

Self-guided Afterlife Connections Development and Study

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Center for Spiritual Understanding
<http://spiritualunderstanding.org>
information@spiritualunderstanding.org

Project Director

R. Craig Hogan, Ph.D.

r.craig.hogan@spiritualunderstanding.org

Abstract

This study conducted by the Center for Spiritual Understanding was intended to determine whether training people to allow the natural, uninhibited flow of unfoldment from the subconscious to the conscious mind would enhance the ability of the people to have an afterlife connection when they were placed into a hypnotic state. The hypnotic state is designed to help participants enter a beautiful place they create in their mind that is infused with unconditional love. There, they have a connection with a loved one who has transitioned off of the Earth plane. The procedure comprises seven stages: two introductory stages, one training stage, and four hypnotic induction stages that take participants to the beautiful place where love is. It is delivered over the Web on the Center for Spiritual Understanding website and is freely available to humankind.

A total of 22 participants completed the two introduction stages, one training stage, and at least one of the four induction stages. Of these 22 participants, 19 (86%) had successful afterlife connections. The conclusion is that a procedure delivered over the Web that trains participants to allow natural, uninhibited unfoldment of messages from the subconscious and leads them into a hypnotic state that takes them to a place of beauty, filled with love, where they can connect with loved ones who have passed, can result in successful afterlife connections for most people.

The study also showed that we can study consciousness, mind connections, and the afterlife using a research protocol in which volunteer participants engage in hypnosis activities on their own, using the Web as the medium, and journal the results for use by researchers. That opens up the possibility that we can do extensive research in a great variety of areas without having to assemble subjects and make physical space available.

The link to the Self-guided Afterlife Connections procedure is <http://selfguided.spiritualunderstanding.org>.

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Summary of Conclusions

1. Use of a recorded hypnotic procedure can enable people to have their own afterlife connection.
2. Training people to allow uninhibited, natural unfoldment before beginning the self-guided connection procedure enhances their ability to have an afterlife connection.
3. The afterlife connections become easier for people after repeated experiences with a recorded hypnotic procedure.
4. After they have experienced the recorded hypnotic procedure, people can enter a state in which they have an afterlife connection without a recorded hypnotic procedure.
5. Continued sessions using the procedure result in deeper connections with remarkable experiences and profound messages.
6. A research protocol using the Web as the delivery medium and volunteer subjects can be used to successfully develop procedures to understand consciousness and survival of consciousness, test the procedures to evaluate their effectiveness, gather self-report data to understand the effectiveness of the procedures, and manipulate the procedures to test various hypotheses.

Description of the Procedure

The pages that follow describe the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure and background of its development.

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Center for Spiritual Understanding

The Self-guided Afterlife Connections procedure was developed by the Center for Spiritual Understanding (website: <http://spiritualunderstanding.org>). The Center is dedicated to helping people understand that we are spiritual beings having a physical experience. That understanding will enable individuals and humankind to grow in love and compassion so people live in harmony, peace, and brotherhood. As a central part of that effort to help people understand their eternal natures, the Center helps people connect with loved ones who have transitioned off of the Earth plane and are now living on another plane of life, and researches and develops methods people can use to have their own afterlife connections.

The Center is performing other activities that will help humankind remove the veil between the afterlife and this life. Groups are meeting at the Center regularly to develop their abilities to connect with people living on other planes of life, communicate with them, and have them demonstrate the reality of the afterlife to people on the Earth plane.

The Center is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Everything developed by the Center is freely available to humankind. Center workers are volunteers or paid through contributions. All Center activities are supported by donations.

Background of the Self-guided Afterlife Connections

The Self-guided Afterlife Connections Procedure was developed to allow people to have their own afterlife connections without the aid of a facilitator, medium, or psychotherapist. We know that people can be guided into having their own afterlife connection by a psychotherapist using the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure (see <http://www.guidedafterlifeconnections.com> and the book *Guided Afterlife Connections* by Rochelle Wright and Craig Hogan). The psychotherapist helps the experiencer enter a special state of mind in which he or she is open to the afterlife connection. It uses a psychotherapy method called bilateral stimulation.

The Guided Afterlife Connection method cannot be used by an individual without a psychotherapist present because the psychotherapy method on which it is based (bilateral stimulation) opens the mind so the experiencer might re-experience or remember traumatic memories or unresolved issues that could result in psychological difficulties for the experiencer. A state-licensed psychotherapist must be present in the event such memories surface to help the person deal with them. Performing the bilateral stimulation procedure alone may be harmful for the experiencer.

However, we believe we should be able to help the experiencer come into the state of mind the experiencer enters that makes the afterlife connection possible using other methods that will not open up traumatic memories. Many meditations are available today that appear to open up the person to afterlife connections. A method that is not a meditation titled "Coffee Time" developed by Phil G. has the experiencer sit at a table and imagine having a conversation with the loved one who passed. Anecdotes about the process describe the conversations as morphing into actual conversations with the person living on the next plane of life. Raymond Moody writes that the use of mirror gazing in a psychomanteum results in a 70% success rate in connecting with loved ones on the other side.

From the characteristics of this variety of methods of connecting with the afterlife, we know that the following conditions must be present for the connections to occur.

1. The person's conscious mind must be relaxed so the subtle messages can come through.
2. The person must be open and willing to have the connection occur.
3. The person must allow the connections to unfold naturally, without expectations or efforts at manipulation of the experience that thwart the unexpected, unique unfoldment of the message that is provided by the person living in the afterlife.
4. It will help the connection if the person can raise his or her mental condition (or vibration) through focusing on love, particularly the love they feel for the person in spirit. The Guided Afterlife Connection focuses on the most disturbing memories for the grieving person, but the bilateral stimulation seems to override the disturbance and allow the loving feelings from the experiencer and the loved one to predominate the session.

Project director Craig Hogan, who is a certified hypnotist, realized that a hypnotic trance with guidance into a state of mind that is open and loving should enable the experiencer to have an afterlife connection. However, some training in how to allow natural unfoldment without interrupting, constraining, or manipulating the unfolding connection is necessary. People normally will try to manipulate or control the experience. That blocks the afterlife connection.

Description of the Self-guided Afterlife Connections Procedure

The Self-guided Afterlife Connections procedure has the following characteristics:

1. Participants log onto the website containing the link to the procedure (<http://selfguided.spiritualunderstanding.org>). They agree to some research stipulations and receive the user name and password to use the procedure.
2. The procedures begin with two stages containing reading material that tell the experiencers they must feel confident that their loved one is alive and well in the afterlife, and that the loved one is available to communicate. The procedure is not for skeptics who want proof through a connection that the afterlife is a reality and we can communicate with people living there.
3. When they are ready to go on to the third stage, they plug in a set of headphones to listen to the recordings of the procedures. The recordings have barely audible background music intended to provide audio bilateral stimulation while the narrator gives instructions. They put on the headphones and click on the first link for instructions.
4. The third stage of the procedure trains the experiencer to allow free, uninhibited unfoldment of whatever comes during the experience. The experiencer learns to suspend intention or control and relax into being a passive observer.

5. It then takes the experiencer into a hypnotic state where they go to a place of great beauty filled with love.
6. In that place of great beauty filled with love, there is a bright light that is the portal to the afterlife. They are to step into the light and find their loved one there.
7. They ask questions and wait patiently for responses to unfold. A period of 25 minutes of music follows with no further guidance so whatever unfolds can come naturally.
8. After they have gone through this experience, they go on to a second experience in which they are led into a hypnotic state as before, but are to start a dialogue with their loved one, whether the experiencer believes them to be there or not. They continue the dialogue, speaking or asking questions and allowing responses to unfold. A period of 25 minutes of music follows to allow whatever unfolds to come naturally.
9. In a third experience, the participants are provided with background music, but are to take themselves into a hypnotic trance by counting from one to twenty, going deeper into the state and into the place of beauty where love is with each count.
10. Finally, the participants are asked to take themselves into the hypnotic state with no music and no guidance.

The scripts are as open ended as possible, with few specific requirements, such as requiring the participant to climb a set of stairs, see a door, open the door, and so on. The natural unfoldment will create its own details when the narrator gives only general guidance. Many people are actually inhibited by being required to imagine specific details the facilitator provides.

Summary of the Stages in the Procedure

The result is that the procedure is in seven stages. The first two explain to the participant about the need for confidence that the afterlife is a reality and their loved one is available to communicate. The third takes them into a light hypnotic state where they learn to allow unfoldment without inhibiting it by trying to manipulate what happens. The next four stages contain the four inductions to having afterlife connections that progress toward being able to enter the state without the aid of a narrator or music.

This is the description of the stages provided to experiencers:

Stage 1: Conviction

Having the conviction that your loved one is alive and well, living in the next plane of life, may help you connect more easily. If you have much doubt, you may quickly give up on trying to communicate or doubt the source of real messages you receive.

Stage 2: Understanding Afterlife Connections

You must understand the nature of afterlife connections, especially why some people connect easily and others can't connect at all. You also must know without reservation that your loved one is

available to communicate; we just have to figure out how we can do it.

Stage 3: Understanding Your Mind

Most people don't understand the nature of experience, memory, imagination, dreams, and afterlife communication. At this stage, you will learn about how these mental phenomena relate to each other. You will learn how to allow the experiences and messages to unfold naturally. For this experience, you will put on headphones to listen to the instructions and meditation music.

Stage 4: A Trial Experience with Connecting with the Afterlife

At this stage, you will be guided through an experience that may result in a connection with your loved one.

Stage 5: Self-guiding Your Afterlife Connection - Listening to A Guided Relaxation

In the final three stages, you will practice taking yourself into a relaxed state, with and without the use of meditation music, to have your own afterlife connection at any time. In this first method, you will listen to a recording guiding you into relaxation to make the connection. The recording includes questions you will ask.

Stage 6: Self-guiding Your Afterlife Connection - Listening to Meditation Music

In this second method, you will listen to meditation music and guide yourself into relaxation to make the connection.

Stage 7: Self-guiding Your Afterlife Connection - Guiding Yourself without Meditation Music

In this final method, you will guide yourself into relaxation to make the connection without listening to meditation music.

Journals

At the end of each stage activity, participants are asked to write a journal describing their experience, what worked well for them, what they would change, and whether they experienced anything between sessions. The participants receive a copy of their journal in an e-mail so they can maintain a journal of all of their experiences. A copy goes to the Center for Spiritual Understanding to use in improving the procedure and further research.

Development of the Procedure

The original procedure presented to participants at the beginning of the research contained nine stages:

Stage 1: Their conviction about the reality of the afterlife

Stage 2: Their conviction about communicating with those living in the afterlife

Stages 3-5: Unfoldment exercises. Participants were taken into a light hypnotic state where they were guided through experiencing natural, uninhibited unfoldment, understanding its relationship to intention, imagination, daydream, and dreaming, and practicing allowing unfoldment without disturbing the natural flow.

