

Spirit message saves woman's life

THE EDITOR'S E-MAIL INTERVIEW WITH A SERVING MEDIUM

Below, Hampshire-based medium Terri Stromeyer answers a series of questions about her life and psychic gifts. Although not raised as a Spiritualist, Terri explains that her mother encouraged her to develop her mediumship and tells how a message from a "dead" grandmother stopped a woman from ending her own life. The first question put to Terri was, "How did you discover your mediumship?"

I WAS living in Kent when I had my first psychic experience. I was seven and my mother was expecting my younger sister.

She wanted to give birth at home, so I went to stay with family friends who lived in an old rambling property in Hawkhurst.

I was sharing a bedroom with two other children when I became aware of a noise on the landing. I could hear someone walking along the corridor to the bathroom, the door closing and the toilet being flushed.

This happened repeatedly, but I could also sense a great sadness and depression within my whole being. It frightened me to such an extent that I began distressing the other two children, who couldn't understand what was happening.

Their parents tried to console me, telling me that there was no one in the bathroom and that it was probably the old pipes clanking and floorboards creaking. However, as much as they tried, my fears worsened and I just had to get out of the house. My father came and picked me up.

I forgot about the incident until some years later when I mentioned it to my mother, who told me that someone had committed suicide in the same house by hanging himself in the bathroom.

Do you have a family? If so, how do they regard your mediumship?

I have no children and live with my partner, Barry, who is totally supportive of my mediumship and is a true believer.

My mother, who died six years ago, was not a medium, but she was the main driving force in my early days. She knew that I had a gift and encouraged me to develop it.

My father is probably a believer, but sits on the fence. Interestingly, my sister Penny is clearly psychic, but denies it. However, she is supportive of my gift.

Were you raised as a Spiritualist?

No, I was raised in the Church of England. From a small child of four, I used to see visions of Christ, which drew me to church and ultimately to serve. I went to Sunday school and sang in the church choir.

Where were you born and when?

I was born in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, on Christmas Day, having been conceived nine months earlier in Singapore. At the age of five, I moved to Kent with my family before moving back to Oxfordshire in my teens.

Where do you live now?

In Bartley, Hampshire, which is in the New Forest National Park. It's such a beautiful area with forest, country and the sea. I'm totally settled here and can't see myself ever leaving the area.

What psychic gifts do you have?

I'm mainly clair-sentient and "clair-knowing," but also use the other facilities of clairvoyance and clairaudience. I also sit for trance, but don't do that publicly at present.

Where did you develop your gifts?

Initially, I sat in a development circle run by an adorable couple, Jim and Grace Smith, at North Oxford Spiritualist Church. I progressed my training at the Greater World Association in London and had the privilege to be tutored and mentored by Ivy Northage.

I also attended many lectures and residential workshops and trance sessions with the late, great Ursula Roberts.

What's the most satisfying aspect about being a medium?

Unpleasant things happen in our lives, which we have no power or control over; they seem horribly painful and unfair.

The pain of losing a loved one is overwhelming, but getting first-hand evidence that your loved one lives on is comforting, empowering and a life changing experience. It is a great privilege to look into another's soul and to see the troubles

and pain they are carrying and being able to assist in the healing process.

How much time are you able to devote to your mediumship?

My work is my life. It is also my living. I consider it a privilege to be able to support myself by using my gifts and the skills that I have developed to help others.

Like many people with a career, it involves a lot of hard work, but the rewards and satisfaction knowing that I'm helping people in their hour of need makes it all worthwhile.

I give sittings and run workshops at my sanctuary in the New Forest and give demonstrations of mediumship throughout the south of England.

Can you briefly recall an especially unusual spirit message you have relayed?

At a service about twelve years ago, I was in the middle of giving a message when the church door opened and in walked a lady, who sat down. I finished the message and immediately a grand mother figure took me straight to the lady who had just arrived.

She was somewhat dismissive of the message I had for her. She was clearly distressed, but the message was uplifting and I could see a bright future for her. What I didn't know at the time was the significance of the message.

About ten years later, I was giving a service at a nearby church. At the end of the service, the same lady came up to me and thanked me so much for the message given to her years before and apologised for her behaviour at the time.

