Different Understanding of NDEs

Name

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**Introduction**

Some people go through near-death experiences at some point in their lives during a life-threatening situation. It can also result from the use of psychedelic drugs like Ketamine, LSD, and DMT. NDEs can manifest as either positive experiences which are associated with peace and calm or negative experiences that are related to grief and anguish (Greyson and Evans Bush, 1992). NDEs have elicited mixed responses from the general public and the scientific community. Some people argue that these experiences have significance and can be dangerous, while others hold on to the opinion that the experiences are normal and have no real danger. NDEs have transformative effects on the lives of those individuals who experience them.

**NDE perspectives**

**The Dangerous Perspective**

According to Gallup and Proctor (1982), about 15 per cent of the American population reported having gone through a near-death experience. Out of this percentage, one per cent described hellish experiences. NDEs can manifest either as positive experiences or as negative experiences. Some people even describe out of body experiences as part of their NDEs (Van Lommel et al., 2001). These near-death experiences have several side effects on the people who experience them. Some people who experience positive NDEs describe it as an eyeopener that positively transformed their lives, and they no longer have a fear of death (Today, 2018). On the flip side, others go through negative experiences, and they do not have a peaceful state of mind.

Some of the side effects are first, depression after an NDE. Some people who go through these experiences, most of the time, feel angry and depressed for being brought back to life, a life that does not coincide with the positive experiences and feelings he felt during the NDE. He sees it as being brought back to a world of pain and suffering. Another side effect that makes NDEs dangerous is it may make the people who have experienced it doubt the state of their mental health. Most people find it hard to accept what they experienced, especially if it clashes with their beliefs or lack thereof. Since they do not want to be stigmatized, many of them end up keeping quiet about it, and some contemplate suicide to put an end to it all.

One other side effect is the loss of friendships and strained family ties. Many individuals who go through these life-changing events end up changing their belief systems and lifestyle. Friends and family members may not be on board with the new changes, and this causes a strain on previous relationships. The friends and family may opt to cut ties, and the individual is left alone with feelings of abandonment. On the side, friends and family might end up expecting unrealistic acts of kindness and forgiveness, and if the individual cannot meet these expectations, they cut ties and leave. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is another probable side effect. Many people who experience NDEs may have PTSD caused by recurrent images and flashes of the NDE experience, and they may detach themselves from society and lose interest in some of their previous interests and activities.

**The Normal Perspective**

While some people believe that NDEs are dangerous, some maintain that NDEs are a normal part of life. New research shows that NDEs are a result of brain activity linked to psychedelics and not because of any outworld reason. These people see everyday life as near-death experiences since no one knows what to expect, and anything can happen. According to Charland-Verville et al. (2014), NDEs can also be experienced by people who face life-threatening situations like epileptic patients, people suffering from intense anxiety, and grief. Morse, Venetia, and Milstein, (1989), argue that NDEs are a result of chemical stimulation of the hippocampus. Other researchers say that NDEs are just lucid dreams and are a result of the human mind (Wolchover, 2012).

**Impacts of NDEs**

**Social**

After a person experiences a near-death experience, they tend to be more loving, caring, and considerate. This change of emotions is a result of their newfound meaning to life and changed belief systems. The person values life and finds peace not just within himself but with others as well. People who have experienced NDEs also tend to re-evaluate their relationships with friends and family. Those that do not conform with their new belief systems end. Divorce is prevalent in married couples, where one person has experienced an NDE. Another social impact is it will lead to the formation of self-help groups for people who have experienced NDEs and have trouble adjusting to life after resuscitation. After an NDE, most people feel estranged from their family and friends as they think that they cannot see things from their perspective, and they might judge them. The formation of self-help groups for people who have experienced NDEs would offer a safe place with people who have gone through the same experience, albeit differently, and they will have a sense of belonging.

Another social impact is that family members and friends are willing and able to help the person who went through an NDE to move on from experience and settle back into his former life. They do this by visiting the person while he is in hospital, by coming together to help pay the hospital bill, organizing get together and family gatherings. Another social impact is the mental health and wellbeing of the person who experienced the NDE. After an NDE, many doubt the state of their mental health, and they may not accept what happened to them, and this might lead to denial (Greyson, 2007). The dissent would harm their mental health, and most would doubt whatever it is that they saw after the NDE. The people who experience NDE tend to seclude themselves from anything for fear of stigmatization. This seclusion leads to a general social exclusion from the community.

**The Brain**

Scientists argue that NDEs are a result of chemical reactions in the brain, while it is in an inactive state. They suggest that it is a result of neurotransmitter and hormone releases, for example, serotonin. This release activates the temporal lobes, causing seizures, which in turn cause the NDEs (Parnia, 2017). They also put forward the suggestion that a burst of electrical activity in the opening seconds after cardiac arrest can lead to NDEs. They categorize NDEs as being caused by ‘faulty’ cerebral processes. The scientists propose that NDEs are hallucinations and illusions created by the human mind because of the fear of death. Another reason that leads them to conclude this is that normal human hallucinatory feelings of peace or happiness coincide with the described feelings after an NDE.

**Conclusion**

NDEs are experiences that some people go through when facing a life-threatening situation or when near-certain death. NDEs can manifest either as positive feelings, joy, and peace or as negative feelings of pain and anguish. About 15 per cent of the American population is experience NDEs when faced with a life-threatening or near-death experience. About one per cent of the population report having experienced negative NDEs. These experiences are life-changing and give the person who has experienced them a new look at life. Some scientists and researchers argue that NDEs are a result of chemical reactions in the brain that cause hallucinations or illusions, and otherworldly causes do not cause them.

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