



NDE Evidence of the Localized, Individuated Mind Entity and its Relationship to the Brain

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IANDS Spring Symposium • February 11-13, 2022

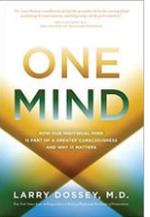
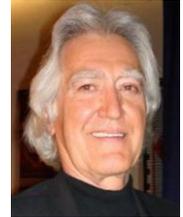
What NDEs and Related Experiences Reveal About the Relationship Between Mind and Brain

In affiliation with Seeking 'I' Life After Death and Consciousness Research for Open Minds

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An alternative view to “nonlocal mind”

- The term “nonlocal mind” was first coined by Larry Dossey in 1989 (Dossey, 2013, 2014, 2017)
 - “Human consciousness is nonlocal in that it is not confined to specific points in space such as brains and bodies, or specific moments in time, such as the present”
 - Nonlocal mind is “a mode of consciousness ... a mode of information acquisition and exchange that transcends the limitations of the physical senses and space and time”
 - For the notion of One Mind: “One cannot separate any single consciousness from all the other consciousnesses—in some sense, *all minds come together to form a single mind*”
 - Nonlocal–One Mind phenomena include telepathic exchanges, clairvoyant knowing, remote viewing, precognition, and presentiment
- Two features of information access and exchange with the brain
 - Filtering: There is good evidence that human consciousness is filtered or reduced by the brain
 - “Transmission” model: Consciousness operates *through* the brain; it is not produced by the brain—but “there is no evidence that anything is actually transmitted” because consciousness is omnipresent (Dossey, 2013, 85)
 - Other researchers have proposed the television set analogy to explain how the mind works with the brain.



- Dossey, L. (2013). *One mind: How our individual mind is part of a greater consciousness and why it matters*. Hay House .
- Dossey, L. (2014). Spirituality and nonlocal mind: A necessary dyad. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, 1(1), 29–42.
- Dossey, L. (2017). Consciousness, Love, and Healing. Presentation at the annual IANDS conference, Westminster, Colorado, August 2017.

Our view of “nonlocal mind” ...

We agree with the following:

- **Consciousness is filtered by the brain**
 - In our view, the situation is more the case that in-body consciousness is *dependent* on brain activity
 - Brain processes are slow and not as sharply focused or expansive as in an NDE (more-real-than-real)
 - The mind-brain interface is an imperfect “stepdown process”
- **Numerous phenomena exist in which information is acquired and exchanged in a nonlocal way—in processes that extend beyond the normal senses and beyond space and time**
- **The minds of individual people are connected and interrelated**
- **The experience of *connectedness and oneness with everything* is a common characteristic in certain altered states of consciousness, like NDEs**

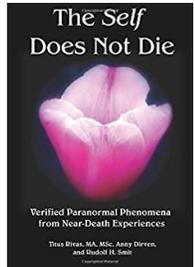
Our view of “nonlocal mind”

However, we disagree with the “nonlocal” characterization of the mind

- Nonlocal phenomena and experiences describe the mind’s *modes of consciousness, its attributes, abilities, and faculties*
 - These are *not* the mind *itself*
 - The sense of a *universal, collective One Mind* occurs because all individual minds coexist together in the all-pervasive transcendent realm; this realm *mediates* all our interactions in everyday life
- The individual mind *itself* is *localized*—in a particular location in space and at a particular time, *even* in the “nonlocal” transcendent realm
 - Objectively, there is abundant evidence that the nonmaterial mind is *observed as localized and individuated*
 - Subjectively, the mind is experienced as an individuated *Self or Being*; with a sense of *selfhood* and *agency*, separate from all other beings
 - The mind is the *essential or intrinsic* person
- Even though individuated, the mind exhibits *nonlocal properties and abilities*
 - Therefore, one can *experience* oneness with everything
 - One can *exhibit* nonlocal abilities, such as telepathic exchanges, clairvoyant knowing, etc.
 - During an NDE, the NDEr frequently experiences access to *all knowledge, ultimate knowledge*
 - Nevertheless, a person’s consciousness *exists independently* from all other consciousnesses

