

There Is No Death

Near-Death Experience Evidence for Survival After Permanent Bodily Death

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Overview

- We focused primarily on NDEr reports
 - Separation from the physical body
 - Accurate perceptions of physical reality
 - NDEr sensations and experiences while out-of-body
- We then focused on encounters with deceased persons:
 - In near-death experiences (NDEs)
 - in shared death experiences (SDEs)
 - in after-death communications (ADCs)
- We thus traced the process of dying:
 - the initial separation of the mind or soul from the physical body in NDEs
 - the transition of a dying person to a transcendent realm in SDEs
 - the continued existence of deceased persons in ADCs
- Based on the evidence from these phenomena, taken as a whole, a person's essential Self or mind at death
 - separates from the physical body
 - transitions to a different realm
 - survives the death of the physical body

Key lines of evidence regarding NDEs

- NDErs report accurate, verified perceptions of the physical realm
 - Demonstrates the NDEr's mind or consciousness has somehow *separated* from and *operates independent* of the brain and body
- Strong NDE evidence: the separate mind is *the essence of the person*
 - The NDEr's mind acts as a *cohesive unit*, embodying *all* cognitive faculties
 - The NDEr realizes that their physical body is *not their real self*
- Strong NDE evidence: the mind or soul itself is *objectively real*
 - The mind *entity* can be seen by in-body people, by animals, and by other NDErs
 - The separate mind entity *objectively exists*
- The human being consists of a nonmaterial *mind* integrated with the physical body
 - In an NDE, the mind separates from and functions independent of the brain
 - Strong NDE evidence that the nonmaterial mind can interact with matter and can *sense* and *trigger* neural activity in the brain

Key lines of evidence regarding SDEs

- Shared death experiences are strong *objective* evidence that the deceased person's conscious Self continues to exist after physical death.
 - In some SDE cases, the experiencer (SDEr) witnesses the process the dying person goes through transitioning out-of-body, which has elements similar to NDEs
 - The SDEr can later *verify* the details seen in the dying person's life review
 - Two or more SDErs in attendance at the person's death may observe and *corroborate* the same SDE events, so the events are *objective facts*
 - The SDEr observes that the process of dying is identical to the process in an NDE, except that the dying person's mind does not return to the physical body *but continues to exist after physical death* in a different realm
- Thus, SDEs provide strong *objective evidence* that the dying person continues to exist and transitions to a different realm

Key lines of evidence regarding ADCs

- ADCs provide strong objective evidence that the deceased person continues to exist after physical death
 - In an ADC, a deceased loved one communicates with the “witness” who may sense the presence of and hear the loved one, or directly see and converse with them
 - The loved one frequently appears completely solid, in their full form, and the encounter seems more real than everyday reality, including in some cases physical interactions
 - The loved one may provide veridical information which is later confirmed to be accurate
 - *Shared* ADCs, that is, encounters in which two or more people together witness the loved one, provide *objective corroboration* of the event
- Thus, ADCs provide strong *objective evidence* that the deceased person continues to exist after physical death

Further considerations

Based on the evidence from these phenomena, taken as a whole

- A person's essential Self or mind at death *separates* from the physical body, *transitions* to a different realm, and *survives* the death of the physical body
- Our essay *also* proposed how the autonomous mind entity works with the brain's neurological processes in ordinary consciousness
 - The interface of the mind with the brain is a crucial part of any theory of consciousness

The *mind entity* hypothesis

- The NDE evidence shows the following:
 - The nonmaterial mind can separate from the body
 - The mind is a separate entity in itself
 - The mind entity is a real thing, a real being
- The mind entity hypothesis
 - The human being consists of a nonmaterial “mind” that is integrated with the physical body
 - The mind entity is the seat of consciousness of the person; all cognitive faculties reside in the mind, not in the brain
 - For “in-body” consciousness, the mind entity interacts with the brain to establish consciousness
 - Ordinarily, the mind is completely dependent on the brain’s electrical activity for consciousness
 - For the “out-of-body” state in an NDE, the mind entity separates from the body and operates independent of the brain
- For this theory to work, there must be:
 - Some form of energetic interaction between the mind and the brain
 - Some plausible mechanism of interaction

How could a nonmaterial mind interact with the brain?

