

A chapter from the upcoming book: **The Messenger**

By

Catherine Dougherty

***The Natural Sage™***

“Near Death Experiences (NDE) and Phenomenon”

As it happens, near death experiences (NDE) are unplanned, or so we think. I'm sure Destiny plays a great part in it, along with free will choice, and Karma.

When it happens, we are consumed with the experience, during and after. Unfortunately, a great many of us who have had these experiences go through the after events alone, and don't share much with our family and friends for many reasons. I'm going to share with you a brief version of my last NDE to give you an idea of how absolutely fulfilling an NDE can be regardless of setbacks!

I had moved to Virginia to live near my brother and sister, as I was downsizing myself from a major corporation, and was also experiencing “Empty Nest Syndrome”, as my adult son had moved away from home, building a life for himself.

After settling in to my new place, I developed a small company and was busy at work.

Just prior to moving to Virginia, I had seen a cardiologist and was referred to an oncologist.

Shortly after moving my insurance lapsed. I asked the Oncologist in Virginia if he would take me pro bono as I was no longer insured, and it wasn't possible to manage such payments in my budget. “No”, was the answer, and he said “If you don't get insurance and maintain care, you will likely die.”

Unfamiliar with the prevalence of mold in rentals, I was exposed to mold from a leak around the fireplace of the rental house, and combined with poor indoor air quality, I was quickly losing good immune function.

At Christmas, I traditionally have a Tree Trimming Party, and invite friends and family. That year, the party was small, for I was growing a new circle of friends. Unfortunately, I was exposed to the flu at the party, and within days became quite ill.

Each day following the Tree Trimming Party on December 9, 1995, I felt more and more ill, with increasing symptoms. I stayed in bed, unable to move around, as my breathing was becoming difficult and painful. The nights were the hardest, and very, very, long. I was unable to shake the symptoms, and was getting worse.

After several days, my son who recently was staying with me was concerned about me as I rarely was ill, and he wanted an intervention. So, he consulted with my brother. My brother respected my wishes to not go to the hospital [*due to the expense to me with no health insurance, more than anything*] and my brother asked my son to wait it out.

My son waited patiently, while I was becoming increasingly more ill.

On December 30<sup>th</sup> 1995 I had an NDE. What occurred is as follows:

At 11:05 pm it felt like an elephant was standing on my chest. I thought no one was around that night except my dog Patti that was restless on my bed. The pain in my chest was growing in strength and I was unable to withstand the pressure that was also building on my chest as the long minutes passed. I had said my prayers during the 54 minutes before the pain became unbearable, and was trying to relax, but the pain increased in the center of my chest with great consistency. I prayed asking if my life was over. Since I had no answer, or thought I had no answer, I then declared my surrender.

At approximately 11:59 P.M. on December 30th, I began my NDE, wide awake with all my faculties, while still in great pain.

I had surrendered to death, as my chest felt like it was being crushed with insurmountable weight and pain. I had so much trouble breathing, and felt glued to my bed, unable to move from the weight and immense pressure on my chest.

I decided based on the amount of pain I was experiencing, and my inability to overcome it, to let go. And I did.

What follows is an account of my NDE:

From that instant of letting go of the pain, I relaxed, feeling myself drifting.

The next thing I knew I was feeling much better!!! --- No pain, no weight, no pressure--- relief! I thought: "I'm getting better", not knowing I was experiencing death! I marveled at how quickly I had no pain! I questioned how long that would last. These thoughts quickly ran through my head, as I was attempting to grasp at a bit of reality.

Following this brief thought process, I was no longer in my bed in my thinking; instead I found myself looking through a mist. I was making my way gingerly through this mist into what seemed like a vastness of nowhere, light and bright yet not clear enough to focus or see anything.

The mist wasn't exactly like the deep kind of fogs my hometown of San Francisco would have at times, where you could feel the cool air surrounding you, and you can barely see the outline of a car in front of you, or the streetlight shining above you, unless you were almost upon them.

This was a different mist.

As I walked, it was cool-not moist like a fog, and the mist had a hollow-like sense, definitely different from fog, yet just as mystifying and cloaking.