Stages 6-9: Inductions to make connections with loved ones living in the afterlife. The inductions contained decreasing amounts of direction.

The original scripts for training in unfoldment and for the inductions for connection contained instructions with periods of music between instructions.

The protocol was designed so the researchers could make adjustments in the procedures in the initial weeks of the study to refine the procedures until they were reliable and effective, then continue to have participants use them to study their effectiveness. In other words, the study proceeded from design into evaluation seamlessly.

In the first three weeks of the study, it became apparent that three training stages were not necessary. Participants learned how to allow unfoldment and were having connections after the first stage that trained them to allow unfoldment. It was also apparent that the connections could occur at any time in any of the training and induction stages. As a result, the format of giving an instruction, allowing time for them to follow the instruction, then interrupting them to give a new instruction followed by time to complete the instruction was actually disrupting connections that were already going on. Participants were making a connection after the first instruction, so they needed no further instructions. They were being disturbed out of the connection with each new instruction. The stages were revised so all of the instructions are at the beginning, with no further instructions while the music continues to play. The connection occurs at any time and the participant experiences it without interruption.

Participants also wanted to continue their connections as long as they wished, without being guided out of the hypnotic state by the narrator. As a result, the stages were revised so after the initial instructions, the meditation music continues to play for 25 minutes. Participants are taught to count themselves out of the hypnotic state using a one to five count during which they progressively waken.

Other changes resulted from comments by participants, such as slowing the pace at points, reducing or increasing the volume of the music, including more instructions about parts of the procedure, and so on.

By the third week of the study, the stages had been refined and now remain in the state established by that point. However, continued journaling by people going the procedure will result in more refinements.

Description of the Study

The pages that follow describe the study of whether the Self-guided Afterlife Connections procedure can allow participants to connect with their loved ones in the afterlife and the effects the procedure has on participants.

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Project Director

The project director for this study is R. Craig Hogan, Ph.D., director of the Center for Spiritual Understanding. Craig is the co-author of the book, *Guided Afterlife Connections*. He is the author of *Your Eternal Self* and co-author of *Induced After-Death Communication: A New Therapy for Healing Grief and Trauma*. He is owner of Greater Reality Publications, on the boards of the Academy of Spiritual and Paranormal Studies, the Association for Evaluation and Communication of Evidence for Survival, and the American Society for Standards in Mediumship and Psychical Investigation.

Period of the Study

The study began on August 23, 2012. It was originally scheduled to end six weeks later, but the project director decided to extend the research to record information about participants' continued use of the online procedure recordings. As a result, the study continued until November 30, 2012.

Participants

When the Center for Spiritual Understanding sent e-mail announcements that a self-guided afterlife connection procedure would be available for research subjects to use, 30 people signed up to go through the procedure. An additional 15 people signed up during period of time that the research was going on.

The procedure contains seven stages. Stages 1 and 2 are introductory. Stage 3 is a training stage. Stages 4 through 7 contain hypnosis induction recordings that create a state of mind that enables the afterlife connection to occur. To be included in the study, a participant must have completed the Stage 3 training stage and at least one of the 4 through 7 induction stages. Of the 45 who signed up to go through the procedure, 22 participants completed at least Stage 3 and one of Stages 4 through 7. Of these, 21 were female and one was male.

Among the participants who completed all seven stages, five continued to use the procedure for additional sessions. The study was extended to find out the results of their continued use of the procedure.

The numbers of stages participants completed are in Table 1.

Table 1: Stages the Participants Completed

Stages	Number Who Completed
Stages 1 through 7 (all stages)	8
Stages 1 through 4	9
All 7 stages plus additional sessions	5
Completed none or only one stage	23

Participants who completed Stage 3, the training stage, and at least one of the induction Stages 4 through 7 were included in the study. The resulting total was 22 participants.

Descriptions of the Results

Of the 22 participants who completed the Stage 3 training session and at least one of the Stage 4 through 7 induction sessions, 19 had afterlife connections, or 86%.

Five participants completed all seven of the stages and continued to have additional sessions. The number of sessions (including both the first seven and the additional sessions) for each of these participants is in Table 2. These participants were continuing to have sessions at the time this report was published.

Table 2: Sessions Completed by Participants Who Completed the Seven Stages and Additional Sessions

Participant	Total Sessions
Participant 1	13
Participant 2	14
Participant 3	16
Participant 4	26
Participant 5	32

Examples from Participant Journals

Example excerpts from participant journals follow. As part of the research design, participants agreed to allow excerpts from their journals to be included in reports, with names omitted or changed.

The journal excerpts have had only light editing. Nearly all of the wording is the wording presented in the original journal entry.

The example excerpts from participant journals that follow are representative of the journals all of the participants filled out after each of the stages.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Prior to this exercise, thoughts of my husband mostly brought me sadness. I did this exercise twice. The first time was a trial run, and I ended the exercise at the count of five. The second time, I found it to be so wonderful that I continued the exercise for an extra fifteen minutes, enjoying the soothing guitar music. This was truly the first time that I found my sacred, quiet, love filled place. I had been looking for this during prior meditations, but it all came together for me just now. I found the room in my parents' house where my husband, his mother and my parents and sons would gather for holidays, to be the warm, loved-filled room where my loved ones who had passed were gathered. I hugged each one and smiled a lot. Then I opened the screen door and sat on the concrete steps with my husband, holding his hand and putting it up to my face. He did not say anything, and no one else did. I did all the talking, but I felt a tremendous love and warmth.

This was extremely healing, simply because thoughts of my husband now can make me smile, and I can go there on my own now. It is truly bizarre that I could not do this before without breaking down. Now I can spend time with him, his mother and my father (who passed two months before my husband), while feeling love instead of the sadness I feel at their physical loss.

I believe that my feelings of love represent clairsentience.

I truly appreciate this meditation and find it of tremendous value.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

When I went through into the white light, it was blank for a while as I decided what image or setting I was going to create. I thought about the 'loving' place I had just come from and invite my Grandma for a quiet 'beer', but I didn't need to worry as the Garden scene from the previous session unfolded in front of me and there was my Gran, looking in her late 30's looking radiant.

The garden was mainly an impression of one, but was very vibrant with lots of colours and Gran was picking big bunches of flowers and then she placed them gently on the ground and invited me to sit on the grass with her.

I got a deep sense of the spaciousness of 'over there', the vastness, the feeling that it's more real than here. I could see why people who cross over, just want to get on with things as that is the more 'real' aspect to their life.

I asked Gran if she had reincarnated yet and how it worked. I got the impression of a yellow daisy. Within that image I unpacked the information which translated to..."each petal is a life experience yet it's still part of the whole flower. That is how I can communicate with her, while she has incarnated again.. "

She also 'showed' me how she sends energy to her two daughters who are still alive who very much need some good energy. She almost waves sparkles of energy across their consciousness while they're asleep. This is also to help them remember faster when they do eventually cross over.

In the background I could hear my partner getting up and moving around, so I thought i'd better bring the session to a close, yet when I got up and came out of the room I was in, my partner hadn't got up at all.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I was ahead of the process, as soon as I arrived at the very beautiful garden scene my Dad and Fallon [her dog that had passed] were already there. Well before the door. Things just started playing out and I was trying to listen to and follow the instructions on the audio and at the same time participate with what was playing out in front of me. There was a flash of brilliant light that shot across. Very interesting, I am not sure what that was. My Dad looked young and handsome and bursting with excitement about seeing me, as was Fallon. It seemed that they wanted to just celebrate our being together while I wanted to apologize for not being the best daughter and caretaker, apologizing because I felt they deserved more and better from me while they were here. I guess I expected a different response from them. I expected them to reminisce with me my shortcomings and accept my heartfelt apologies but they were like "forget that, be here in this grand moment, right now and be joyful with us".

Invaluable.... another amazing experience that I had not expected.

What made the whole thing real for me is that it was not what I expected. I would have, and tried to, script the entire thing differently. I wanted to use the opportunity to apologize and for them to recognize my sorrow and accept my apology, but they would have none of that! They were all about the BOUNDLESS JOY!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I experienced a very clear connection with my loved one. He's only been gone a little over five months, but his presence was very strong. Since Frank died in April, I've felt his presence at certain times but nothing as pronounced as tonight. We were able to have a conversation, and I was able to tell him how much I miss him and how difficult it has been to live without him. I was surprised when he told me he is also missing me in the same way and was sorry he had to leave. He reminded me of the only prayer he wanted said around his bed while he was dying: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference." He told me his death was something neither one of us could change, no matter how hard we tried. He told me that it's important to move forward and not look back. My experience brought forth tears, but my pain did not seem to weaken my connection. Overall the experience was extremely helpful in decreasing my feelings of grief. I feel very blessed to have had that precious time with Frank.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I saw my father, my brother and my son as a group together. I then asked if I can first just talk Andre. George, my brother replied that they understand. I started having a conversation with Andre regarding very painful circumstances surrounding his death. Especially the last 4 months. I asked him if he would still have been here with me, if I used another approach. If I didn't fight for his life, but just been loving and supportive and not anxious and desperate and in the process just added to his

desolation. He replied that if that did not happen, something else would have. That we had an arrangement to play these roles in each other's lives. That he is learning and exploring with me. He reminded me that he chose me and again he said: "Always remember, I chose YOU!" He said that my brother George needs to have time with me. He came over and I started crying. I was so angry with him before he died. I gave him an ultimatum: Stop using drugs or you are out of my life. I revisited those words again and again the last 6 months. I missed the George who was my brother. I asked him the same question: Would things have been different if I used another approach? He commented that he would have manipulated it anyway and it would have been no use. I just hugged me and said that he, my father and my son are all three exploring life's possibilities with me now.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I like this stage the best. I relaxed while listening to the guided relaxation and went to my place of love. I can go there easily, it is a very familiar place to me now. Sometimes there are more people than others. This time when I went my son was a little boy and he was playing with his Saint Bernard rolling around and laughing, (we didn't have dogs in our house but he has dogs he cares for now). He ran up and jumped into my arms and nuzzled his head in my neck and just held on tight. I could feel the love and familiarity. he reached out and my mother came to us. I told her how much I wished she had been with me when I was a mom and could have been with my kids and been there grandmother. How much I would have like to have her to learn from. She said she was always around and I did a wonderful job as a mother, she guided me even though I did not know it. Then Jimmy was grown up and my boyfriend came over and hugged me and wanted me to just feel the love and to always know they are with me and to feel the love they are always surrounding me with. Jimmy went back and forth between a child and a grown up. He said to remember how happy he is now and at peace, learning and feeling the love he never could completely hold onto here except when he was with me and as an adult he couldn't always be with me, he had to learn on his own. When it got too painful and he couldn't go on anymore he was allowed to come back 'home'. He wanted me to come visit him whenever I wanted now that I knew how to reach him. To try to feel the love and peace that I am always surrounded with.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I was sitting on a tree stump, my grandma came dressed like I remember her before she got sick. And she was grinning from ear to ear. There was thought exchanges of love and acknowledgement and then I asked the question "why did you have to spend the last 2 years of your life in bed with diapers and all that suffering?". She answered, "It's just part of life and it's okay. It's something I had to go through and some lessons your mother had to go through. It's just all part of the journey and you don't have to understand. I know what you were feeling Lenny, sadness and guilt because you didn't visit me because you couldn't stand to watch. I know what you feel but I want you to know, it's all okay. Don't feel sadness. I know you loved, love me. Maybe this was a lesson for you, for me, for her, for anyone..... We're all on our own path. But I love you and that's what I know"

With that I just felt an overwhelming sense of love, acceptance and contentment from her. And I said "you can come visit me anytime Grandma, I'm here for you".

