# Near-death experiences prompt profound rethinking of work and meaning among survivors



Recent research into near-death experiences (NDEs) has highlighted significant shifts in individuals’ perspectives on work and meaning following brushes with death. NDEs, which can involve sensations such as floating above one’s body or encountering spiritual beings, are deeply personal and transformative. While these experiences have been studied since the 1970s, there remains a limited understanding of their implications for people’s lives post-incident.

A recent study explored how NDEs influenced the professional lives of 14 working adults, many of whom faced medical emergencies such as heart attacks or serious accidents. The findings challenge traditional notions of success and workplace motivation, revealing that these experiences often lead to a stronger desire for meaningful work aligned with newfound personal values.

Participants reported a pronounced shift in their work priorities after their experiences. One participant described a transformative moment following an episode where her heart began beating erratically. She stated, "I was not interested in doing nonsense … I just was not gonna waste my time on nonsense.” This sentiment echoed throughout the group, as many individuals chose to pursue work that felt significant and impactful rather than adhering to previous career paths driven by financial gain or prestige.

A common theme emerged: a quest for authenticity and personal fulfilment. One individual articulated her decision to change careers dramatically, explaining, “I woke up in that hospital bed, I had a knowing that the character I was playing was no longer working for me and I had to change characters.” This reorientation often led to new ventures where individuals could support others, such as providing guidance during life's final stages.

The study also examined shifts in motivation, finding that participants often lost interest in extrinsic incentives like salary and promotion. Instead, they became more driven by internal motivations related to personal growth and the desire to make a positive impact. One interviewee noted the transformative realisation that upon surviving their NDE, they felt a deeper sense of purpose: "It’s hard to come out of this experience and not feel there’s a reason why you’re here."

Moreover, the research highlighted profound changes in interpersonal dynamics at work. Participants described a transition from viewing workplace relationships as transactional to valuing deeper connections with colleagues and clients. As one participant put it, “My relationships across the board are deeper, are more connected with people, a hundred per cent.” This transformation suggests that NDEs may serve as catalysts for enhancing emotional intelligence and compassion within professional settings.

The implications of these findings extend beyond the individuals who have undergone NDEs. They provide insights for those who have not experienced such events, emphasizing the importance of meaningful work and relational engagement. Current shifts in workplace culture, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, may benefit from the lessons derived from NDE survivors. The study suggests that workers generally seek to fulfil three core needs: economic security, meaningful work, and healthy relationships. The after-effects of NDEs appear to diminish the emphasis on economic security while elevating the importance of meaningful labour and authentic connections.

In conclusion, the narratives of those who have experienced NDEs may serve as a roadmap for both employees and employers striving for a more enriching work experience. As one participant succinctly stated, “It’s about relationships, not achievements,” underscoring the broader lessons that can be gleaned for enhancing workplace well-being and satisfaction.

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

## Bibliography

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