

A LITTLE STORY

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There are so many stories we all could share about dealing with the after- effects of our near-death episode. For me, the biggest lesson I learned was to put prayer and meditation foremost in my life. Not my will, but Thine. This meant that on many occasions I became "the odd one out," as I struggled to replace personal opinions and desires with what I came to recognize as a source of greater wisdom.

A little story I could share about this concerns my name. It was 1980 and I was about to marry. At that time in the State of Virginia, it was possible to sign a form in advance of the wedding ceremony to legally establish the way you wished your name to appear and be used from then on. Discovering this, I experimented for several days with various combinations but nothing felt right. In prayer I affirmed that whatever name was best for my highest good and the highest good of all concerned would soon be revealed to me. A week later a vision interrupted my sleep. The field of my mind spread with a warm, velvety blackness that shimmered with life. Across its expanse glowed giant block letters that spelled out in brilliant white, "P.M.H.Atwater." I was so shocked at this I jumped straight out of bed and landed on my feet in the middle of the bedroom I was renting from Don and Neddy, a retired couple who lived north of Roanoke. As I stood, I faced a white wall, and now those same block letters were suspended in the air near my nose only this time they shimmered warm black. The colors had reversed. I ran screaming into the hall. Don and Neddy heard me and came running. The three of us talked about the incident. If indeed this strange "name" was the answer to my prayer then it was the silliest ever. I thought the name was brash, egotistical, ridiculous, and I flatly refused to accept it until I "heard" my complaints. Had I not asked for a name that would align with the greater good? Had I not requested heavenly assistance? Back into prayer I went.

At issue was never my wants, but what was right. I affirmed in prayer that God knew better than I what would be best for the life I would soon share with my beloved, and for my commitment to near-death research. My choice was Truth with a capital "T" nothing less, nothing more, nothing else. By the following week the name felt so comfortable that I couldn't imagine life without it. Considering it a sacred gift, I filled out the proper forms to make it legal. No, the initials don't stand for anything, and are easily pronounced when slurred together as "PMH." After 21 years of wearing my "silly" name, I can attest to the wisdom of its gift.

P.M.H.Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.) is the author of many books concerning near-death states, the latest being FUTURE MEMORY, CHILDREN OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, and THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE. Check out her website at www.pmhatwater.com for more information about her other books and her "Brain Shift/Spirit Shift" model for exploring transformations of consciousness.