

## READING AND DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

# *Evidence of the Afterlife*

by

Jeffrey Long, M.D.

### INTRODUCTION

1. When you hear the phrase “near-death experience” (NDE), what images, words, or phrases come to mind? Do you consider yourself a believer or a skeptic?
2. “*There is life after death*,” concludes Long (p. 4). At the outset of this book, do you agree with this? Why or why not?

## CHAPTER 1 FIRST ENCOUNTERS

1. “Near-death experiences! Nothing in my medical training had prepared me for a discussion of the topic,” writes Long (p. 23). Why do you think this was the case? Do you think our culture discusses or is open to the idea of near-death experience?
2. Do you know someone who has had an NDE? If so, how would you describe this experience? If not, what NDEs had you heard about before reading this book?

## CHAPTER 2 JOURNEY TOWARD UNDERSTANDING

1. Long has derived “nine lines of reasoning that . . . prove the existence of life after death” (pp. 45–51). In your opinion, which of these is the most convincing? Which is the least convincing?
2. “I believe,” Long writes, “we have some answers to humankind’s most perplexing question: What happens when we die?” (p. 52). Were you ever taught how to answer this question? If so, how were you taught to answer it? What is your answer to this question today?

### CHAPTER 3 PROOF #1: LUCID DEATH

1. What is the “Oprah Factor,” and how does Long address it (pp. 66–67)?
2. “I have looked at thousands of case studies filled with solid evidence of a lucid death. The only conclusion I can come to is that consciousness leaves the body at death” (p. 68). How does this claim square with your own understanding of consciousness? Do you agree with Long’s conclusion?

### CHAPTER 4 PROOF #2: OUT OF BODY

1. “Some skeptics think that out-of-body experiences are simply fragments of memory that pop up as a person begins to die” (p. 79). After reading this chapter, how would you respond to such a claim?
2. Long offers a “Try This at Home” experiment on page 82. Take a few minutes to do the experiment. What did you learn from doing it?

### CHAPTER 5 PROOF #3: BLIND SIGHT

1. How does Vicki’s story (pp. 83–85) strike you? What do you think about her seeing “for the first time in her life during her near-death experience” (p. 83)?

2. “Perhaps NDErs are actually describing another real, transcendental realm of existence” (p. 91). How open are you to the possibility of “another real, transcendental realm of existence”? Do your religious beliefs influence your view at all? How so?

## CHAPTER 6

### PROOF #4: IMPOSSIBLY CONSCIOUS

1. Long includes five testimonies of NDEs occurring under general anesthesia (pp. 95–100). Do any of these stand out to you? Why?
2. Long quotes Sir John Eccles as saying, “I maintain that the human mystery is incredibly demeaned by scientific reductionism, with its claim in promissory materialism to account eventually for all of the spiritual world in terms of patterns of neuronal activity. This belief must be classified as superstition” (p. 103). What are the limits of medical or scientific knowledge? What is lost when we fail to acknowledge as legitimate anything beyond those limits?

## CHAPTER 7

### PROOF #5: PERFECT PLAYBACK

1. Why does Long consider a life review a “condensed form of healing psychotherapy” (p. 109)? What is it about a life review that can provide healing?

2. “Many near-death-experience researchers have noted that one of the life review’s main lessons is that knowledge and love are two elements that we take with us when we die” (p. 110). Have you ever considered what you will “take with [you]” when you die? What are your thoughts on this?

## CHAPTER 8

### PROOF #6: FAMILY REUNION

1. “Although many deceased loved ones prior to death were elderly and sometimes disfigured by arthritis or other chronic illnesses, the deceased in the near-death experience are virtually always the picture of perfect health and may appear younger—even decades younger—than they did at the time of death” (p. 129). Why do you think this is the case?
2. How does Long address the skeptics who claim that “NDErs expect to see these deceased beings” (p. 133)? Does his answer help any skepticism you might have?

## CHAPTER 9

### PROOF #7: FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES

1. “Very young children have every NDE element that older children and adults have in their NDEs” (p. 138). Before reading this book, would you have assumed that to be the case? Why or why not?

2. According to Long, how do the NDEs of very young children help prove that these experiences “are not the product of our television culture, and they are not invented by the people who experience them” (p. 147)? Why is this important?

## CHAPTER 10

### PROOF #8: WORLDWIDE CONSISTENCY

1. “Whether it’s a near-death experience of a Hindu in India, a Muslim in Egypt, or a Christian in the United States, the same core elements are present in all” (p. 149). What point is Long trying to make here? Why does this matter? What role do you think religion plays in NDE accounts?
2. Do you find the worldwide consistency of NDEs to be a persuasive argument for their reality? Why or why not?

## CHAPTER 11

### PROOF #9: CHANGED LIVES

1. After their NDE, individuals often experience “self-confidence, a stronger sense of spirituality, a reduced interest in material gain or status, and a greater appreciation of life,” as well as an increased awareness “of the needs of others” and a willingness “to reach out to them” (pp. 177–178). Why do you think this is the case? Why does it often take something like an NDE before we humans start acting this way?

2. What can we learn from these NDE accounts that might help us focus on “what matters” and live more meaningful lives? What, specifically, have you learned?

## CONCLUSION

1. “After considering the strength of the evidence, I am absolutely convinced that an afterlife exists” (p. 199). Now that you have finished the book, do you agree? Either way, how did your views on the afterlife and NDEs change as a result of reading this book?