

# Josie Varga

Best Selling Author, Motivational Speaker, Blogger, Afterlife Expert

## Writer's Statement

Is there life after death? Does our consciousness transcend bodily demise? What is heaven like? Is it possible for the dead to communicate with the land of the living? And, if so, what does that say about us? Who are we and why are we here? These are certainly big questions when it comes to the afterlife but what if you didn't have to go very far to find the answers?

Although I am among the roughly 74 percent of Americans who believe in life after death, I never thought that I would ever write a book on the topic. Truthfully, you might say that the idea was actually given to me during a very special visit from heaven.

The Epilogue of my first book, "Footprints in the Sand: A Disabled Woman's Inspiring Journey to Happiness," contains an inspirational e-mail written by my husband's friend and former boss, Rich, who died during the World Trade Center attacks on September 11. In it, Rich talks about the passing of his father but more so about the importance of life. In August 2003, Rich came to me in a vivid or seemingly real dream that would not only forever change my view of the afterlife but would also strengthen my faith in God.

In the dream, I saw myself going through this long hallway but I had no idea where I was yet there seemed to be a force pushing me forward as I made my way to the end and turned right into a door at the end. I walked into this room and looked

around seeing a bunch of desks and windows. I should also mention here that I actually felt myself moving. It was as though my soul was out wandering while my body remained in a deep sleep. All of a sudden, Rich appeared before me. He was wearing glasses and smiled reassuringly at me as he telepathically communicated, "Josie, thank you for mentioning me in your book."

I had never met Rich in person when he was alive on this earth. I had only spoken to him on the phone and knew him through pictures yet I had no doubt that this was my husband's friend standing before me. I looked up at him squinting because it was hard to look straight at him. The only reason I can give for this is there seemed to be a density or fog about us. To this day, I don't know why I said this but I looked at him and said, "Rich, you have to prove to me that this is really you?" He looked at me with a comforting glance and walked over to a desk picking up a cell phone. On the cell phone was a picture of him, his wife and his son.

He then spoke to me again saying, "Boston is O.K." I had no idea what this meant but the next thing I knew I was going through a window and found myself on the street looking up at a pickup truck. In the bed of this pickup truck was Rich standing behind his wife and son. He looked at me and told me to give them the message. I don't remember anything much after that except for waking up panting and sweating in a sitting position feeling like something had just hit me in my chest.

I must admit I was scared and confused. Nothing like this had ever happened to me before. Though I could not understand what just happened; I was certain that I had to get this message to his wife. It was about 8:00 a.m. and my husband was already at work. I quickly rushed to call John and told him what had just happened. His response was nothing that I didn't expect. "You've got to be kidding me," he yelled. "You want me to call Rich's wife who just lost her husband and tell her that 'Boston is O.K.'" He was convinced that I had lost my senses.

I persisted telling him that I was positive the experience had been real and not a dream. It had been unlike anything that I had ever experienced. As I would later find out, I had just experienced a form of O.B.E. (out of body experience) known as astral travel. When this occurs, the soul leaves the physical body to travel in its astral body to other dimensions or realms of reality. My husband listened reluctantly but finally agreed to forward an e-mail written by me explaining what had occurred to Rich's sister-in-law. He would ask her to forward the e-mail to Rich's wife only if she felt it was appropriate.

The following week, we were on vacation when my husband received a response from Rich's sister-in-law on his BlackBerry. In short, she explained that her sister had a brother in Boston and was considering moving there. But having purchased her home just before her husband's untimely death, she felt guilty. My husband read this message to himself but did not grasp what the message meant until he read the e-mail aloud to me.

We both looked at each other in complete shock. I never met his wife and certainly did not know that she even had a brother in Boston. Now, it all made perfect sense to me. His words, "Boston is O.K." was meant to let his wife know that she need not feel guilty and move to Boston. He was telling her that it was alright with him.

At first, I honestly did not know what to think. So a deceased friend had given me a message in my dreams that had actually been validated. What next? What did this mean? Even though I had no doubt that what I had experienced was real, I had a hard time processing it all. After all I reasoned, if Rich is dead and if he did, in fact, communicate with me, then not only is it confirmation of the existence of an afterlife, but it must be possible for the dead to communicate with the living.

I did not realize it then but this would ultimately lead me on a spiritual quest which would later result in a book and a reality docu-drama series. I had been given a gift. Not only did Rich communicate with me, but he gave me information that his family was able to validate. Surely if this had happened to me, then others must have had similar experiences.

Before I go on, I feel compelled to tell you a little bit about myself. I am a former business journalist, communications consultant and the mother of two beautiful teenaged girls. I was raised Roman Catholic and have always believed in God and the afterlife. However, the idea of someday writing about the afterlife had never crossed my mind but, as they say, everything happens for a reason.

Nowadays, I don't believe in heaven and the afterlife. I know. There is a big difference. It is a knowing beyond knowing. I have no question that what I experienced was real and have since strived to help others understand that life never ends and love never dies.

Since that unforgettable night, I have continued to search for answers and have met countless others who have had such experiences. Now 15 years later, I can undeniably say yes, there is an afterlife. We are far more than the physical body and when we cross over; our awareness, our consciousness does continue.

William James was one of the most famous philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but what some don't realize is that he also studied metaphysics and the idea of an afterlife. "To upset the conclusion that all crows are black," he said, "there is no need to seek demonstration that no crows are black; it is sufficient to produce one white crow; a single one is sufficient." Perhaps then, Visits from Heaven, is that one white crow.

Is there life after death? Does our consciousness transcend bodily demise? What is

heaven like? Is it possible for the dead to communicate with the land of the living? And, if so, what does that say about us? Who are we and why are we here? The answers can be found simply by asking the many people who have experienced heaven on earth. The answers can be found in the many profound visits from heaven reported from around the world.

Renowned scientist Carl Sagan is famous for saying, "Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." It's a self-explanatory statement. If you make an extraordinary claim, you better have extraordinary evidence to back it up.

In conclusion, I will say that I am well aware of the substantial weight of my claims. But I also stand unswervingly by my response. There is an afterlife. Love lives on. We live on.