

Is Your Life Eternal?

If so, you'd better start paying attention now before it's too late. Whether your answer to this question above is no, maybe, or even yes, this book is a necessary read for you. You might want to know for sure because your life choices now will influence your eternal life. Your life now seems long but your eternal life will be forever eternal... and eternal is very, very long!

You may have noticed that a lot of my articles lately in the Chatham County Line concern this topic, but I don't claim to be an authority on eternal life. If I've been there, it hasn't been recent. So let me introduce you to a book that will leave you a believer, even if you started out as a skeptic. Especially so. But if you started out laughing at this topic and ignore the evidence, you might eventually end up in some place you'd prefer to avoid!

Take a look, a long look, at the latest book by Stafford Betty, PhD. (Yes, that is actually his real name. I've spent a lot of years with Betty as my first name and have always been female, so to see Betty as the name of a man was rather startling.) This Dr. Betty is an expert in religious studies and eternal life. He has been a Professor of Religious Studies at California State University in Bakersfield for about 40 years. During that time he has published 10 books as well as articles and essays on these topics. Prior to that time he spent a year in Vietnam as an Army engineer officer. Being that close to death and destruction in that war, it's easy to understand that he escaped to a different life of education and enlightenment.

Dr. Betty's latest book introduces you to the startling headline, "When did you ever become less by dying? AFTERLIFE: The Evidence." Actually, after years of study, I now prefer to refer to this topic as eternal life, rather than afterlife. Our conscious minds are focused on the here and now and so we view our current life as our primary state with whatever comes after as, of course, the "afterlife." I understand that our current lives seem lengthy,

Advice Line

By Dr. Betty Phillips



and anything that comes after would seem to be an afterlife. So afterlife will always be the popular name for the topic. However there is a good deal of evidence that life exists eternally, has always existed in the past and will continue in the future. Now I read and understand that we may have several lives on earth and that these lives seem short by eternal standards, I now prefer to think of death as the return to a life that has always been eternal.

You WILL want to read this book yourself. Why? For many reasons. You are a person on earth now and you might want to better understand your future. Furthermore, it's likely you think you have "lost to death" family members and friends. Also you know that you will someday face the state we call death with depression and terror or with curiosity and excitement to join loved ones and enter into eternal happiness. So you can read this instead of playing with your gadgets or even worse tuning into the dismal politics of our current lives. There are many wonderful books being produced now on spiritual topics, and I've reviewed some in these articles. But if you only want to read one book, this is the one!

Dr. Betty summarizes for us the important evidence (yes EVIDENCE) in the next nine chapters: Deathbed Visions, The Near-death Experience, Apparitions (Ghosts), Poltergeist Phenomenon, Spirit Communication Through Mediums, Spirit Attachment And Possession, Reincarnation Cases, Instrumental Transcommunication: Terminal Lucidity. You will want to read them all. I'll introduce you to a fascinating chapter about "Terminal Lucidity" which

occurs when a person with a nonexistent or severely damaged brain suddenly recovers normal cognition. This has been documented to occur in 5 to 10 percent of Alzheimer's cases during the near-death hours without observable changes in the cerebral cortex. In other instances doctors find observable brain activity after cardiac arrest at the time when the individual is removed from life support machines. Let me tell you about one famous case. A woman severely retarded from birth who never learned to speak or even react to her environment, was observed during her death process suddenly singing out for a half hour these words "Where does the soul find its home, it's peace! Peace, peace, heavenly peace" then dying with a transfigured look on her face. You'll want to read this chapter which provides many examples illustrating the independence of mind from brain function. Yes, your mind and brain work together during life but ultimately your mind will be totally independent from your brain.

Do read the other eight chapters and ponder the evidence. Then, in the final chapters of the book Dr. Betty examines and summarizes information from philosophy and religion. He described the conclusions of scriptural traditions with roots over 1000 years ago, finding that the world's earliest sacred writings strongly support personal survival beyond death. Otherwise, however, he makes the case that the evidence in this book does not necessarily support religion. He states, "An afterlife is not necessarily any more religious than this life. These are just the way things are."