Validations from Participant Journals

Participants experienced validations during the Self-guided Afterlife Connections. The validations were instances in which the participants learned something during the Guided Afterlife Connection that they did not know about. The information was later proven to be true.

Excerpts from their journals with the validations follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Then, I saw a young girl/teenager. She had familiar features. The name Brenda came to me and I realized it's a friend of mine's daughter. She died in a roll over crash where she was pinned and asphyxiated. The kids with her were allegedly responsible for her being abandoned at the wreck. The feelings I got from her had nothing to do with that wreck or the people around her then. She hovered with me, morphing a bit so I saw her in different stages, ages. I saw her exploring. I saw her as a student, studying. I don't know that she did that on earth but she is now that she's passed. I heard her say, I love mom. I miss mom. I asked in my mind, how can you miss her, you are always with her? It was more like a misunderstanding. I saw some food item, rolled. It looked like a lobster roll but with jalapenos. I was focused on it too much and it disappeared, I looked to the side and saw her as a little girl, rolling out dough, working on a red checked table cloth, working so hard. She was darling! Then, I realized, Oh, she misses doing this stuff with her mom. At least that's what I got from it. I saw her enjoying the weather, the fall, the leaves, colors. I saw her and felt her loving the ocean and tide. I could feel her sort of drinking it in. She showed me some other things she was liking about where she was and her condition. I can't recall what they were. The whole pleasant smell, taste and color might be because I was in the yard picking kumquats and eating them? But I think what it is, that stuff we enjoy is a way to connect? At least it can be for me. It's a reminder of their presence.

IN A LATER E-MAIL TO THE CENTER, THE PARTICIPANT WROTE THIS:

Well, how Dee doo? I wrote Lauren [mother of the little girl in the afterlife connection] and told her the first part of it and how confused I was with the roll ups that had jalapeño in them. I kept thinking, what on earth. So, I wrote Lauren unsure of how much to tell her. I can never remember who is a believer and who isn't. Guess what? She writes back and says it makes sense to her. Yes, they made jalapeño roll ups. WHAT.... I've NEVER heard of such a thing. Look, if I ever thought I was making this stuff up, well, I completely believe now. Where the hell did jalapeño roll ups come from?

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I did a session the other night, clearly saw a friend's son, his music and some other things. I heard him playing a song. Later that day, I asked my friend about something her son had shown me and she confirmed that was something of significance. That made me smile. She told me about his YouTube he recorded before his passing. When I watched the online songs her son left on YouTube, one of his songs was the same song I heard in my afterlife connection!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Last night in an induction, I saw a woman with a scarf around her head. Well, it was more than a scarf. As I saw her in different angles, the word, Habib came to me. I asked who she is. I don't think that was her name. I looked up the head covering and the word is hajib. That's not a word I knew although I've intended to learn the words since I've been exposed to more and more Arabic and Muslim culture.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Things occurred while I was in a relaxed state as a result of your recording. The use of the recordings let me see faces very clearly and hear voices. One message I received came from my uncle, who passed in February 2012, a week before my father. He said something to me in a sentence that was half in Spanish and half in Italian. Since I speak both languages fluently and well, I would never mix the two, but that is something that he always did, so I knew that this was a message.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I could almost hear his voice when I responded in a way that I thought he might respond. This procedure was quite motivating because I felt like some of the time he was actually chiming in with me, and sometimes he would let me know somehow that the answer I came up with was not how he would respond, almost like, "Well, actually, it's more like this . . ."☒

Journal Excerpts from Participants Who Continued to Use the Procedure

Five of the participants continued having sessions after they finished Stage 7. One has, to date, had 25 additional connections. During these later connections, the participants have grown in the depth of their connections and the metaphysical qualities. Some excerpts from their journals follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Marsha and I are back there. The estate is filled with white light....so much light ...from within the building and from sky that comes through the open ceiling. the room we enter is large. People are in white, lightweight robes. Their faces are serene and many are smiling. There are inner gardens and so much water...clear fountains of light and water. This is a higher plane. I receive information and understanding but not through words.

The Source is love and comes in all forms. It is purest here. The Source penetrates all forms in the afterlife but some planes are more dense, so there are more filters to penetrate. The meaning of the afterlife is to come to know the Source. These beings are the spiritual guides that teach - that is their purpose. They are here to inspire, and communicate the truth. They are not guides who help transition people from the earth plane, but guides who lead others into this place...the place of great awareness and understanding. Some came immediately after their earthly transition because they understood, others eventually came here from other planes. It doesn't matter where one goes after the earthly plane. The ultimate purpose is to exist in love, the source of all. I am told that they (the beings) are part of the "Mind." They also write books and are musicians. They inspire through these as well. Marsha does not reside here. She visits. She spends most of her time in the beautiful place with the waterfall....continues to work through issues from earth in that place. She knows that she will be among these beings one day. I do not know where I will begin in the next life right now. It doesn't matter. I say goodbye to Marsha and return to this place. I feel a longing to remain on the other side.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I became aware of the beautiful place and returned....moving on to the path and the estate. Marsha was with me but I start to walk among the people in the large room on my own. A dark skinned man approaches me and place his hand on my shoulder. I notice a large very shiny ring on his left ring finger. He is beautiful. He leads me to the right, through the room, and through a hallway lit without artificial light. I asked why I am being shown this. He communicated that I need to follow him and that I must leave doubt behind in this whole process. I am to take this back to the earth plane and share it. We enter another spacious, well lit, circular room. Walls are white and very high. They are filled with large paintings framed in white. Each painting emphasizes light. I asked about them. He communicated that these paintings have been done by humans on this side...they communicate them to artists on the earth plane. He told me to study them. He left me there for a while on my own. The painting are huge....nature scenes...animals...human groups....individual human beings.. Light fills each surface...comes from eyes...is central to the groups....emanating from the centers....These are paintings depicting life on this side....mostly higher planes.....paintings lit from within....

"Paint from within. Even outside, see the inside...the source." I enter another circular room and there are paintings directly on the walls...paintings of the planes. The dark skinned man returns. It is time to leave. I trace my steps, although it is more like gliding, and Marsha finds me. She feels like my companion....like someone who is accompanying me to some places and then knowing that others will take over for certain periods. We pass quickly though the estate where we entered, down the path, through the birches, the neighborhood, the beautiful place, and I leave through the door in the falls. The next time this will not be necessary.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I was with Mark almost immediately. I could only see glimpses of his face but I would know it was Mark even if I did not see anything. He asked me if I was feeling better which I am and he was glad.

I have not done the connection for several days and I was worried I would not get a connection but was relieved to do so. I wanted to go into eternity again so we held hands and went through the door. When we got to the other side, I saw a lovely staircase surrounded by fluffy clouds and glorious vibrant energy. Mark laughed and said "Yes Momma, it's the Stairway to Heaven ". Just like the song. He then said to me that he knows sometimes I wonder if it's just my imagination. But it is all real. Everything. Not my imagination and to just trust it.

Mark was only able to take me part of the way up as I can't go all the way up yet. It's not the time for that yet. So we stayed there and looked at the stairs going further and further into Heaven hidden from my view. But pure Light, love and peaceful energy poured down on us. Mark told me it comes from the Source. All that is. It felt amazing. He then told me to look around and we were surrounded by flowers of the most intense color and fragrance. Blue sky filled with sparkling lights that Mark explained were others in Spirit. So many we can't count that high. All filled with love for everyone and everything.

Mark wanted to show me something else so he took me by both hands and we floated above the flowers. It felt almost like it would be sacrilegious to step on them and destroy their perfection.

Mark pointed to a small but perfect building where he says he works. His job is helping newly transitioned souls to acclimate to being in Spirit. I said the building looks so small. But Mark told me to go inside with him and watch. When he entered the building expanded greatly. Mark says his loving energy makes it do that. He just needs to think it and it enlarges. He told me so many, many young people keep coming. He helps them by showing them love and peace. He shows them that there is nothing to fear and that no matter who or what they are or have done they are loved perfectly. And they will have the chance to right any wrongs that they might have done. He explained although not physical he projects smiling love and acceptance to all. He is like a big brother or uncle to all there. And I could tell there were numerous souls. It felt like a classroom. But not exactly. Hard to find words for it. But I could tell Mark was happy being with them and they with him.

He told me he was picked for this job because of his loving and smiling nature. That that was not due to him being Mark but his Markness came from who he is in spirit. We then left the building and as we moved away it looked small again. Mark told me that is just one of the miracles of the other side. That it's more incredible than I can imagine even though I have been there many times. Like most in body I have forgotten what Heaven is like. But that inside all souls long to return there.

Soon Mark said we should go back since I'm just starting to feel better he did not want to keep me for long. So we went through to my place. He left the door open so love and light and peace would follow me back. We hugged and said we would meet later soon. Then I watched Mark go through the door again.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Another incredible experience today. I saw Mark immediately smiling down at me. Visuals of his face flickered in my consciousness. Faint but real. We hugged hello and when I asked Mark what he wanted to do this visit he laughed and said he was fine with just being together but he knows I want more. So through the door we went hand in hand. But not really physical. We just were on one side of the door then the other. When I looked around I saw a beautiful arched trellis covered with roses. A cobblestone path led through it to a bench. We walked to the bench. Sat down and began to talk. Mark did most of the talking today. As we sat and saw the loveliness around us I could see the path went on farther than the eye could see. But I'm not able to go all the way yet. Mark let me see him sitting next to me wearing one of my favorite outfits he used to wear. In a pose I recognized very well.

Mark tried to explain many things to me. About the Oneness shared by all. That in Spirit we are all one. Even in the physical we are one but we can't easily feel it. That he in Spirit is in me in everyone and all are in him too. Including me. My physical self can't quite feel it. That's part of the beauty of leaving the physical plane behind.

He told me that he hears me say at times that I could barely handle him living on campus not at home how can I ever handle this? But he is always with me and he knows I do know this. Even when I seem to forget. Living away from home was to help prepare me for his transitioning.