NDE evidence that the mind is an *individuated entity*

- There are numerous cases of *veridical perceptions* during NDEs
 - These veridical perceptions occur from the NDEr's specific *vantage point* outside the physical body
- During an NDE, the mind functions as a *cohesive individuated unit*
 - The NDEr's entire individuated being has separated from the body
 - All aspects of their mind are consciously present *throughout* their NDE
 - NDErs report feeling oneness or connectedness during their NDE but do not report losing their sense of individuality
- There is *continuity of individuated consciousness* throughout the separation and return
- The physical body serves only as a “placeholder” for the mind in the physical realm
 - That physical body wasn't me!
 - The nonmaterial “body” has expanded in size and is difficult to fit back into the physical body
- This evidence strongly suggests that a person's mind is a *separate individuated entity* that is localized in but independent of the physical body
 - In effect, the separate individuated mind is the *essence* of the person



The Self Does Not Die

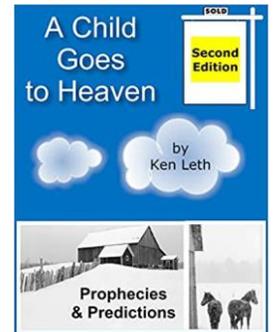
NDE evidence that the mind entity is *objectively real*

- The NDEr can be seen objectively by others
 - Seen by animals – Jerry Casebolt and the German Shepherd
 - Seen by other people (“apparitional” NDEs) – Olga Gearhardt
 - Seen by other NDErs (simultaneous NDEs) – hotshot firefighter team
- The objective corroboration by others of the NDEr’s out-of-body presence demonstrates
 - The NDEr *mind entity* is a real thing, a real *individuated* being
 - The separate *mind entity* is *localized* and *individuated* in both the physical and transcendent realms



Evidence during NDEs of deceased persons

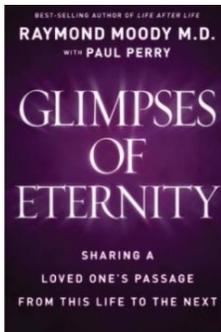
- Encountering deceased persons in NDEs also demonstrates the NDEr's individuated nature
 - Nearly half of NDErs report encountering someone who had died earlier
 - The NDEr generally recognizes the deceased loved one for who they are
- Two types of cases of encountering deceased loved ones
 - Persons known to the NDEr but who were not known to have died
 - The case of Eddie Cuomo (Greyson, 2010, 167)
 - Persons not known to the NDEr but later verified as the person they presented themselves to be
 - The case of Ken Leth's ancestors (Leth, 2020, 57–61)
- What do these cases mean?
 - Veridical communication with someone who has already died is evidence that the *individuated mind* continues to exist after death in the transcendent realm
 - Cases in which the deceased person is unknown but later identified are evidence that the person's identity, appearance, and personality continue on after death



A Child Goes to Heaven

Evidence during shared death experiences

- What are shared death experiences (SDEs)?
 - Someone attending a dying loved one experiences the dying process *along with* the loved one
 - The SDEr may see the dying person's spirit leave their physical body
 - The SDEr may leave their own body and accompany the deceased person out-of-body
 - The SDEr may see deceased relatives and friends come to escort the person to the other realm
 - The SDEr becomes an objective eyewitness of the process of dying.
- The case of Dr. Jamieson and her mother (Moody, 2010, 6–7)
- What do shared death experiences mean?
 - The SDEr observes the decedent's transition to actual death
 - They directly perceive elements that commonly occur in NDEs but from a third-person perspective
 - Including the individuated forms of deceased loved ones and friends, and the decedent's individuated "spirit body"
 - Thus, in the SDE, the decedent's *individuated conscious Self* continues on after physical death



Glimpses of Eternity

Further evidence of individuation

There is evidence from *other* death-related phenomena that after death, a person continues on as an *individuated being* in the transcendent realm

- After-death communications (ADCs) and mediumship phenomena
- **Memories of the intermission period: three stages** (Sharma & Tucker, 2004; Matlock & Giesler-Petersen, 2016)
 - Transitional stage (memories of the funeral, burial, grieving relatives)
 - Stable stage (memories at a particular location, caring for those still living, reviewing past life, planning next life)
 - Returning stage (memories of choosing parents, conception)
- Prebirth memories are memories in the womb
 - Christian Sundberg remembered during the time before birth being very fearful that he would lose his true Self with physical incarnation; the great spirit of God came to him and showed him all of what he truly is—the stars and the galaxies . (Sundberg, 2021)
- Memories of the previous incarnation (cases of the reincarnation type)

Evidence of individuation extends with *continuity through the entire human lifespan*

- During prebirth planning, conception and birth, earthly life (NDEs), the process of dying (SDEs, also deathbed visions)
- During the after-death period (ADCs), the intermission period between lives, reincarnation in a new physical body

- Sharma, P., & Tucker, J. B. (2004). Cases of the reincarnation type with memories from the intermission between lives. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 23(2), 101–118.
- Matlock, J. G., & Giesler-Petersen, I. (2016). Asian versus Western intermission memories: Universal features and cultural variations. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 35(1), 3–29.
- Sundberg, C. (2021). “A journey from pre-birth to human: Why we come to earth.” Presentation at the 2021 IANDS Conference (online, September 2021).

