

Right: Peter Anthony, a celebrity image consultant and artist who had a near-death experience that changed his life. (Courtesy of Peter Anthony) Background: (Jesse Krauss)

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## After a Near-Death Experience, Artist Loses Skill but Mysteriously Gains Other Abilities

BY TARA MACISAAC

September 11, 2017 Updated: November 5, 2018

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Math was never Peter Anthony's strong suit; he was an artist from a young age. He was also agnostic. So when he had a profoundly spiritual near-death experience and emerged from it strongly attuned to mathematics, his whole world changed.

It was the late '80s, and Anthony had tuberculosis and a ruptured intestinal tract.

When his condition went untreated due to a misdiagnosis, his health rapidly deteriorated and he literally saw the bright light at the end of the tunnel.

## **The first thing he saw were mathematical codes.**

“When I crossed over into the light, the first thing I saw were mathematical codes,” he said. “I was able to digest this information.” It wasn’t only numbers and equations, but at the same time music and color like he had never heard or seen before.

He tried to explain what the sounds were like, faltering to find adequate words: “It was voices, but it was almost like, if you’ve ever listened to Mozart’s Requiem Mass in C Minor, you just reach a certain point when you get to the climax and you just — it’s amazing. All this music was playing with colors, the most vibrant colors I can’t even begin to describe.”

## **He made the choice to come back to life.**

He talked to God during his near-death experience, he said. He made the choice to come back to life; he looked at the world and all of its problems without judgment but with a deeper understanding.

During his long and difficult recovery from illness, Anthony took solace in the “witchy woo woo” as he jokingly called these mystical understandings and feelings. To him, it was profound, but to others it was crazy.

“I might well have said to my friends or therapist ‘I was abducted in a UFO and had dinner with Big Foot.’ That’s how they looked at me,” he said. “I went more introverted, because no one would listen to me. No one wanted to talk to me about what I experienced.”

He was changed in other ways too. His senses were heightened, he said. He likens it to a grey wolf hunting in the snowy Alaskan wilderness — its smell, hearing, and sight all acute as it focuses on its prey.

## **But when he sat down to the familiar easel with his paints, the brush felt strange in his hand.**

All his life, art had been a natural part of him. He had worked with a wide variety of mediums, from watercolors to clay. He was studying to be a special-effects makeup artist, while working as a celebrity image consultant.

But after his near-death experience, artistic creation felt foreign to him. He could still paint or sculpt a little, but he felt the talent rapidly fading away.

It was replaced by another passion. “I was addicted to numbers,” he said. He started delving into ancient mathematics and numerology.

He felt a greater meaning emanating from the numbers; it wasn't just about mundane calculations.

“I began to look at everything mathematical as a form of communication from the other side,” he said. His ability to absorb information from numbers was so strong, it was a psychic power, he said.

## **He started using his new numerical skills to help solve crimes.**

Anthony lived a double life. He continued his consultancy work, but also started working with a police department to investigate crimes.

The first case he worked on was a murder case. From the numbers surrounding the murder — the time of death, the number of the house where it occurred — he picked up information. It came in flashes.

“Imagine you're watching a DVD and you fast-forward,” Anthony said. “You're still seeing stuff because you're fast-forwarding it, you're trying to interpret it, but you don't really know what's going on. ... These flashes would keep coming

over and over and finally I would get what I call 'a complete video' of what occurred."

## **He kept his paranormal work secret from his family and friends, but eventually they found out.**

He appeared on television shows like "Sightings," and eventually the people in his life whom he had kept in the dark about his "witchy woo woo" side saw what he was doing. From 1992 to 2007, he hadn't told anyone he was a paranormal investigator.

When they found out, he said, it was liberating. Though it was painful enduring the criticism of his friends and family, he had found a lot of people who had similar experiences and understood him.

## **An organization called the International Association for Near Death Studies (IANDS) helped him open up.**

He recalled his first IANDS meeting, pausing frequently as the emotions of the memory welled up: "I walked into a room of people who had all died and I broke down and cried. Imagine all these many years of being told, 'No, it didn't happen. It was the anesthesia, it was the drugs,' over and over and over again. And you know inside your heart what you saw, that being the truth, and everyone saying 'No.' All of sudden, I was in a room of, I don't know how many were in there, maybe 50 people, and they all had some kind of near-death experience."

