your own

out of body journey, providing very specific exercises to help guide your way.

It is my fervent hope as you explore this book and experience that you will realize the infinite potential available to you through the astral experience. I think you will find that the true fulfillment of the OBE comes not in the experience itself but in the transformational aftermath - the realization that your spirit is free to explore the universe on its own terms. The out of body experience is the ultimate act of independence. More to the point, it is the ultimate act of responsibility. It is the open door through which we glimpse not only the infinite nature of the universe, but the infinite unexplored potential within each one of us.

THE ETERNAL INSTANT

A Brief History of the OBE

"I know a man in Christ...(whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth)..."

St. Paul, I Corinthians 12:2-3