

The Four Types of After-Death Communication Experiences (ADCs)¹

It is not uncommon for the bereaved to experience some form of contact with the deceased. Although the traditional psychoanalytic theoretical model of grief views contact with the deceased as problematic, the modern continuing bonds model views maintaining a relationship with the deceased as normal and healthy (Klass & Steffen, 2018). This involves the bereaved recognizing that their relationships with the deceased continue; a relationship that was in the physical is now in the spiritual.

ADCs

Events that involve contact with or messages from the deceased are termed after-death communication experiences (ADCs).² There are four main categories of ADCs: spontaneous, facilitated, assisted, and requested (Beischel, 2019).

Spontaneous after-death communication experiences (sADCs) involve unexpected or uninvited contact and are the most common type. They occur in all types of people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, education level, income, type of death, time passed since the death, or socioeconomic or religious standing (Houck, 2005; Streit-Horn, 2011). sADCs are common and normal and a natural part of the grieving process. sADCs include (but are not limited to) the following:

- sensing the presence of the deceased;
- visual (seeing), tactile (feeling), auditory (hearing), and olfactory (scents) phenomena;
- conversations;
- powerful dreams;
- hearing meaningfully timed songs on the radio or music associated with the deceased;
- communication through electric devices or telephones;
- natural phenomena including unusual animal or insect behavior;
- symbolic messages; and
- other unusual coincidences, incidents, or unexplainable phenomena.

Experiences of contact with the deceased that occur during a specific protocol and with the direction of a trained facilitator are termed **facilitated after-death communication experiences** (fADCs). These include psychomanteum- and EMDR/IADC®-induced experiences (e.g., Hastings, 2012; Botkin, 2000).

¹The content contained herein is based on Beischel, 2019. That source contains additional citations and resources.

²The plural abbreviation ADCs includes the term *experiences*. In English, the plural word *communications* refers to a technological system for transmitting information (e.g., telephone, TV, fiber optics) and should not be used to describe after-death experiences.

During a mediumship reading, a psychic medium shares messages received from the deceased with sitters (the living friends or relatives of the deceased). The sitters receiving the messages are having **assisted after-death communication experiences** (aADCs) (e.g., Loetschert, 2014).

Requested after-death communication experiences (rADCs) involve experiences that do not fall within the categories of sADCs, fADCs, or aADCs or that occur as the result of the experiencer inviting the deceased to communicate, engaging in specific practices designed to encourage contact, employing technological or other physical apparatuses, or simply intending that the experience occur. rADCs may involve instrumental transcommunication (ITC) or the use of psychoactive substances.

The simple knowledge that ADCs are a natural part of grieving could be the difference between whether an experience is comforting or upsetting. Words like ‘paranormal,’ ‘alleged,’ and ‘imaginal’ should be avoided when discussing experiences with the bereaved. Clinically speaking, the key issue is how these experiences can be used to aid in healing, not if they reflect actual communication.

None of the techniques, experiences, or methods described here will work for everyone. In addition, any ADCs that do occur will not be the same for everyone.

References and Further Reading

- Beischel, J. (2019). [Spontaneous, facilitated, assisted, and requested after-death communication experiences and their impact on grief](#). *Threshold: Journal of Interdisciplinary Consciousness Studies*, 3(1): 1–32.
- Botkin, A. L. (2000). The induction of after-death communications utilizing eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing: A new discovery. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 18(3), 181–209. doi: 10.1023/A:1021323516796
- Hastings, A. (2012). Effects on bereavement using a restricted sensory environment (psychomanteum). *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 44(1), 1–25.
- Houck, J. A. (2005). The universal, multiple, and exclusive experiences of after-death communication. *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 24(2), 117–127. doi: 10.17514/JNDS-2005-24-2-p117-127
- Loetschert, A. M. (2014). The lived experience of bereaved adults with assisted after death communication through a medium (Doctoral dissertation, Argosy University).
- Streit-Horn, J. (2011). A systematic review of research on after-death communication (ADC) (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas).

Disclaimer: The information presented in this publication is provided “as-is.” In no respect shall the Windbridge Research Center or any of its employees or agents, incur any liability for any damages, arising out of, resulting from, or any way connected to the use of the information provided herein. The information is for education, entertainment, and personal/spiritual growth only and is not intended to be a substitute for, nor should it ever take the place of, diagnosis or treatment from a professional. If emotional, psychological, or physical distress is experienced, a suitable professional should be consulted. The author and publisher accept no liability or responsibility for the thoughts, actions, or decisions of the user. The user assumes full responsibility. Always check with a healthcare provider when choosing treatment options.

The Windbridge Research Center is a 501(c)(3) charity focused on easing suffering around dying, death, and what comes next by performing rigorous scientific research and sharing the results and other free customized content with practitioners, clinicians, scientists, and the general public. To support the creation and publication of free educational resources like this one, please visit <http://www.windbridge.org/donate/>

© 2019 Windbridge Research Center, Tucson, AZ.

© The content of this document is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. It may be shared, copied, and redistributed provided that appropriate credit is given (BY). It may not be used for commercial purposes (NC). No modifications or derivatives may be shared (ND). For full license details, see: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>