Minimum requirements for mind-brain interactions

We are not aware of any detailed model from researchers for how the “*nonlocal*” mind works with the brain –

However, we believe the *minimum requirements* for the nonlocal mind to work with a specific person’s brain are:

- There must be a causal relationship, a “causal pairing,” between a specific person’s mind and that person’s brain.
- The brain must influence the mind (to support sensations, perception, and awareness) and the mind must influence the brain (to support volition, movements, thoughts, plans, daydreams, imaginations, etc.)
- To account for these influences and the high level of correlation of brain electrical activity with mental states, *at some level* there must be *physical interactions* between the mind and the brain:
 - The interactions must be two-way: brain-to-mind and mind-to-brain
 - The interactions should occur through *direct physical contact* and nearly all the energy for these interactions should come from brain neurons
 - Neurological evidence strongly suggests that the mind’s interface with the brain operates at a fine-grained size (perhaps the cortical minicolumn, about 4 mm²) and at “brain” speeds (on the order of 10–100 milliseconds)

Model for localized mind-brain interaction ...

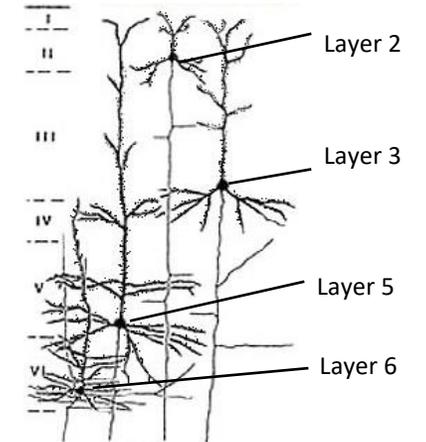
- It's not clear to us how these requirements can be met with a *nonlocal mind* model, but all these requirements can be met if one assumes:
 - *A person's mind is localized and individuated* as the death-related evidence suggests,
 - The person's mind is causally paired with their specific brain and body, and
 - The mind works by direct physical contact with the brain
- There is good NDE evidence for mind-brain interaction
 - There is strong evidence in NDEs that the *out-of-body mind interacts 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 a *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 physical body
 - The mind can interact *specifically* with neural electrical processes,
 - Both *sensing* and *triggering* neural electrical activity



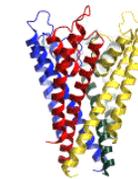
Model for localized mind-brain interaction

A plausible mechanism for mind-brain interaction

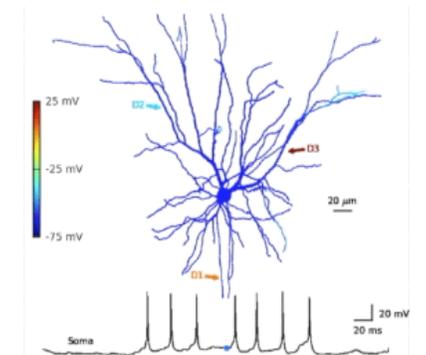
- The physical interface between the nonmaterial mind and the brain is in the gray matter
 - Specifically in the apical dendrites in the outermost 2-3 mm of the cortex
- There is a two-way causal interaction between the nonmaterial mind and brain neurons
 - The mind “senses” neural action potentials through back propagation
 - The mind opens ion channels to trigger action potentials
- Neural electrical activity brings *perceptions* and *thoughts* to awareness in the mind
 - Mental intentions trigger electrical activity which activates *motor actions*



