# Dr Raymond Moody revives ancient psychomanteum ritual to help grieving connect with departed loved ones



The profound yearning to reconnect with deceased loved ones—to express feelings, seek closure, or simply to hear their voices—resonates deeply within the human experience. While many may dismiss such desires as fanciful notions reserved for the realms of film or deceitful mediums, Dr. Raymond Moody, a leading figure in the study of near-death experiences, insists that these encounters can transcend mere illusion. According to Dr. Moody, all that is required is a somber environment, a reflective surface, and an open disposition to make contact with those who have passed away.

Dr. Moody, who has dedicated several decades to exploring the metaphysical, originally held a far more sceptical view on the afterlife. Raised in a household indifferent to religious practice, he saw such concepts as comedic rather than substantial. However, his philosophical studies at the University of Virginia changed his perspective, particularly after he met Dr. George Ritchie, a psychiatrist who recounted his own near-death experience at the age of 20. This pivotal encounter sparked a fervent interest in what lies beyond the mortal coil.

Despite his reverence for science and empirical study, Dr. Moody initially approached the ancient practice of mirror gazing with skepticism. Described in his writings as reminiscent of fraudulent fortune-telling, he initially questioned its sincerity. However, driven by a desire for discovery, he constructed a ‘psychomanteum’, a private chamber designed to facilitate spirited communication. This modern iteration mirrors ancient Greek rituals that sought to conjure the voices of the deceased, which involved gazing into reflective surfaces to connect with the spirit world.

Participants in Dr. Moody's psychomanteum experiments engage in a structured process. They enter the dimly lit chamber with mementoes of their loved ones and are guided to clear their minds as they focus on the deceased. The method, reminiscent of scrying techniques, aims to evoke a sense of connection that can offer significant solace to those grappling with grief. While one participant reported a vision of his mother, appearing healthier than in her last days, another felt an overwhelming presence that prompted an urgent message from a nephew who had taken his own life.

Dr. Moody’s findings suggest that many participants emerge from their experiences convinced of their authenticity, often describing them as “realer than real.” Intriguingly, he observed that unlike contemporary advancements in artificial intelligence, which create digital avatars of the deceased, the psychomanteum invites genuine encounters grounded in emotional and psychological healing.

Skeptical of his own ability to see apparitions, Dr. Moody ultimately underwent the experience himself. His expectations were upended when he met the spirit of his paternal grandmother, a figure from his life with whom he had experienced a tumultuous relationship. This encounter not only transformed his view of afterlife communication but also demonstrated to him that individuals often see not who they want but rather who they need.

Dr. Moody emphasises that these experiences are not just harmless; they often serve as catalysts for healing. As echoed by Dr. William Roll, an authority on apparitions, there has not been a single reported case of harm arising from such encounters. Instead, they frequently bring about profound relief from grief, enabling individuals to move toward acceptance and understanding.

In a world where technology often overwhelms, Dr. Moody's work with the psychomanteum offers a counterbalance—a return to the deeply human desire for connection and closure. He maintains that the nature of these experiences emphasises the transformative power of love, urging that the yearning to communicate with those we’ve lost may be a vital aspect of our collective humanity.

Reunions: Visionary Encounters with Departed Loved Ones, Dr. Moody's latest work, invites readers to explore these intimate encounters and reassess their understandings of grief and love, framing the journey through loss not just as an end but as part of a continuum.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14716997/You-speak-dead-loved-ones-living-proof-you-how.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14716997/You-speak-dead-loved-ones-living-proof-you-how.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychomanteum), [[6]](https://breath4balance.com/2025/02/18/the-black-mirror-and-the-psychomanteum-experience-of-dr-raymond-moody/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing), [[5]](https://www.som.org/3library/interviews/moody.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14716997/You-speak-dead-loved-ones-living-proof-you-how.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://breath4balance.com/2025/02/18/the-black-mirror-and-the-psychomanteum-experience-of-dr-raymond-moody/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://psychiclibrary.com/psychomanteum//), [[7]](https://www.gaia.com/article/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14716997/You-speak-dead-loved-ones-living-proof-you-how.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychomanteum> - The psychomanteum is a small, enclosed area designed to facilitate communication with spirits. In parapsychology and Spiritualism, it typically features a comfortable chair, dim lighting, and a mirror angled to reflect only darkness, aiming to connect with the deceased. The concept was popularised by Dr. Raymond Moody, who believed it could aid in resolving grief. He compared it to the ancient Greek Necromanteion, suggesting its function as a form of scrying. ([en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychomanteum?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing> - Dr. Raymond Moody, a pioneer in near-death experience research, explored mirror-gazing as a method to contact the deceased. He constructed a modern psychomanteum—a darkened room with a large mirror and a chair positioned to avoid self-reflection. Participants would gaze into the mirror, aiming to encounter apparitions of departed loved ones. Moody's experiments suggested that this technique could facilitate therapeutic contacts, offering solace to the grieving. ([psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk](https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://psychiclibrary.com/psychomanteum//> - A psychomanteum is a small, dark chamber used to facilitate communication with a particular departed soul. Its origin stems from an ancient Greek ritual for contacting those in the spirit realm. At that time, individuals were led through an underground maze to a dimly lit place so they would be away from outside stimuli. In that area was a cauldron or bowl filled with water or oil. The person would gaze directly into the cauldron, look at and focus on his own reflection in the hope that the spirit would appear. ([psychiclibrary.com](https://psychiclibrary.com/psychomanteum//?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.som.org/3library/interviews/moody.html> - In an interview, Dr. Raymond Moody discussed his psychomanteum experiments, revealing that a significant proportion of participants experienced apparitions they perceived as real events. He noted that many subjects reported seeing apparitions first form in the mirror before emerging in front of them, sometimes accompanied by audible voices. These experiences often helped individuals address unfinished business and alleviate grief. ([som.org](https://www.som.org/3library/interviews/moody.html?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://breath4balance.com/2025/02/18/the-black-mirror-and-the-psychomanteum-experience-of-dr-raymond-moody/> - The black mirror, often used for scrying, plays a central role in the psychomanteum—a practice of spirit contact through reflective surfaces. The term psychomanteum originates from Greek, meaning “a place for seeing the soul.” Ancient cultures, such as the Greeks, believed that mirrors could serve as portals to communicate with the dead, often consulting oracles in darkened chambers where they gazed into still water or polished metal mirrors. ([breath4balance.com](https://breath4balance.com/2025/02/18/the-black-mirror-and-the-psychomanteum-experience-of-dr-raymond-moody/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.gaia.com/article/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing> - Dr. Raymond Moody, a philosopher, psychiatrist, physician, and author of Life After Life (1975) and Reunions: Visionary Encounters with Departed Loved Ones (1993) is best known for coining the term near-death experience and for his research on consciousness and the afterlife. Inspired by theater of the mind techniques found in ancient texts, Moody revived the concept of the psychomanteum as a method for making contact with spirits. ([gaia.com](https://www.gaia.com/article/psychomanteum-mirror-gazing?utm_source=openai))