He went on to tell me to look again at how beautiful the path we just walked on and stretches into Infinity so perfect. That it's the exact same path I walk here in the physical. Here I see it as sad and lonely so very very painful and difficult. But in reality the very things that make it hard here are what makes it glorious on the other side. He asked me to look at my path as beautiful. Because what seems impossible to bear at times is what gives me the growth I seek. My path is perfect on both sides. It's all a matter of perspective. To try to hold onto the reality that though Mark had a short path and mine is much longer they are exactly as they were meant to be. To remember we chose this life to experience great spiritual growth. Again and again he asked me to keep the reality of my life in perspective. And to see it as it really is not just the way my physical self experiences it. This Mark impressed upon me over and over.

We sat a bit longer then Mark felt I had enough to absorb for now so we went back. I could see the path coming through the door looked beautiful as it did on the other side. I told Mark I will do my best to hold on to that truth. Then we hugged again a huge hug and I saw him smile turn and go back. All this time the door stayed open letting divine love and peace pour into my beautiful place. I smiled to myself then brought myself back.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I counted and relaxed myself quickly to meet with Mark. It's faster and easier than ever. We hugged then following our usual routine we went into Eternity. I did not see but knew we were where the path my path was. Surrounded by flowers and the bench we sat on before. When I say I didn't see it is not quite correct. There were fleeting glimpses of the beauty that was there. But it was once again more of a knowing. I looked at my path extending farther than the eye could see. I remarked that I wished I could go to the end but Mark told me once again that it's not the time for that.

This connection was different from any of the others in that I did have faint quickly changing visuals of Mark as he looked in the Physical but more than that. It was as if I could not tell which thoughts were mine and which were Mark's. It was as though our minds were merged into one. Thoughts were both those of Mark and of me. It's hard to describe but our minds were one in a way never before experienced.

Mark told me that is how it is when we are fully in Spirit. We no longer feel separate but have total connectedness with each other. And with All That Is. As difficult as it is to grasp we become one at the same time retaining that which makes us uniquely ourselves. Although I know many things intuitively when I connect this went beyond that to a merging. A fusing of selves. It was incredible yo not feel where I ended and Mark began. We talked about this for a bit. Mark told me how happy it makes him to be able to share this knowledge he has been sharing with me during our connections. He told me not everyone on the other side get the chance to show someone still physical these realities. Not everyone in the physical is able to have these experiences. Not that I am more special than others. But that beginning these connections has opened the possibilities for us both.

Mark went on to explaining the fusing of selves yet retaining our uniqueness. I was asked to envision a rose Bush in bloom. That the flowers are individual but part of the same Bush thus being one and not one.

I then asked Mark for us to go back so I could process more fully what I just experienced. We then went back hugged for several moments then parted. Mark to Eternity and me back to my room here in the Physical.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

It's so easy for me to slip into feeling connected. I can usually do it before the relaxation portion is finished. I wanted to repeat these to make sure I had a good understanding of the development towards the recognition of connection. Again, I read something new in these instructions, or so I thought until I listened.

I use the sunlight to help me connect. For me, different loved ones seem to be different colors or hues of light. Some are just blips of contact. I feel and see and smell many people, some I don't recognize. I got a few inspirations of insight into something I've struggled with mainly with my mother. I had a clear message, "What she thinks of you doesn't matter." Very strong and clear. First it was revealed to me in regards to a stranger, then I realized it with my mother in mind. Then, my husband was in the picture. I can see that as a big 'ahah' in a struggle to be authentic. Another clear message had to do with my husband and his constantly jumping legs. That was tied in with his enormous consumption of diet coke. Strangely enough, I had the insight that I could best influence my husband by competition. He is very protective of ego, surprisingly. If I give up diet drinks, it may become a challenge to him to do better than I do? I was giggling when I SAW this, clearly. I told Peter thank you for the help, encouragement with my health. I've made changes and I feel him helping me. I could see him in bits and pieces. Then, we travelled a bit. I felt the same experiences I had years ago when I had a near death experience and felt my heaven. I felt how Peter was sharing that with me. Such wonderful peace. Then, we travelled some more. I saw his version of the grant canyon except it was in technicolor, miss colored

colors. Things were rich colors that didn't match the item, substance. The Grand Canyon was reddish orange brown but not like dirt. Then, it became deep blues and contrasting blacks. I saw that Peter could go anywhere and did. I felt that he could and did read and absorb anything he wanted to know. I kept seeing other people like still talking heads. I didn't ask them anything just went back to the light with Peter.

Oh, initially, I greeted my beloved grandmother and hugged my grandfather. Like walking in their house or calling on the phone! So easy. I saw a dog that had gone missing years ago and asked her what had happened. The picture I had of her being picked up for a lab was correct. No wonder I had a clear image of the labs in my mind!

I have a fairly settled feeling with Peter. I teared up but it's about me missing him. So, I get the message to talk with him just like at any time I did before. Also, part of the happy images that flashed for me included the short time we were with his father. That was pleasant.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I got snapshots of people I knew as well as my maternal grandfather who died 8 years before I was born. Mostly, I talked with Peter. My grandmother was with me and showed me all these loving moments we had together. I realized it truly was how I was able to parent Peter with so much affection. All of this was very comforting. I started getting these HUGE, "Aha's." I kept thinking, this is a book of life. I realized everything I needed to know was right here. So, I asked Peter to tell me something I don't know. He kind of sent me this un-worded understanding.

As I continued, I came out slightly and went back easily. I keep getting this intense desire to come out of this. It's almost like free floating anxiety/high anxiety. It goes away as I just relax and let it wash over me.

My paternal aunt appeared and my maternal father came into it again. I asked him why he came back from the Army early? He had been in the landing at D day. What I understood from him was he had what we call a nervous breakdown. I know the story is that is when he started drinking.

I didn't have any real questions established before I went into this. The next time I'll make the intent to know what I want to ask. I kept asking Peter to tell me something I didn't know.

At the very end, when I was looking at my maternal grandfather's revealing that he had been overcome during his duties, I turned back to ask Peter, "Why so violent?" Why choose to die like this? I got the very quick insight that it was the easiest way. Boom, done, gone, poof. Then I saw someone lingering, the energy that goes into long term illness, grief, etc. That fits with something I keep counting as a gratitude. I feel I had it easy. There was no wondering where my son was, trial, emotional drag out. One and done! So, then that led into seeing someone who is not dead. I can't think who that is right now but it is someone close. And another young man who was diagnosed with schizophrenia right after Peter was killed. The boy who was Peter's age went downhill so fast. He's just living in limbo right now. His mom and I used to be friends. Now, I can't really tolerate being around her. And I saw her son, her beloved son my husband adored, dying slowly from the disease he has. That popped me out. I have not seen him since he attempted suicide a couple of years ago. I've been afraid to look at him and see no aura. That's what happened the last time I laid eyes on my son, he had no aura. So, that thought of this

young man popped me out and I didn't try to go back. I went back and counted 5 and felt better. So, I know if something interrupts me, it's not all lost and I can control how I respond to that.

This is surprisingly easy.

Results of the Connections by Stages

Each of the seven stages had a different purpose. Following are the results of participants' activities in each of the seven stages.

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Stage 1

At this stage, the participant states the strength of his or her conviction the afterlife is a reality. Of 21 participants who completed this stage, 17 stated they believed 100% that the afterlife is a reality. Three said they were 90 to 99% sure of the reality of the afterlife. One marked 75% for certainty the afterlife is a reality.

At the conclusion of the research, three of the four who were less than 100% certain of the afterlife had afterlife connections, including the one who was 75% certain.

Stage 2

In Stage 2, participants indicate the strength of their conviction that afterlife connection is possible. Of the 21 participants who completed this stage, 16 stated that they believed 100% that afterlife connections are possible. Three stated they were 90 to 99% sure. Two stated they were 75% sure. Of those who stated they were less than 100% certain, two had successful afterlife connections, including one of those that stated they were 75% sure.

Stage 3

Stage 3 is the training stage. It is divided into three experiences. In the first, the participant is asked to imagine a little girl on the beach. The recording then explains that everything about the little girl that came into their minds was unfoldment. The participant didn't decide on a color of suit, skin, or hair. The participant didn't decide whether she was sitting, what she had in her hand, or what she said. That was all unfoldment. It came from the Source or the person's Higher Self. That unfoldment is where messages from the afterlife come. To allow the messages to come through, the participant must learn to allow unfoldment.

In a second exercise, participants are told to stand on the beach and ask whether anyone has a message for them. They are then to allow whatever unfolds to happen without disturbing the unfoldment.

At this stage, all participants except one were successful in allowing the unfoldment to occur without disturbing it. The one that was unsuccessful was also not able to have an afterlife connection. Excerpts from the journals filled out at this stage follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

One participant, whose daughter had passed, reported this:

I was able to experience the beach right away. The little girl was building a castle. She told me that it was ok that the waves would wash it away, because everything made of sand washes away with the waves. Then another voice said "You are made of sand, too, Mom. The same with me." When the waves washed the castle away, the little girl just said, "Oh, well. We'll build a new one."

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

One participant who finished no stages beyond Stage 3 reported this afterlife connection:

I saw a dog and bird at the beach...i asked if there was a message or if someone had something to tell me there and my best friend walked up smiling and we hugged and jumped around. She couldn't stay long but I asked her if she had something for me to tell anyone and she told me to tell our friend that everything was going to be fine and just be strong and tell another friend of hers, not mine, something about college or the number 8 or it may have been infinity...not sure. I asked if I was going to be fine, she said, everything's going to be just fine and I'll see her again.

Linda had on blue and chewing gum...she said she's been loving it and hanging with her mother.