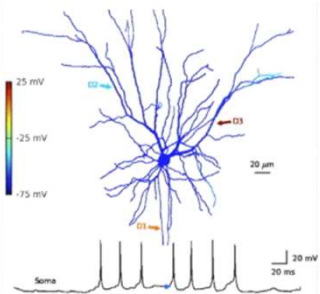
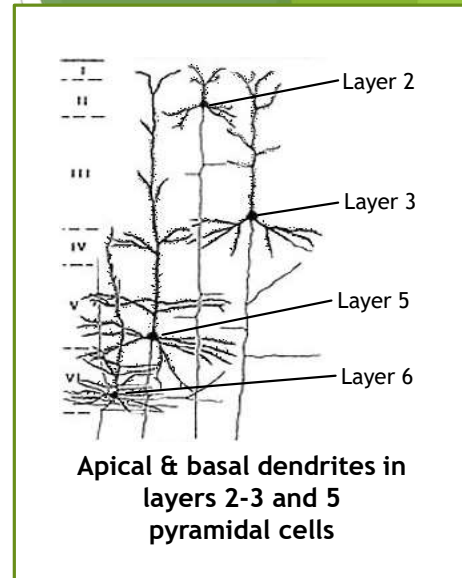
- How could a nonmaterial mind interact with the material brain to achieve consciousness?
 - There is strong evidence that the out-of-body mind does interact with physical processes
 - Light, sound waves in the air, and solid matter
 - Giving rise to subjective sensations and accurate veridical perceptions in the physical realm
- There is evidence of new subtle, push-pull force when the out-of-body mind entity passes through solid matter,
 - Giving the sense of resistance or increased density in the NDEr
- There is evidence when NDErs interact with another person's body
 - The mind can interact specifically with neural electrical processes
 - Both sensing and triggering neural electrical activity



How does the mind-brain interface work?

A plausible mechanism for mind-brain interaction

- The physical interface between the nonmaterial mind and the brain is in the gray matter
 - Specifically in apical and basal dendrites in the outermost 2-3 mm of the cortex
 - The dendrites have tiny nodules on them called dendritic spines
- There is a two-way causal interaction between the nonmaterial mind and brain neurons
 - The mind “senses” neural action potentials thru back propagation in the dendrites
 - The mind opens *calcium ion compartments* in the dendritic spines to trigger action potentials



Action potentials propagate back through the dendritic arbor

- Neural electrical activity brings *perceptions* and *thoughts* to awareness in the mind
 - Mental intentions trigger electrical activity which activates *motor actions*
- Smith, S. L., Smith, I. T., Branco, T., & Häusser, M. (2013). Dendritic spines enhance stimulus selectivity in cortical neurons in vivo. *Nature*, 503:115-120.

Conclusion

- The concept of an autonomous mind entity can serve as a *new conceptual framework* for explaining consciousness
- This concept:
 - Fits the facts of anomalous phenomena like NDEs, SDEs, and ADCs better than materialist explanations
 - And provides a *comprehensive explanation* for consciousness, that is, subjective phenomenal experience
- This conclusion is a *radical departure* from explanations of consciousness proposed by materialist philosophers and scientists
 - And compels a significant shift in the existing scientific framework or *paradigm*, most notably in neuroscience and physics

Future Directions in Afterlife Research

There are several avenues to help scientists make the “mental transposition” to our proposed mind entity framework

1. Show that the new framework better explains existing neurological phenomena
 - Phenomena that are well-known but not fully understood
 - Consciousness, semantic knowledge, perception, language, attention, memory, movement, brain plasticity
2. Show that the new framework explains the anomalies of neuroscience
 - For example, terminal lucidity, split brain phenomena, phantom limb phenomena
3. Validate the proposed mind-brain mechanisms through improved clinical therapies and results
 - Therapies applied to disorders of consciousness (DOCs)—unresponsive wakeful state, minimally conscious state, etc.
4. Validate the proposed mind-brain mechanisms through experimental testing
 - Energetic interaction with neurons: experimenting with the squid giant axon
 - Energetic interaction of a healer’s energetic field with the brain and body, and validated by MRI or MEG scans