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BOOK REVIEWS

SOUL SHIFT: FINDING WHERE THE DEAD GO by Mark Ireland. Frog Books, Berkeley, CA, 2008. \$16.95. ISBN 978 1 58394 251 2

The author of this lovely book is Mark Ireland, the son of the mid-twentieth-century psychic medium Dr Richard Ireland, renowned as being a 'psychic to the stars'. Although exposed to mediumship from a young age, Mark had chosen a more traditional path in life based on pursuing 'worldly standards of success'. However, Mark's life was thrown into turmoil by the unexpected death of his much loved youngest son, Brandon. This book describes the cathartic journey of the author and his quest to make sense of the death of his dearly loved son, the result being that Mark was drawn back into the world of mediumship that he had avoided as he grew older.

At the beginning of the book Mark reflects on his previous slavery to routine while remaining ignorant to things unfolding before him. The book describes aspects of Brandon, Mark and their family life and begins with the morning of Brandon's death. Mark's feelings of uneasiness about Brandon going hiking in the mountains with his friends were thwarted by Brandon's insistence that he was going no matter what.

Following Brandon's tragic death Mark became more open to his father's work that he had cast aside years before. Throughout the book Mark refers to paying attention to the subtle signs he was given and the role that synchronicity began to play in his life. Mark began to recognise his own psychic abilities instead of pushing them to one side as he had done prior to Brandon's death. These subtle signs were also noticed by those close to Brandon. His older brother, Stephen, had an unusual experience of connecting with Brandon shortly after his death and their musician friend James received inspiration while composing and recording what he describes as his best piece of music yet, called *The Other Side*.

The theme of this book is Mark's heartfelt journey of working through his grief and turning it into something positive, thus helping others faced with similar situations. Prominent features of the book are his readings with three different mediums and Mark's participation in a *Discovery Channel* experiment along with other mediums. All the mediums, never having met the author, reported consistent themes. Their messages were so precise and meaningful to Mark that he was convinced of their authenticity, despite exploring other possible explanations first, thus reinforcing his conviction of some form of post-mortem existence.

This is a moving example of how, through the devastation of losing his son, Mark found a new understanding of life and how he has now found new ways to express his love in all aspects of his life. Having empathy with others has provided a means of healing for others as well as himself. The book has great insight, and wisdom which has the ability to overturn any situation into something positive. For example, he writes: "I came to realize, or remember, the ultimate guideline and directive for everything in the universe is love. God,

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Book Reviews

the creative source, is the wellspring of all positive energy and love; compassion is naturally intended to be the catalyst for all our actions.”

I'm sure this book will bring great comfort and peace to all who read it.

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