Five who had successful connections later had connections during this training stage. Excerpts from their journals follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

While I was just standing and looking towards the ocean, I felt the need to look to my right. I saw my son walking towards me, his beach towel thrown over his right shoulder, his long hair been blown by the wind. He looked calm and confident. He walked right up to me, put his arm around me and also stared at the ocean. Then he said, but not in words, that I know this is our meeting place and that he will always be there for me. Suddenly I saw my brother approaching us from the left. Tall and tanned. He just walked up to us in silence, put his arm around me and the three of us stood there, looking at the ocean.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This was amazing!!!!!!!!!! I met with my Mom and my Aunt Janet!!! There was a lot of laughing and silent understanding and communication. They were so happy and wanted me to be the same. My Mom kept telling me she knew I would make it. She knew I would get it. She has come to me several times before and she has told me we can still communicate but that I just have to adjust and do it differently. I asked if this was where I was supposed to be headed because I have always had a deep fascination and desire to understand more and be able to communicate and she said Yes!!!!!! I knew that though on some level. She guided me here, no doubt about it!!!! I love this and have such a profound sense of love, joy and gratitude!!!!!! My Mom also thanked me for being there for my dad :)

EXTREMELY valuable!!!!!!!!!! I had huge success. It has stayed with me also and I know that I have had communication in the past but may have had doubt.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Ah, wow! I decided to go back and make sure I had each step pretty clear in my mind how they worked. I listened to this last night but fell asleep before I could journal. So, I feel like I

was wide open all night. I had vivid dreams but again, I can't remember them. Remembering doesn't seem important. I think I was feeling the gist if it all day. Spent the day with my father, helping him finish securing his home he's hung onto since hurricane Katrina. It's an albatross but it's his. I was exhausted. I worked harder than I've worked in several years. And I felt great. I almost felt too great... so, we had a productive day together. Tonight, doing the intentional, the girl was so clear. Her suit, hair, age were very clear. I popped into unfoldment easily, started to pull things and realized it very quickly. It became like riding along on a quick paced trip. My husband's nephew Ken was apparent very quickly. My SIL had only one contact/dream of him after he passed 11 years ago. That satisfied her need. He told he was right where he was supposed to be. Strangely, last week she dreamed of him again. She told me about it and said she was so pleased at the visit. So, Ken was taking my hand. He told me, Ken, is what he wanted to be called. We saw so much in our trip. Initially, I just wanted to hug him. I thought that was strange since I met my husband after Ken had died. I never knew him. Anyhow, I had such LOVE for him I wanted to express it. We saw places they had gone on cruises, moments he was driving the car with Peter. Ken never drove, he had Downs Syndrome. I saw him with his mom, in his mom's new house, around water, water, water. We kept flitting over water. Then, I thought, "Am I actually having an OBE?" Didn't really matter so, I got back into it. One of our family jokes came to us during this, honey bun. And I'd had one today! The drive through where Ken would talk gibberish to the speaker as if he was saying real words, making a joke. All of these things we laugh about in talking about him, showed up. Boom realized he was with us as we laughed. Even though I hadn't known him, I did. Again, we kept clothing to places he loved. He was thrill led to lived in Tuscaloosa as his mom finished her PhD, thrilled! All sorts of places kept coming up, almost all including water. Then, I got this feeling of him drowning. I thought he might have had some swimming accident, then, I realized it might be how he felt as he was dying with pulmonary edema? It was very brief feeling. I told him to visit his mom, suggested he visit Bob, too. Bob, my husband, adored him and lived with them the last years of his life, helping to care for him as he was ILL. So, I was teasing him, visit your mom. Tell me something I don't know.

Then, thoughts of a friend of my mom's interrupted. I could see her friend with this "roll" of substance above her, to the side. I saw her husband, now deceased, with the same roll. The roll had no good, no evil, it just was... energy? Maybe a script? I don't know what it was but all I saw in relation to them had it. Those two believed in possession. I saw the husband in the jails where he ministered and the incarcerated with the same rolls around their heads too. I was watching and imagining what I've heard she described a exorcism as. She said she had seen demons jump from one person to another. So, that led me to the week before I had the accident that basically ended my career working with disabled. I saw that night I had gone to the beach with a couple of friends, the ritual that was being done, summer solstice and how I felt watching the embers of the bonfire fly into the sky. I've thought my scripted life had stopped at that point. I had thought I invited something evil in. With this vision, I saw it opened the door to Bob, my eventual husband, entering my life. Something I didn't know? Huge difference in how I perceived that time and the guilt I had that I caused my son's death.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

When I asked if anyone had a message for me, the 6 year old, blonde little girl ran up to me and said "I do, your Mom said she loves you, you are on the right path, stay strong and know that no matter what it will alright just know that she always loves you."

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

As for the 3rd exercise, there was a message written in broad strokes in the sand and then Max appeared sitting next to me and hugged me.

Stage 4

In Stage 4, the narration takes participants into a hypnotic state and they go to a beautiful place they choose. It is infused with love. In that beautiful place, they enter a bright light and their loved one is there. All but two of those who had connections had them beginning in Stage 4.

Stage 5

This stage includes instructions to daydream a conversation with the loved one. The thought was that people who had difficulty in Stage 4 could open a conversation in a daydream and let it flow. That follows the example in Phil G.'s "Coffee Time" and other similar instructions to just start a conversation with the loved one as though he or she were present and let the conversation flow.

This stage proved to be unsuccessful and unnecessary. Those who could not have a connection in Stage 4 did not have a connection in Stage 5. Those who were successful in having a connection in Stage 4 also had one in Stage 5.

The daydreamed dialogue was superfluous. One participant who had been successful in having a connection just waited out the instructions to start her real conversation with her loved one. She wrote in her journal that she immediately was with her loved one, and "We both knew that the daydreaming part was a real connection, and so we just waited with each other." They continued their connection when that part of the stage was finished.

All who completed Stage 5 described their connection without mentioning that they started with a dialogue that may or may not have been an actual connection. They apparently started right into the connection without the need for the dialogue.

Stage 6

In Stage 6, participants listened to the meditation music only, with no narration. The instructions told them to close their eyes, relax, and count down from one to twenty, becoming increasingly relaxed as they counted. That would take them into a self-hypnotized state. They were then to go to the place of great beauty where love is and begin their connection.

Two stated it was difficult without the recorded instructions. One wrote, "I had thought that this would be easier without the guide, but as it was I had mind clutter that I had to get rid of a few times."

It is apparent that nearly all who had gone through the guided procedure were then able to go into the unguided procedure by self-hypnotizing. Most didn't remark about the lack of instructions. One wrote that using the counting self-hypnosis procedure was easy: "I was able to take myself into a deep meditative state, the counting to 20 while going deeper into your soul is a good tool to reinforce."

Another remarked, "If the goal is to learn to do this completely on our own, then I was able to remember the relaxing and the steps to get there. I had done this during my lunch hour one day when I just went in the break room and used the tools I remembered to take myself into a meditation and where to reach Jimmy."

Another wrote, "I relaxed with almost no effort and met Mark right away in our beautiful place."

One stated that she didn't use the music at all. She attended to the sounds of the birds outside the window.

One stated that the music was a distraction without the voice: "Without the voiceover directing the relaxation and entry portion of the exercise I found the meditation music to be a distraction. I've never been able to work or study with music playing in the background either as it disrupts my train of thought."

Stage 7

In Stage 7, participants were given no music. They were to relax, count down to 20 to bring themselves into a self-hypnotized state, go to the place of great beauty where love is, and have their connection with their loved ones.

The participants seemed to be able to go into the open, relaxed state without the instructions or music. Some experimented with other accompaniments to their relaxation.

One wrote, "After I relaxed I was easily able to go to my place of love and meet my spirit guide along with Jimmy." However, she later wrote, "I prefer the guided meditation with music to help me relax and get to my place of peace and being able to see my loved ones."

Another: "I relaxed easily and went straight to my beautiful place. "

Another wrote, "I am lucky it is so easy for me to pop into this state where I can feel this washing light of love. It wavers as if it is breathing. Absolutely alive and it's Peter or this essence of so many. . . . I think the procedures must be firmly in the back of my brain. It is so easy to relax."

Another wrote, "It wasn't too difficult, I probably didn't mentally vocalise it (if that makes sense) as much as the list but mainly tried to loosen my awareness? I didn't have to wait long until I heard 'I'm here mummy.'"

Another wrote, "I was able to relax easily not using the music and I was quickly in the zone I guess. "

Another wrote, "Each time I do the exercise, I feel more and more relaxed. I need to be sure I don't fall asleep while sitting and reclining, which has happened a few times."

One stated that doing the procedure without the music or instructions is "most productive" for her.

For one, it was a struggle: "As I said, it was a bit of a struggle. I feel like it's a cue to center myself and do some meditation. Something is definitely off."

Another wrote about her experiment: "Tonight I experimented doing the afterlife connection while listening to some of Peter's favorite music while riding in the car with my husband and friends. I had Peter's playlist playing via MP3."

Effects of the Connections on Participants

Example excerpts from participant journals showing the effects the procedure had on participants follow.

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Resolving Grief, Guilt

The journal entries showed that the Self-guided Afterlife Connection procedure was successful in helping participants feel less grief. Later studies will evaluate the amount of reduction in grief using pre-self-reports and post-self-reports. Examples of the participants' comments about the grief after the connections follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Prior to this exercise, thoughts of my husband mostly brought me sadness. This was extremely healing, simply because thoughts of my husband now can make me smile, and I can go there on my own now. It is truly bizarre that I could not do this before without breaking down. Now I can spend time with him, his mother and my father (who passed two months before my husband), while feeling love instead of the sadness I feel at their physical loss.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

The procedures certainly helps me achieve a resolution. I still hurt, tear up and miss my son more than I ever knew possible. As I talk with him, listen to his peace even as I express my feelings of guilt, I feel some peace, too. I think this has helped me to listen to other grieving moms, support them and assure them... it's all right. They will survive, our children survive. As Peter said to me, "Mom, we don't really die." That was spot on!

Shoot, and another thing, my resting heart rate is now normal :) yoga? Meditation... exercise? I tend to think it's the overwhelming sense of peace I feel. This is amazing.

Is subsiding grief a side effect of afterlife contact? It's amazing the peace it brings. I still cry. I grieve. I miss my son. And I interact with him more than when he was with me, physically.

So, basically, I've been calm for the past few days. It's been lovely. Instead of being filled with loss, I've felt others close to me.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I want to make time every day to do this. I am going to try to set it as a goal as it helps my heart.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Recently I have felt a little guilt for having been able to move beyond the grief. Intellectually I know that we are meant to do that. After this experience I know that my loving again also brings her great joy.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

My grief is up and down, though less deep down and for shorter period, and only when I laps back into the old way of thinking, but I snap out of it more quickly. So it's not desperate grief anymore, it's sadness because I do miss Max's physical presence. I totally trust that life goes on, the love bond is never cut off, our spirits are untangled. Some are incarnated and some are discarnated but we are all

interconnected. The veil is very thin between the conditions of existence but nevertheless and unfortunately not always easy to lift.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I can feel my grief lifting more every day. This is the message he's been giving me ever since the [afterlife connections] workshop--Don't continue to live in the past. Get on with it.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I have found significant release of grief while using the procedure (pain that I didn't even know I had). The grief is from a recent loss and the decrease in pain has been helpful. Overall the experience was extremely helpful in decreasing my feelings of grief. I feel very blessed to have had that precious time with Frank.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I feel more in control of my grief most of the time now.

Reactions of Participants

The reactions of all of the participants to the Self-guided Afterlife Connection experience were very positive. Examples statements from their journals follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

These procedures have been invaluable as they have given me a link to my son. I have learned through the counting to 20 and relaxing to go deeper into my soul and push away the ego. Jimmy counted to 20 with me and told me go as deep into my soul as I could so I could feel his love. And told me we needed to do this more as I hadn't been taking enough time out to connect and that was starting to deepen my grief again. I want to make time every day to do this. I am going to try to set it as a goal as it helps my heart.