Apical dendrites in layers 2-3 and 5 pyramidal cells



Neural ion channel



Action potentials propagate back through the dendritic arbor

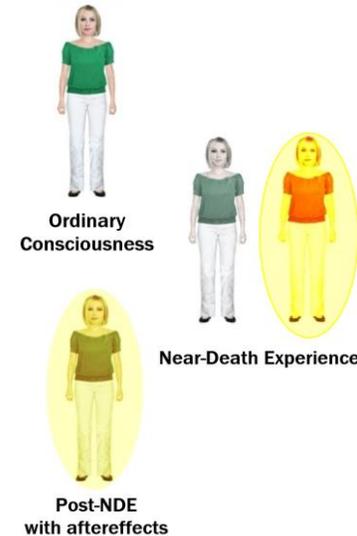
Philosophical objections to mind-brain relationship

- Addressing philosophical objections to interactionist dualism
 - Strong evidence that the *out-of-body mind interacts with physical processes*
 - Evidence that a subtle, previously unrecognized *two-way force* is involved in mind-matter interactions
- Three specific philosophical challenges to interactionist dualism
 - Taking the mind to be a “thing” is a *category error* (Ryle, 1949)
 - The nonmaterial mind is actually in the *same category* as physical objects because the mind is an objectively real thing that unites with the brain and body
 - The *causal pairing problem* (Kim, 2011)
 - The nonmaterial mind is a three-dimensional object in physical space
 - The mind and brain are located in intimate spatial relation to one another and exert direct causal interactions with each other
 - The *causal closure of the physical* (Kim, 2011)
 - The mind is nonmaterial, yet *interacts* with physical processes and thus takes part in *physical causation*
 - The mind interfaces with the brain at *specific points of contact* at the surface of the cortex

- Kim, J. (2011). *Philosophy of mind* (3rd ed.). Westview Press.
- Ryle, G. (1949/2009). *The concept of mind*. Routledge.

Degrees of mind-brain integration

- Evidence from NDEs and SDEs suggests there are three clear states of the mind's relation to the brain
 - The mind is fully united and integrated with the brain – in ordinary consciousness
 - The mind is *fully separated* – in NDEs and in the permanent death of the physical body
 - The mind is reunited with the body after an NDE but remains *partially separated* – as seen in the aftereffects of an NDE
- 80% of cardiac arrest patients do *not* have an NDE: implies there is a “*separability threshold*”*
 - If there was a prior NDE or prior trauma, the threshold will generally be lower for a subsequent NDE
 - The *separability threshold* may be *reduced* with meditation, alcohol, psychoactive drugs, etc. and can lead to *partial separation*, with reduced brain electrical activity, or *full separation* in an NDE-like experience (NDLE)
 - *Partially separated* state appears to be brief and thus “unstable”, which may explain transient psi experiences
 - A high separability threshold and partial separation can explain the phenomena of dementia and terminal lucidity
 - As the brain and thus the mind get progressively disabled, the mind stays fully tied to the dysfunctional brain; the patient can rally with partial separation and brief periods of mental coherence but then falls back into dementia
 - Near the end, the mind can partially separate and function *fully normally* for a brief period of lucidity, but then lapses back to the demented state and ultimately permanent separation, with physical death



Conclusions

- We have presented two proposals:
 - First, in our view, there is overwhelming evidence from NDEs and other death-related phenomena that the mind is *individuated* and *localized*, even in the transcendent realm
 - Second, there is a plausible model for how the localized nonmaterial mind works with the brain
 - These proposals have explanatory power for numerous neurological and death-related phenomena
- We propose that the notion of the universal, collective One Mind refers to the all-pervasive transcendent realm – they are one and the same thing
 - Phenomena suggesting One Mind—telepathy, clairvoyance, etc.—are actually *glimpses* into and *intimations* of the transcendent realm which *mediates* all interactions in everyday life
 - In contrast, phenomena from NDEs are direct *indelible, immersive, transformative* experiences of the transcendent realm—telepathy is the *normal mode* of communication between individuated beings in this realm
- Rudolf Steiner: The ancient cliché that “we must ultimately lose our individual consciousness and merge into a universal consciousness” is *no longer* correct:
 - Universal consciousness *will* be a harmony of *all* forms of consciousness
 - Human beings who have passed through the final stage of human development will form a unity *out of their own free will*; they *will remain individual entities* and will *also* form a unity, because they *choose to do so* rather than because they are forced
 - Each one will contribute the particular *colors* of their consciousness as individuals, which cannot be lost
 - The great variety of colors will shimmer more beautifully than could ever have been before and will become “the living garment of the divine” (Steiner, 1998, 247–248)
 - Steiner, R. (1998). *The Christian Mystery*. Anthroposophic Press.