I returned briefly to wondering why I felt better as I had been suffering for two plus weeks, and with the intense pain I was feeling being gone, I questioned: *the pain couldn't possibly disappear just like that...* However, since I felt better, I surely wanted to stay that way.

So, seeing the mist made me a little nervous, because I was uncertain about what exactly was happening.

While I walked, passing through the mist, I started to see clearing, a space. The space was much brighter than the mist and full of light like an extremely lighted room with white walls reflecting the light.

Then, I heard my friend Charley's voice say... "Kitty". That was my nick-name, and I thought: "I knew that voice! That was my friend Charley's unmistakably sweet, yet gravelly voice. My friend Charley had passed away in 1991 of Hodgkin's related-Lymphoma/Granuloma. We were best friends for years, very much like the TV sitcom Will and Grace. During the course of our friendship, Charley voluntarily stepped up to be the male figure many times in my son's life when he was needed, which my son appreciated, greatly. And, Charley was the voice of reason for me during my divorce.

I was shocked hearing Charley's voice again!

(By this time I wasn't thinking anymore about what was happening, and how I felt, or any thought like that, I was going with the process.)

I looked around. -Wait a minute. Let me describe what I mean by looking around.

First off, I couldn't really "see" anything. What I was experiencing was more like a feeling, like a **sense** of seeing, walking or talking. So, the real experience I was having was feeling and sensing. Which I did, a lot...

As I walked through the mist, I heard Charley's voice again, only he was closer.

I couldn't see anything but the mist.

Hearing Charley was enough for me to keep going forward, fearlessly.

After what seemed like a long time of walking, I saw Charley! I was so happy! I was crying so much, so happy to be with him again. We talked and hugged and clung to each other for a while, which I wanted to last and last.

Then, Charley said: "The others are here for you." I looked through the mist around us, and walking in towards us were my parents, my uncle and aunt, and my grandparents.

I couldn't believe it!

The general feeling of this gathering was so warm and happy. After what seemed like a long time, everyone milled around, and Charley asked me what I was going to do.

I asked him what he meant by that. He said: "Now that you're here, you have to make a decision." "What?" I asked. Charley said: "You have to decide about your life. Do you want to stay here, or go back?"

Phew! I couldn't even fathom what he said.

The thoughts of the unbearable pain I had just experienced only what felt like a few moments ago flooded back to me. "Ooohhh. I thought. I don't want that."

Then, I thought about my life and all it was to the point of my death, the people I'd known and loved, and those that loved me, and I wanted that again. I especially wanted my life back because my son needed my help and I knew I had to be there for him.

But, I wanted this great feeling, this warmth and lovingness, it was so great. I wanted Charley and all this love here, with not a speck of pain. I felt very conflicted.

I spoke with Charley about my dilemma. He said in his serious voice: "Kitty, you have to decide what you want, you don't have much time." "Oh man, I don't have much time, what do you mean?"

"I mean you have to decide to stay or go back."

I told Charley there were two things I had yet to do: I had to go back to be there for my son until he doesn't need me anymore, and I still had yet to make a significant difference in the lives of others.

I asked Charley if I could have both these decisions and have my life back.

"Both? I don't know. I'll find out."

Charley disappeared and I was focused again on friends and family that had passed on, enjoying how good it felt to be there, basking in the sweet uncomplicatedness of it all.

Charley came back and said: "You can go back because your son needs you, and because you feel you want to make a difference, and haven't accomplished that yet."

"But, what about here? I want to feel like this, it feels so good," I said.

Charley told me that I had to choose.

"Why can't I have both?" I wondered.

He said: "You will have both when you go back. You will be connected to this experience and your life experience.

"Oh, like one foot in my life and one foot in this life?" "Yes," Charley said. "O.k.," I said.

And as quickly as I said "O.k." everything started to change.

Charley said I should say my goodbyes, and as I did everyone started to fade and the mist started coming back in deep and heavy.

*My spiritual awakening began that night, and complete transformation became the light for my path.*

**Chapter 1 to be continued...**

**Author's note:**

Look for The Messenger's release date coming soon!