She said she had been in a suicidal state, but as she walked past the church she was stopped in her tracks and drawn into the service. Had she not received the message from her grandmother, she said she would certainly have ended her life.

What advice would you give to fledgling mediums?

Understand your sensitivity and protect it as you develop and unfold. Remember, it's not a competition; you're unique and will be used in the areas that suit your character, life's experience and personality. We can't all be the same.

Knowledge is power, so continue to understand and develop self as you grow. Explore the Eastern philosophies, as meditation is food for the soul.

Work from the heart with integrity and compassion. Aspire to be the greatest you can be in service and to achieve your best by being well balanced with inner peace and humility.

It's an on-going process of learning. When you have mastered the above, then you've cracked it!

From a medium's point of view, what makes a Spiritualist church really good?

Professionalism is paramount and key to a well organised and well attended church. A warm welcome and an understanding of a medium's needs for attunement are essential.

For me, the respect of peace, quiet and being left alone prior to a service or demonstration is so important as we mediums are expected to deliver once out on platform. And a nice "cuppa" after the service!

How many churches do you serve a month?

My work plays a very important role in my life, so serving and supporting the Spiritualist church is a way of giving back and is a form of "tithing." On average, I serve six churches each month, but try to have a break during August.

Have you worked abroad?

Yes, I have worked in Spain, and taught in Germany. I also give telephone readings internationally.

What was the best day in your life. . . and the worst?

The best day in my life was realising that my partner, Barry, was not only the love of my life, but also my soul mate. Ironically, I had met him eighteen months earlier, but at the time had no feelings for him whatsoever.

There are two worst days of my life. Firstly, the death of my mum, who had suffered so much following a stroke, which was then followed by the death of my first dog, Zimba, a Rhodesian Ridgeback. I have never had children and Zimba was like my baby.

What is your philosophy of life in no more than two or three sentences?

My spiritual pathway has led me to explore the Eastern philosophies and techniques and merging with Western Spiritualism, which has taught me deeper levels of attunement.

I also became a Samaritan, which has taught me how to listen and not to judge, but to be there for people in times of crisis.

If you were stranded on a desert island, which three or four luxuries in life would you miss the most?

My choice of luxuries would in fact not be luxuries as we know them. I would be lost without a flush toilet, iPhone, the teachings of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and a glass of ice-cold champagne!

Similarly, if you had to leave your house in an emergency, which three items would you grab on the way out?

My dog, iPhone and handbag, which has all sorts of things in it!

Do you have any hobbies or special interests away from the psychic scene?

I'm extremely fortunate in that I have a wonderful garden of ten acres. Barry and I have set out to create a number of different gardens within the garden. It is a place where people can come and reflect whilst having sittings or visiting for workshops.

My other passions are food, fine wines and champagne. I love entertaining friends and family.

How do you relax at the end of the day?

I'm a fairly active person, so after a long day of sittings or workshops I need to ground myself.

My garden is a great relaxation and I also enjoy a good session at my local gym. Like most people, I also enjoy TV soaps and a catch up with my neighbours at our local pub on Saturdays.

If you could change anything about yourself, what would it be?

I would have loved to have been a greater campaigner for the Spiritualist movement earlier in my life. Sadly, the

Spiritualist movement suffers from scepticism. Men of science, the media and other religious bodies cast doubt on the ability to communicate with Spirit.

European legislation deems our religion to be nothing more than entertainment, which is surely wrong. I hope that I can get to a wider audience to achieve true acceptance of our beliefs in line with other religions and the acceptance of their beliefs. That is asking for no more than a level playing field.

If you could invite four people, "dead" or alive, to dinner who would you choose and why?

My dinner guests would be Jesus Christ, Mohammad, Indian yogi Paramahansa Yogananda and biologist Richard Dawkins.

As the heads of two great world religions, I would ask Jesus and Mohammad whether they are happy with the development and interpretation of their teachings.

I would also ask Yogananda, who brought Eastern philosophies to the West in the 20th century, whether his expectations of the spirit world met with his earthly teachings.

I would then ask all three to demonstrate to Richard Dawkins, author of "The God Delusion" and a prominent atheist, with all their power that his beliefs are totally misguided and to see him overwhelmed by the truth.

■ ***Terri Stromeyer's website can be found at www.terristromeyer.com***