I feel lucky to have access to this

Since I started these sessions, Jimmy will pop up in my mind and I hear phrases and answers to questions that I am thinking. He has even told me to stop thinking certain thoughts that are disturbing me. I want to find peace in all this, I am working so hard to not cry everyday but still miss his physical presence so deeply.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Strange, I did feel like I was having a conversation with Simon, but the answers to most of my questions came quickly so then I wondered if it was me answering the questions or if I was actually having a conversation with him.

I wasn't sure. Afterward, I felt good as if I had been communicating with him while he was alive - I felt that good feeling like when you have just talked to someone you haven't talked to in a very long while and you feel good about it.

This experience has left me with a feeling of hope - that I can continue to communicate with Simon, even though he is in a different form now. I can do this.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This is awesome. I'm so glad I participated. This is such an exciting time for me. Growing all the time and knowing I am surrounded by love its simply amazing. These are connections I will continue to do as long as I am able. I hope others are experiencing their connections as deeply. This is what we all need.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This is a wonderful, healing experience. I would like to learn how to carry the experience with me always to become more peaceful and really continue to trust what I'm getting. I still get caught up in the physical missing of my son, cry a lot.

I want to make time every day to do this. I am going to try to set it as a goal as it helps my heart. I feel lucky to have access to this

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I love how each time Mark and I meet it is different. Also the just knowing what we are saying and doing without having to really see in my mind's eye. It's so peaceful and fulfilling. It's so empowering to know these connections are real and available to me.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This is so pleasant. I relish my time doing this. I make sure I will get to enjoy it totally. It seems like being able to feel this love has allowed me to pause in my everyday life and contact "It" when I need it. With my husband, I don't waste our precious relationship on petty stuff. I am not perfect about it, that's okay. So, I believe the techniques have allowed me to experience life more completely. I don't see the dregs of sorrow as something to avoid or need hyper joy constantly. I wish I knew this stuff years ago :) Gives me a more secure sense that things happen in their own time.

Thanks so much. This has been a fantastic experience. I feel transformed and I hope it helps others who witness the tiny transformation in me. I hope they see it's possible to let go of hate and judgement in the face of what is every parent's nightmare.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I felt my experience was very real. Participating in this project has been very valuable for me. I'm one of those people who knows and loves the feeling of deep relaxation but has a hard time making myself do it. I believe taking the time on a regular basis to listen to the induction in order to achieve deep relaxation and make the connection with the afterlife would be of great benefit to me. I know that

my connection will improve as I continue to do it. I feel that I'm on the cusp of something big but I just have to keep taking the time to go within to finally achieve it.

Making Afterlife Connections More Easily

Participants reported that as they had more sessions, they were able to make the connections more easily.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

While I have been listening to the recording every day, I have not had contact since the last time I wrote. Each time I listen to the recording, however, I sense some aspect of it more deeply. This time, it was the feeling of love that I experienced more deeply, and as I explain below, I also sensed the presence of angels. When I hear the music, I immediately relax and the experience puts me in a wonderful place.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

The Self-guided Afterlife Connections as well as the automatic writing help me to stay interiorly focused and still. It feels that I go deeper into the experiences when I use the self-guided exercises. The exercises that you have developed have really helped me in this work. I do them without music or an exact script, but count backwards and always call on protection, envision light, and allow whoever comes, to come. Inside myself I understand the meaning of some of what happened this morning. I am open to any questions or suggestions you may have.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Meditation was elusive to me until I learned the unfoldment concept. I am practicing watching with my peripheral vision so I don't pierce the bubble and burst it!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

It just seems to get deeper all the time. Concepts I never gave much thought to prior to these connections. Also my husband inadvertently interrupted my connection. But I was able to just pick it up again with no difficulty. This has never happened before. That was good to have happen.

I easily relaxed into my place of peace love and beauty. Each time I go there it seems more beautiful than before. It looks so incredibly beautiful in an other-worldly way. Like I imagine Heaven to be. My door opened just on me thinking it open and Mark walked out. I find this to be so incredible. And am finding each time connecting becomes easier and easier.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

My connections are much easier now. They sometimes happen on their own without prompting.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

The connections are easier. I find I can connect without making a conscious effort.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Each time I do exercise 4, I become more relaxed, and it enables me to sleep better. I hear the suggestions more clearly and I am better able to respond to them.

Connections with Pets

The excerpts of connections with pets begin with three excerpts from a participant whose pet had passed only days before she participated in the Self-guided Afterlife Connections research.

Session 1

I went to a beautiful garden with a small quiet brook. It was so colorful with flowers and the green green grass and meadow and such lovely blue sky. The scrapbook of pictures was my pet Missie when she was young with her beautiful chocolate brown face and her wagging tail. When I entered the golden door she was waiting there for me and I couldn't stop crying the moment I saw her. She was young again and very beautiful and lively. She wagged her tail when she saw me and I petted her. I was crying so she came over and licked my face. I told her how much I loved her and how much I missed her. She communicated to me that she was happy and missed me but was happy to be where she was. Her eyes conveyed her love for me and it felt very real and loving.

Session 2

I met with my dog Missie -- she was waiting for me as I walked through the beautiful golden door. She was as I remember her as a puppy full of life and wonderment. She wagged her tail and told me how much she loved me and that she was with me every day. She (through telepathy) told me about coming at night to sleep on our bed and she asked if I remembered the other night when I woke up to feel her nudge me (I do remember but thought it was my husband). She wanted me to run to the brooks edge and throw a stick into the water like we used to when she was alive. Interesting enough when she came out of the water she was dry. We played and then I picked her up to feel her. I could feel her soft fur and I was crying as I cuddled her. She licked my face then I said I had to go back. She wanted me to see how she could jump and run and I watched her with great love

Session 3

When I first went through the golden doorway there were many animals even an elephant. Missie wasn't there waiting but then I saw her running towards me panting and all excited to see me. She jumped up at me like she used to do when she was a puppy. We kissed and I told her how much I loved her. She told me (through telepathy) that she was happy and she wanted to thank me for all the care I had given her over the years and especially when she was sick. I started crying and she licked my salty tears then told me not to cry because she was very happy and very well looked after.

I told her I will always miss her and she said she would always be with me. I truly felt her wonderful presence and could even smell her beautiful puppy smell.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

When left on the beach, initially things started populating the empty beach such as beach umbrellas, then a dune buggy, then a horse (I used to ride my horse at the ocean when I was a kid) but it was interrupted before I could determine if it was a horse from my past. Then my dog Sasha came barreling toward me. WHAT A DELIGHT!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Then, my horse, Golden, showed up and I just held her around her head and petted her - just as I would do when she was alive . .and Storm, another horse showed up to show me that he is OK now and his leg which had been broken, was whole . . .

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Then we were in our meadow and his dogs were there and he reiterated the peace and love and people that loved me were with him, taking care of him and watching over me always.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This came naturally because I love our yard and we have put so much of ourselves into it. My first dog came to me...her name is Duchess. She loved the yard and I buried her body there after she was put to sleep. I saw her wagging her tail as I stood by a rather misty doorway. Her communication to me was, "I am having so much fun."

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Then, I saw my husband walking one of his dogs. Peter engaged with the dog and I talked to Bert. That would have been 8 years before we met. I was doing the numbers in my mind and realized we easily could have been on the same beach he took his second Golden Retriever to. I talked with him. I felt shy, offering him a drink. The dog was gorgeous and I kept feeling sunshine warming me.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This was even more valuable than the first time I did this stage because I saw my Mom as well as Mark plus my dogs and cats on the other side.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This time when I went my son was a little boy and he was playing with his saint bernard rolling around and laughing, (we didn't have dogs in our house but he has dogs he cares for now).

Making Life Easier and More Enjoyable

Participants reported that participating in the Self-guided Afterlife Connections affected their lives in positive ways. Excerpts from their journals follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Lastly, for some reason, I've felt like doing physical things. I've had chronic pain for so long, it really weighed on me. I had gained tons of weight, stopped exercising, moving, mowing, gardening, stretching. Last spring I started doing PT on my knees, hips, added yoga, started doing stationary bike.. swam, slowly but surely losing weight, changing my food choices. This week, I've been catching up on three years of yard work. It's exhausting BUT I've kept at it. I've had a sense of well-being I am not sure I've ever felt before. It's nice to feel physically able. Mostly, it's a lifting of grief that's giving me energy. Pretty wonderful!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I feel peaceful, simply peaceful and vaguely 'at rest.'"

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I am learning to use them when I am not on the computer and can do the visuals and reach my place of love in other places where I have quiet time. It has helped me during the day to stop and meditate when the day is overwhelming or when I go to acupuncture, I use it as my meditation

I was having a belief crisis on Friday and when I did my meditation at the acupuncturists office the other day the first thing Jimmy said to me was Mom, this is real, stop questioning it, you have to trust it, trust that we are all here for you whenever you need us

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This experience of connection seems to be braided in with my environment, people I am around, thinking, exercise and nutrition. I think I am going to become very selfish about this journey.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Lastly, for some reason, I've felt like doing physical things. I've had chronic pain for so long, it really weighed on me. I had gained tons of weight, stopped exercising, moving, mowing, gardening, stretching. Last spring I started doing PT on my knees, hips, added yoga, started doing stationary bike.. swam, slowly but surely losing weight, changing my food choices. This week, I've been catching up on three years of yard work. It's exhausting BUT I've kept at it. I've had a sense of well-being I am not sure I've ever felt before. It's nice to feel physically able. Mostly, it's a lifting of grief that's giving me energy. Pretty wonderful!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I feel calmer. I have been I'll and wanted to wait until I felt better while I connected. I realize Peter, my aunt, grandfathers, grandmother are here. Always talking to me, guiding my shoulders. Even though I was quite ill this week, I feel I've been moved a long way into understanding and ability.

All I have to do is pause and take a deep breath and I can FEEL Peter's arms around me, soothing and comforting. WOW!

Many times, I did not intend to feel Peter, grandma or others. They are the easiest to open up to. I've "seen" stuff around people, known they were lying, known they are full of light kind of people, connected with my animals very easily since starting this. Mostly, I've gotten these huge insights. They seem to center around forgiveness for humans being human. I've learned to honor the unfoldment and accept it as information from them rather than something I am just making up!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I have always tried to be aware of the divinity that exists in human beings. This allows me to find meaning in daily life. Obviously I don't always succeed. This exercise brings the beautiful place into my day to day interactions. It feels like an awareness of another dimension within this one.

It is interesting to me that as I wrote about the experience, I changed from the past to the present tense and lost a total sense of time. As I write at this moment, I feel a strong pull to go into the forest. I may not wait until I am in a quiet place at home. I will let it all evolve as it will.....

Returning to the "places" is definitely not like watching a movie. It is more like a presence that I become aware of in a split second. Sometimes it feels like it is within me at all times....like it never leaves. At other times when I am extremely busy or feel frustrated, especially at work, I have to make the effort to bring it into my consciousness. They are more like knowings....many times I start to feel a sensation in the area of my sternum and then I am in the other place, even as I know I am here. So, the sense of presence comes first, then the images. Sometimes the awareness of presence alone is enough. Does this make sense to you?