Dr. Betty has obviously studied and written extensively in these areas and can be considered one of the few experts on these topics. You'll find out that this evidence will intrigue and entertain you, hopefully to help you understand your life and your choices for your future. I won't summarize all these chapters as you will want to read them yourselves. Instead I'll say a few words about helping our loved ones crossover to eternal life. In 2006 my father moved in with us for his final year and

eventually needed home hospice care. During this time he told us that Fran, his deceased wife and my mother, gave him tickets and was coming for him to go home. Later, as he slipped into a coma with our day helper watching, I told him I was going outside for a while but to raise his arm if he wanted me to return and if he could. He had not moved for hours and appeared unconscious. Lo and behold, soon the arm of the comatose and apparently unconscious man was raised and I came running back to be by his side. I remained with him sensing that my mother and the angels were silently watching. At midnight, surrounded by moonlight, he breathed his last peacefully. As I continued to talk to him for a few minutes, I heard owls gathering and sounding outside our window. This beautiful and magical experience was the beginning of my new education, an education I had not received in my PhD at Harvard or anywhere. Soon thereafter I began to study all aspects of spirituality including information about the powers of experienced mediums. Talking to my first medium, my father told me that he had passed happily and easily with me holding his hand on to my mother and on to heaven. To me this is evidence!

Dr. Betty states that "the case for survival has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt" by "evidence." Betty concludes with the story of a mother who had lost her son in a battle. The mother became "very happy" because she found her son was "free and happy" after death. Her son told her about death: "the joy which it brings." Dr. Betty informed us that this mother was "blessed" and asked us to "go out and spread this word."

I do hope you will understand from this article and Dr. Stafford Betty's work that life continuing after death is true and eternal. And now you can spread this information about eternal life to everyone you love!

Need Advice? Send questions to BettyPhillips@BellSouth.net or 466 Eagle Point Road, Pittsboro 27312. Questions can be anonymous. www.bettyphillipspsychology.com

The Medicine Wheel Healing Ritual — Past and Present

by Gaines Steer

The Native American Medicine Wheel, much like the circuitous labyrinth, is a healing ritual and practice that honors the four cardinal directions and introduces natural tools and images to enhance personal growth and insight. For example, the Medicine Wheel embraces the honoring of one's ancestors, a universal value. The wheel reminds us that all things are connected and emphasizes nature as a guide and teacher. Practitioners believe that the wheel creates vortex of healing energy present in the circle symbol, honored in many worldwide traditions. Medicine wheels have been used by generations of indigenous people. In this country, most extant ceremonial wheels are located in the West, property of plains Indians. The most notable wheel is found in Bighorn National Forest, Wyoming. Digital references abound.

The labyrinth, a circular creation, often created in stone and open to public use, has captured the imagination of Western culture and is embraced by churches, schools, parks,

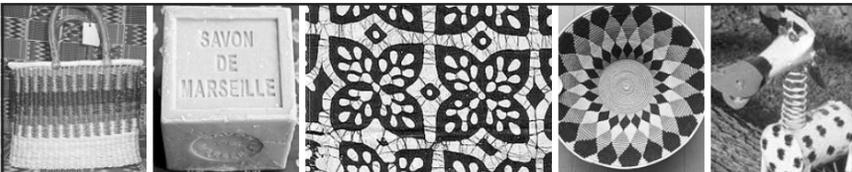


A medicine wheel in Orange County

and municipalities all over the USA. The Medicine Wheel, in contrast, is largely unknown except among folks who are familiar with indigenous peoples' customs and practices. While the Medicine Wheel is not linked to the better known, yet mysterious, Native American sweat lodge, they share many of the same nature-inspired teachings and inspirations. The major difference is that the sweat lodge is a sacred rite, not to be led by non-natives, as a rule. The Medicine Wheel, in contrast, is not a sacred rite and may be "walked" freely by any who wish to explore the experience. A guide and directions are helpful, of course.

As a point of information, the Medicine Wheel, as most commonly practiced today, was popularized by a Chippewa medicine man named Sun Bear (1929-1992) and a woman medicine healer and writer, Wabun. The Sweat Lodge, as described here, originated in this generation via a dynamic vision, reminiscent of the legendary "Black Elk Speaks." Sun Bear and Wabun followed the inspiration found in

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