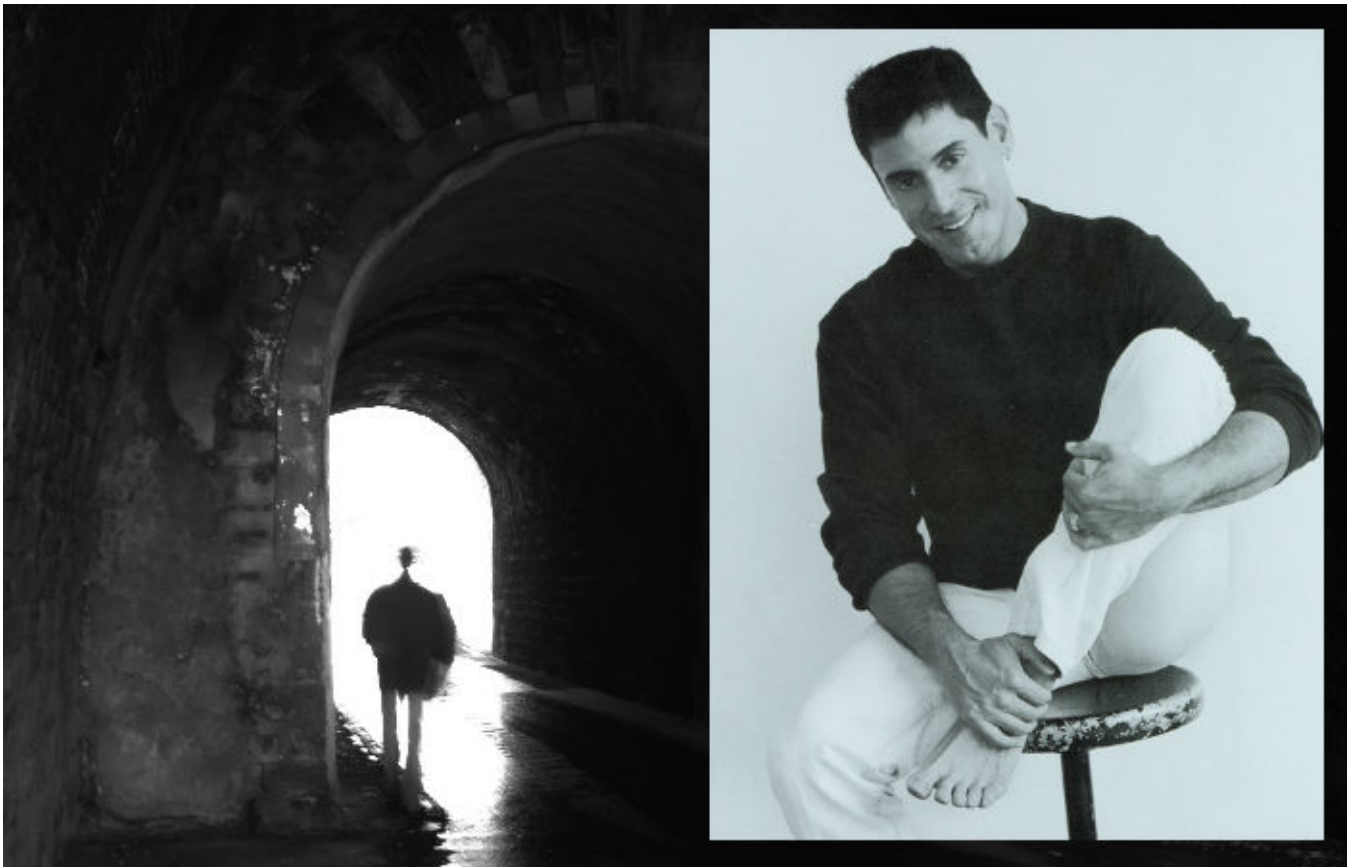
He has talked to other near-death experiencers who have nearly been crushed by the loneliness before they found others who would listen to them without derision.

Some turn to alcohol, some to drugs, some attempt suicide, he said. One woman he knows has been close to suicide multiple times because her near-death

experience has changed her understanding of life in ways her family can't accept; it doesn't fit their religious beliefs, making her home life miserable.

"I don't care what people think about me anymore," Anthony said. "I've been called a circus act, a fake, I've been treated poorly."

**Even if people don't believe him, he hopes talking about his experience might help others.**



Right: Peter Anthony, a celebrity image consultant and artist who had a near-death experience that changed his life. (Courtesy of Peter Anthony) (Background photo: Jesse Krauss)

For him, it's worth enduring the ridicule to share his experience widely if, by doing so, he can help even one other person who has had such an experience find comfort. He has written two books, "Key Master" and "The Accidental Prophet," for this reason.

It's to be expected that people who have not experienced it for themselves wouldn't understand, he said, and he doesn't blame them. It's like trying to

describe an amazing movie to someone; the description will always fall far short of the experience.

As with many other near-death experiencers, facing death has given Anthony a new appreciation of life. “I start my day with gratitude and end it with gratitude. I say, ‘Thank you for giving me a second chance.’”

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