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

The feeling of well-being continues. It's like learning to walk and trying out new shoes and doing it on a treadmill turned to RUN all at the same time. Then, the thing suddenly stops. Balance. If I don't need to live the highs, I don't need to stay in the lows either. Is part of resolving grief letting go of the need to wrap ourselves in it?

Profound Insights

Participants are receiving profound insights and teaching about life, the universe, and their relationships that come from the other side. Excerpts from their journals follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I think this has helped me to listen to other grieving moms, support them and assure them... it's all right. They will survive, our children survive. As Peter said to me, "Mom, we don't really die." That was spot on!

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I got a few inspirations of insight into something I've struggled with mainly with my mother. I had a clear message, "What she thinks of you doesn't matter." Very strong and clear. First it was revealed to me in regards to a stranger, then I realized it with my mother in mind.

I think I am fairly open or too open at times like how I could see and feel my mother's disapproval without words. And a solution is now visible. I suppose that is Peter answering in something I don't know? He could be wise that way. I've been so irritated, lately. I figure it's an internal warning. Mostly, I think I need to learn to bite my tongue and let others look for their own answers. I could flip that around to learning to be still and listen so that I discover the individual ways people figure things out for themselves! Much less aggravation.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I felt like I was visiting the others during most of this session. I saw snippets of scenes and people I didn't know. There were several who were very attractive/beautiful. I saw these people, interacted in thought, told them they were beautiful. As I did, I saw the beauty was not just skin deep. It was like a wax candle, melting away this vision of sweetness. I heard my mother's constant remarks about looks, hers, her golden years in high school. I saw my older sister in law, who is pretty but seems to brush the compliments off. I saw what she sees of herself. It was this image of a gap-toothed, Buck tooth ugly girl. yuck! I got the impression it was a window into their psyche, a gift to me. I could consider those images and possible insights when I am perplexed at their behavior. The insights continue.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

After that question to Peter, I had this insight that life and death do not matter, we just are. That's a bit bizarre for me to embrace. I thought there were lessons, tests, tasks, a planned out journey. It just is? So, is everything really little stuff and don't sweat it?

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Mark tried to explain many things to me. About the Oneness shared by all. That in Spirit we are all one. Even in the physical we are one but we can't easily feel it. That he in Spirit is in me in everyone and all are in him too. Including me. My physical self can't quite feel it. That's part of the beauty of leaving the physical plane behind.

He told me that he hears me say at times that I could barely handle him living on campus not at home how can I ever handle this? But he is always with me and he knows I do know this. Even when I seem to forget. Living away from home was to help prepare me for his transitioning.

He went on to tell me to look again at how beautiful the path we just walked on and stretches into Infinity so perfect. That its the exact same path I walk here in the physical. Here I see it as sad and lonely so very very painful and difficult. But in reality the very things that make it hard here are what makes it glorious on the other side. He asked me to look at my path as beautiful. Because what seems impossible to bear at times is what gives me the growth I seek. My path is perfect on both sides. Its all a matter of perspective. To try to hold onto the reality that though Mark had s short path and mine is

much longer they are exactly as they were meant to be. To remember we chose this life to experience great spiritual growth. Again and again he asked me to keep the reality of my life in perspective. And to see it as it really is not just the way my physical self experiences it. This Mark impressed upon me over and over.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

My grandmother was with me and showed me all these loving moments we had together. I realized it truly was how I was able to parent Peter with so much affection. All of this was very comforting. I started getting these HUGE, "Aha's." I kept thinking, this is a book of life. I realized everything I needed to know was right here. So, I asked Peter to tell me something I don't know. He kind of sent me this un-worded understanding.

My paternal aunt appeared and my maternal father came into it again. I asked him why he came back from the Army early. He had been in the landing at D Day. What I understood from him was he had what we call a nervous breakdown. I know the story is that is when he started drinking.

At the very end, when I was looking at my maternal grandfather's revealing that he had been overcome during his duties, I turned back to ask Peter, "Why so violent?" Why choose to die like this? I got the very quick insight that it was the easiest way. Boom, done, gone, poof. Then I saw someone lingering, the energy that goes into long term illness, grief, etc. That fits with something I keep counting as a gratitude. I feel I had it easy. There was no wondering where my son was, trial, emotional drag out. One and done! So, then that led into seeing someone who is not dead. I can't think who that is right now but it is someone close. And another young man who was diagnosed with schizophrenia right after Peter was killed. The boy who was Peter's age went downhill so fast. He's just living in limbo right now. His mom and I used to be friends. Now, I can't really tolerate being around her. And I saw her son, her beloved son my husband adored, dying slowly from the disease he has. That popped me out. I have not seen him since he attempted suicide a couple of years ago. I've been afraid to look at him and see no aura. That's what happened the last time I laid eyes on my son, he had no aura. So, that thought of this young man popped me out and I didn't try to go back.

OH, that was another thing I got this session. The pain Peter felt was necessary, my pain has purpose, it's mine. No reason to stop it. That goes for others, too. I can't stop their pain and I can't fix it. That was very clear to me. I've had a real sense of peace. Like I said, it may be the exercise or it's most likely that I have reassurance that things are truly all right. That kind of takes all the drama out of it!

So, basically, I've been calm for the past few days. It's been lovely. Instead of being filled with loss, I've felt others close to me.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This time, during the induction, Cindy came to me and said "you don't need this, you can do this yourself. you just need to believe" . .

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I asked Gran if she had reincarnated yet and how it worked. I got the impression of a yellow daisy. Within that image I unpacked the information which translated to..."each petal is a life experience

yet it's still part of the whole flower." That is how I can communicate with her, while she has incarnated again.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I have my angry, depressed mother, victim of untreated childhood abuse, frequently sending me ugly emails and going on and on about how I mistreat her, criticizing my parenting choices and mocking my grief for my father. All of the hostility and anger she directed towards my father during his lifetime is now being directed towards me. And she has rewritten history and claims that he was her soul mate and that she can't wait to die to join him. She also claims to be highly spiritual with psychic and mediumistic abilities.

So, it was this situation for which I asked my father's advice and guidance and he answered with what he appeared to demonstrate in life. "Just love". And he projected a feeling of expansiveness perhaps to remind me that I (we) are more than we sometimes remember in difficult times.

I asked him how to deal with the difficulties I've been experiencing recently and repeatedly the answer came back "just love" (verb) and once to keep going forward through life. That loving Josie and being patient and kind to her is synonymous with loving myself. In response to the possibility of another child, again "it's all love"

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

There was thought exchanges of love and acknowledgement and then I asked the question "why did you have to spend the last 2 years of your life in bed with diapers and all that suffering?". She answered, "It's just part of life and I it's okay, it's something I had to go through and some lessons your mother had to go through. It's just all part of the journey and you don't have to understand. I know what you were feeling sadness and guilt because you didn't visit me because you couldn't stand to watch. I know what you feel but I want you to know, it's all okay. Don't feel sadness. I know you loved, love me. Maybe this was a lesson for you, for me, for her, for anyone..... We're all on our own path. But I love you and that's what I know"

With that I just felt an overwhelming sense of love, acceptance and contentment from her. And I said "you can come visit me anytime Grandma, I'm here for you".

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

He asked if I wanted to go to Eternity. Of course I did but we were not the shapes we had gone in as before. But Mark was a huge heart shape like a balloon but instead of helium he was filled with love. He soared through Heaven. Floating and dipping and just radiating love all around me. I asked if I could do so also. And I became a heart filled with love. Mark said to always remember that love fuels everything. That while physical we don't quite realize that. But he explained to me that love is not confined to the other side but we all have it within us.

I asked Mark if Heaven is truly different for each of us and he told me yes especially when one first crosses over. But the longer one is there the less ties to physical we have.

He told me to let myself always feel and recognize the love inside and around me and to share it with all. He once again told me that love is all we need. It is everything.

He let me glimpse Heaven. And for me it was rolling hills and meadows filled with wildflowers. Bright blue sky and blue lake. But Mark said we make it what we want.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

He told me that we are so in tune with each other because of our many incarnations together that we always recognize the energy of the other. His dad also. And not to fret over his physical life being short this time because it's about growth and love not duration.

I asked if he can help me on my path. Mark said he and all other loved ones in Spirit are right with me when I need them. He told me I have no clue as to how surrounded I am. But to trust it trust the pure and immense love I dwell in. He again reminded me that love is all that matters always.

We then decided to go back to my place. Mark told me it's becoming more beautiful because we bring more love each time we go there.

I almost forgot to mention Mark assured me he and all of my loved ones that have transitioned before we will greet me when I return home. But that he will be the first. He knows how important that is to me. Mark also told me never to fear transitioning. To remember the love and ease and peace of leaving the physical and not have any fears. Just focus on the beauty.

When Mark and I were talking he told me to put his hand on my heart then he put my hand on his heart. They were beating in synchronized rhythm. Like two hearts beating as one. Mark told me that this is because we are so connected. It was a wonderful and comforting experience. He also wanted me to make sure I knew that the things he tells me of love are also true for his Dad. That the three of us share truism.

We also talked about his soul name and mine. Mark is Joshua. I am Alecia. And how while physical he was 18 but in reality he is a sixth level mature soul while I am a seventh level mature soul. Which is why our guides allowed us to take on another tragically difficult life. Similar in a way to the one I experienced in the regression.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Mark explained to me that Mother Earth needed loving energy sent to her to help heal her from the ill effects humankind has had upon her. As we floated Mark wanted me to see all of those in Spirit directing love and light to Gaia. He explained to me that the Earth needs our energy to heal from the assaults we as humans have dealt to her. I asked how much good could I do and was told each of us can help heal Gaia by sending loving intentions and that we must help Mother Earth to heal so that the school of this Earthly Plane can continue.

Mark explained that although other planets are able to sustain life Earth is unique and must be preserved. As humans the lessons we can learn here are among the most valuable we can ever experience. That as humans we have ravaged this perfect world acting in our own interests. Selfishly humankind has felt that whatever we wish to do is ok. In reality Earth is a gift we have been given and we must cherish this gift.

Mark told me to see the waves of energy Spirit is sending to Earth constantly and when asked he said to me those still here can and should join in the sending of healing. That this is a time when great

renewal can take place if we join in loving Gaia. I had visions of energy blanketing the Earth and helping to bring healing.

