**[Why does neuroscientist Dr. Eben Alexander believe that consciousness exists beyond the brain?](https://www.quora.com/Why-does-neuroscientist-Dr-Eben-Alexander-believe-that-consciousness-exists-beyond-the-brain" \t "_top)**

[](https://www.quora.com/profile/Richard-Martini-1)

[Richard Martini](https://www.quora.com/profile/Richard-Martini-1), Film Director Writer at Internet Movie Database (1985-present)

[Answered Sep 6](https://www.quora.com/Why-does-neuroscientist-Dr-Eben-Alexander-believe-that-consciousness-exists-beyond-the-brain/answer/Richard-Martini-1)

I can’t speak as to why he might believe that consciousness exists beyond the brain, but I can point to the research that agrees with him. If you take a look at Dr. Bruce Greyson’s “Is Consciousness Produced by the Brain?” (<https://youtu.be/sPGZSC8odIU> and also <https://youtu.be/4RGizqsLumo>) talk on YouTube, you’ll see him cite the medical cases that agree with that conclusion.

If one looks at the work of Mario Beauregard, PhD (“Brain Wars”) one can read about near death experiences where people blind from birth were able to see color during a near death event. Or Dr. Sam Parnia’s “Aware Project” where ten years of case studies demonstrate that consciousness can and does exist outside a working, living brain.

One example is former Navy science officer David Bennett’s NDE he wrote about in “Voyage of Purpose.” Bennett drowned for 12 minutes - and during that time, had a life review, met people who he recognized as having been with him for much longer than this lifetime. He also was shown that in the future he would get cancer and survive it.

When he was rescued (the boat had capsized, and when he body slammed against a rock, the water was expelled from his lungs) he was studied by the lab at UVA on a number of occasions. It wasn’t until later in life, during a meditation class, did he recall all the details of that event - and then when the doctor came in to tell him he had terminal cancer (It wasn’t his regular doctor, but the same one that had appeared during his near death event) he responded by saying “Thank you Doctor, I knew that - and I’m going to survive it.”

The doctor tried to correct him, to get things in order - but Bennett had already seen that he would survive it.

It’s in the reporting of “new information” that a person is able to point to consciousness existing outside the brain. If during a near death event - everything that one had been brought up to experience occurred, then it could be claimed that it was something that was “imagined.” It’s when a person experiences “new information” that one can point to why it could not be something imaginary.

People sometimes see people who’ve died who they had no idea they’d died (and after recovery, learn that indeed, while they were in the operating room their loved one had died.) Or people learn new details about their own life and journey - and later find these details to be accurate. There are many reports posted on the IANDS (dot) org website - and if one takes the time to read them, they’ll see these cases of “new evidence.”

The part of Dr. Alexander’s NDE that was not known to him, but later turned out to be accurate was the “guide” who escorted him during this journey. (By the way, the “heaven” of the title was chosen by the publisher, Dr. Alexander’s choice for a title was different, but a “proof” in scientific terms is an “argument for or against” a particular item, as well as “evidentiary.”)

During Dr. Alexander’s “journey” he was escorted, guided by a woman he said he’d never met before, but instantly recognized. (Like in David Bennett’s experience.) Many people report meeting “guides” or “teachers” during an NDE - as well as while under deep hypnosis. But Dr. Alexander didn’t call this woman anything but someone he felt he’d known “forever” who guided him around this “afterlife adventure.”

It was some period of time after he recovered, that he received a packet of information from his birth family. Dr. Alexander was put up for adoption, so he was not aware of his birth family, nor had he ever spoken with them. They had taken the time to write to him, and tell him about his birth family, and included a photograph of his sister, who “died before he was born.”

He says he instantly recognized the sister in the photo as the person who had guided him during this journey. Not someone he’d ever met, was ever aware of existing, and yet had met while he his body and brain were not functioning properly.

So it’s not that Dr. Alexander “believes” that consciousness exists after life - it’s that he was shown an example of how it does, and in his own case, what that might represent. I know that “Newsweek” debunked Dr. Alexander’s claims - but that “debunking” doesn’t address the fact that there are thousands of clinical cases, it was prior to the Dr. Parnia’s ten year study being released, and there are thousands of cases in the office of Dr. Bruce Greyson UVA that he hasn’t had the time to thoroughly examine.

But if you’d like to see them, or examine them, I’d recommend watching the latest IANDS (dot) org talk where Dr. Greyson addresses his latest work (and was filmed and put on line two weeks ago.)

<https://med.virginia.edu/perceptual-studies/our-research/near-death-experiences-ndes/media-nde/>