Mark also told me you understand that natural disasters are a part of this healing process. That when a disaster claims many lives the energy rises and aids in the healing process. And that even when a huge loss of life does not occur many natural disasters act as a cleanser for Mother Earth.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I have been struggling with issues and Mark helped me with a process that can help. Whatever I am feeling that I don't want to feel I can envision a bubble I am holding in my two hands, to see what I don't want in the bubble then let the bubble go. It will float away and I can know I have let go of any of those negative issues and feelings. I ended up releasing several bubbles filled with things such as anxiety, sadness, grief, guilt, etc.etc. Mark told me that doing this may not keep negatives gone for good but that I should feel relief for awhile. He also said that I can do this visualization any time I feel I need to. I asked for help in remembering to use this technique when needed. Of course Mark replied that he will remind me if I need reminding.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

He kept talking that I had to know that this was where he was supposed to be, needed to be. That the real world was a toxic place for him, he used the words, they told me I could come home. He wanted me to remember that as it is now why he is so golden, peaceful and surrounded in the love he could never quite find.

He said I needed to stay on earth to take care of his sister. She was strong and needed me. He couldn't go on any longer, it was his time to go. He loved me for the mom I always was, unconditionally loving him. we stayed surrounded in white golden light for a long time.

He reiterated the peace and love and people that loved me were with him, taking care of him and watching over me always.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Our angel showed up and held us close together as he continued to tell me to just feel the love and light transfer between us, to feel the peace he was trying to transfer, he knew it was hard. He said I needed to stay on earth to take care of his sister. She was strong and needed me. He couldn't go on any longer, it was his time to go. He loved me for the mom I always was, unconditionally loving him. we stayed surrounded in white golden light for a long time. I started to feel more peace and love.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Recently I have felt a little guilt for having been able to move beyond the grief. Intellectually I know that we are meant to do that. After this experience I know that my loving again also brings her great joy.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This morning I used the exercise and arrived in a huge beautiful field with small white flowers. There was a large, white building in the field..a few stories high. As I arrived I saw my Dad working the soil and planting. He looked up and smiled.

I asked why he was planting because I never remember that he did that while I was a child. He told me that he always wanted to plant when he was on earth, but his responsibilities did not make that possible. I asked him about his perception of life and he said, "Oh Honey, just live it." I asked him if I could go into the big house and he said that I could go anywhere in the afterlife. I approached the house, opened the door, and the entire place was filled with plants of all sizes and luscious colors. People were planting all over and the place was cool and bright and fragrant. I asked a blonde, young woman why everyone was planting. She said, "Planting symbolizes everything in life." I was also told that they sometimes bring the plants to other planes in the afterlife. When I went back outside with my Dad he told me to come back at anytime. The place was absolutely beautiful.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I connected again with my loved one, Frank. After our usual greeting, I asked him about leaving his body at death. I knew his physical body was weak from sepsis, but I was wondering what his etheric body was like once he detached from his physical body. He told me that he felt an overwhelming sense of lightness and freedom. Once he felt the light, his energy was regenerated enough to progress on into another dimension. It took time for him to be fully functional as there's a period of adjustment. I asked him how he spends his time. He told me, and it was no surprise, that he is very much into his astrological studies. He told me that he was pleasantly surprised to find out that he is far more knowledgeable in esoteric astrology than he was in his lifetime on Earth. He says it's great where he is because he can study with the masters. He told me that you can study with anyone you want; you're only limited by your imagination. He also told me that he spends a lot of time with his son, Rorie. He told me that Rorie helped him greatly in his transition. He said that James shared his energy to help him communicate. He told me that he and Rorie are collaborating on a musical project. I asked him if it was something related to the blues. He said, "Yes, heavenly blues." On that note, I felt him fading away so I started the count to return to an awakened state.

I told him how much I love and miss him. He told me he loves and misses me too. His loss is the same. I was taken aback by his answer as I assumed since he was reunited with his loved ones and he's busy exploring and learning new things, that he wouldn't feel a void. He told me that he feels the same frustration as I do. Our relationship is still just as close, but the mechanism which we communicate is different. Right now it's awkward and unstable but as time goes on our communications will become stronger.

Communications Occur through Telepathy

Nearly all of the communications were described as coming through telepathy or a “knowing.” However, some described a voice speaking words. Examples of journal excerpts describing the communications follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

No real words were spoken as communication was telepathic in nature. And all was clear even though Mark said to take all on faith as words are inadequate to explain just how healing Earth happens.

I find it interesting how many things Mark wants to show me and how clearly it is communicated between us. It seems to be virtually effortless. Yet I know what I am experiencing is real. Its reality in a totally new format. Again it's difficult to adequately describe. But it's amazing.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

The other day, I clearly heard, "LET GO." Cool. I'd been seeing bits of movement for several days, feeling brushes. Then, I was feeling how tense my back is (chronic pain) and searching my body for a way to relax the spasms when I heard, "LET GO." I have a feeling it's about more than my back! I've found myself OBSERVING more than attempting to direct my surroundings.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

The weird thing is I basically had no visuals. Everything was just a deep knowing. I did not see Mark yet when I asked to go beyond the door he told me to take his hand and we would go together. I did not see nor feel his hands but I knew we were holding hands somehow. I think because. Spirit has no body parts Mark allowed me to feel what is unseen. It seemed as though we were floating in space a space where waves of love and energy surrounded us holding us up bathing us in love. It was indescribable. We did talk. About how I love being with him especially when I feel love so intensely. I told Mark I am trying to live so he is proud of me and he said he is.

What stands out to me is that I really had almost no visuals but just knew on a soul level what was happening. Everything was an energetic feeling and knowing

Experiences after the Connections

Participants described occurrences after or between sessions that resulted from the session experiences. Examples follow.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

He is constantly with me now. All I have to do is feel his arms or think and I see the light.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

This morning I did wake up and begin to obsess over things that I did not suggest that my husband do while he was being treated. I tried to stifle these unproductive "what if" thoughts, and in the midst of the mental commotion, I heard his voice, clear as a bell - so clear that it startled me. He then said something I was not even thinking about. He said "Did you know this then, Cristina?" The answer, of course, is no, so if I did not know these things then, he was suggesting, how could I have thought of doing them?

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Yesterday I began this practice with stages 1 to 3. I asked my husband how he was. This morning, I dreamed that he was very well - so well, in fact, that when I woke up, I was very surprised that he had passed, and felt very depressed as a result. I realize now that this dream, which conveyed a real message in response to my question about how he was, was probably a visitation.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Just thought I'd let you know that while rolling around in the hypnogogic state early this morning, my Grandmother (who died back in '92) randomly appeared in a scene and told me that I should let go of trying to communicate with Joan as her energy was low and at that I could call upon her at anytime and she'll be happy to chat. So when I go through stage 4 again, hopefully today, I'll contact my Grandma instead and report back.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

My uncle Benny was in my dreams ALL NIGHT. I woke up and journal about the message I remembered hearing over and over.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Since I started these sessions, Jimmy will pop up in my mind and I hear phrases and answers to questions that I am thinking. He has even told me to stop thinking certain thoughts that are disturbing me. I want to find peace in all this, I am working so hard to not cry everyday but still miss his physical presence so deeply.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

I have been having more telepathic conversations with my son, one or two lines at a time and am trying to trust it is really him more and more.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

After the experience I actually went out into the yard and did some work. At that time I became aware of my grandmother's presence. She stood next to my dad with her hand on her hip. When I was a child, they frequently spent time together in our yard. She was my maternal grandmother.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

Vivid dream the night after my stage 7 exercise. Became aware in my dream that my father was now able to participate in an activity I wanted him to do. He was visually present in the dream. I sought him out to go horseback riding with Julie and I. (in waking consciousness, Julie, 3, recently saw a video clip of older kids riding horses, galloping, and has been asking me when she can do that. My father was basically a cowboy in South Dakota until his mid 30s, driving cattle and riding in the rodeo for a living). I knew in the dream that he had been previously unable to do this with us but couldn't remember precisely why. I had a sense that perhaps he had been ill but that now he was fully restored and everything was ok.

~ Participant Journal Excerpt ~

My light being show up more before I fall a sleep (maybe it is called twilight sleep). and also through out my day I feel peace flushing through my body. Sometimes for a moment and leaves through my finger tips. Now it flushes through my body and stays for a few minutes. It feels so good and allows me to inhale it all. Flashes of spirits from time to time on the corner of my visions while awake. This has happened before. Visitors in my dreams and wanting me to remember but when I wake all I remember were visitors and remembering I had to remember something. I focused so much on trying to remember it than I didn't know what I was supposed to remember.

Conclusions and Further Research

As a result of the study, the Center for Spiritual Understanding has come to several conclusions about the procedure and plans for further research. Explanations of the conclusions and plans for further research follow.

Conclusions

The Center for Spiritual Understanding has drawn the following conclusions based on the results of this study:

1. Use of a recorded hypnotic procedure can enable people to have their own afterlife connection.
2. Training people to allow uninhibited, natural unfoldment before beginning the self-guided connection procedure enhances their ability to have an afterlife connection.
3. The afterlife connections become easier for people after repeated experiences with a recorded hypnotic procedure.
4. After they have experienced the recorded hypnotic procedure, people can enter a state in which they have an afterlife connection without a recorded hypnotic procedure.
5. Continued sessions using the procedure result in deeper connections with remarkable experiences and profound messages.
6. A research protocol using the Web as the delivery medium and volunteer subjects can be used to successfully develop procedures to understand consciousness and survival of consciousness, test the procedures to evaluate their effectiveness, gather self-report data to understand the effectiveness of the procedures, and manipulate the procedures to test various hypotheses.

As with everything developed at the Center for Spiritual Understanding, the Guided Afterlife Connections procedure is freely given to humankind. It is available at <http://selfguided.spiritualunderstanding.org>.

Further Research

The Self-guided Afterlife Connections enable most people to have an afterlife connection. With that knowledge, the development and research have just begun. These research questions now must be explored:

1. Can we connect with our own Higher Self using a hypnotic guided procedure?
2. Can we connect with the Higher Selves of people now in vegetative states, comas, with Alzheimer's, severely retarded?
3. Can the procedure enhance mediumship, psychic abilities, and remote viewing?
4. Does repeated use of the procedures change a person spiritually?
5. What will the effect be of having regular contact with the other side over years?

We can now explore these questions by developing procedures that are used by people over the Web from around the world.

Next Steps

The Center for Spiritual Understanding will continue to study the Self-guided Afterlife Connections procedure and refine it still further. Anyone is invited to use the procedure and fill out journals describing the results.

The next project is to develop a procedure to help people connect with the Higher Selves of loved ones still on the Earth plane who are unable to communicate because of brain damage, vegetative conditions, comas, Alzheimer's, mental retardation, and other conditions that keep them from communicating.

Another procedure that will be developed and tested will teach people to use automatic writing to communicate with loved ones in the afterlife. Teaching participants how to allow unfolding messages that they write as quickly as they come, then taking them into a hypnotic state to do the automatic writing, may result in richer messages.

Plans are being made now to use hypnosis to enhance mental and physical mediumship. It might be used to allow unbridled unfoldment of messages and connections from spirit. That should mean that physical mediumship can be enhanced by having participants enter a trance state before circle meetings.