

WOMAN'S WAY

Real life

IN LOVE AND LIGHT

An out-of-body experience changed Roisin Fitzpatrick's life. Now she hopes to help change the lives of others

"I would have been sceptical about anything really beyond the physical realm," says Roisin Fitzpatrick. We're speaking by phone, but you can hear the smile in her voice.

Roisin, also known as 'the artist of the light,' was just a regular person before her life was changed forever by a near-death experience.

"Many years ago I used to work for the European Bank. I was actually an expert in privatisation in Eastern Europe," says Roisin.

"I was 35 and it was the day after my birthday. I was at home on my own and I suddenly had a blinding headache. My neck was wrenched backwards and I got hot and cold sweats. I started vomiting and feeling very, very weak and each time I vomited, I was getting weaker and weaker."

Terrified that she would lose consciousness, Roisin managed to ring herself an ambulance. Roisin was rushed to St Columcille's Hospital in Dublin and it was there she discovered that she was having a brain haemorrhage.

"They transferred me over to Beaumont Hospital, to the neurosurgery department. When I arrived there, the doctor told me, 'You're having a brain haemorrhage and with a brain haemorrhage there's a very high risk of dying or having a stroke and being paralysed,'" says Roisin.

Roisin was told an operation would be required, but that operation would entail all the risks associated with neurosurgery.

"When I was in the ICU unit, although I was trying to stay calm, I was feeling overwhelmed and isolated and daunted. I was only 35. Death wasn't anywhere on my radar," says Roisin.

"I was extremely fit. I didn't smoke. I hardly drank a drop of alcohol... I had so much energy and suddenly I found myself in a life-

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Roisin Fitzpatrick

threatening situation in the ICU unit. I was very frightened because I was literally on the edge of something quite unknown."

Then everything changed. While in ICU, Roisin had what can only be described as an out-of-body experience.

"I found myself out of my body. I saw this beautiful light and at the same time, I felt embraced by a love that was so pure and unconditional it was like nothing I'd ever experienced before. And a peace. [I felt] a profound sense of peace. This hushed silence," says Roisin.

"The most bizarre thing was that I still existed. My thinking was more lucid than ever before and I remember thinking, 'Who am I and what am I because I'm not in my body anymore. Is this life or if this is death, bring it on! This is wonderful!'"

"The best way I can describe it is it's like you're in a plane and you're doing a transatlantic flight and it's early in the morning and you see the beautiful sunrise... The only difference is, instead of being separate and above it, the way you are in a plane, I was part of this energy and it wasn't static - it was vibrant and alive and moving."

Roisin says it was in this moment that she realised that we are all made from this energy

and that the light and the pure love she experienced is not only waiting for us on the other side, it's also within us and available here. Roisin recalls the moment she came back into her body.

"I came back... back in to feeling the fear and the pain in my head and constrained in a tiny body but I realised there was one big difference - I no longer had any fear of death which has, ironically, given me complete freedom to live life because what's the worst that could happen?"

"It's given me freedom to live life but I realised that this is the deepest truth of each and every one of us. We're always part of this eternal light. It's as if we just put a coat on when we're born - a coat made of muscle and skin and bone, and then we take that off when we die, but we're part of the eternal light."

Roisin believes that we all have access to and the ability to reconnect with this light and love and in her book *Taking Heaven Lightly* she shares tips on how we can get in touch with this feeling.

"It's just a matter of shifting our perceptions. By becoming silent, connecting with nature, finding whatever your joy is, you automatically connect with it. Being open to the possibility that we are all part of this eternal light radically shifts your perspective on life to being able to feel this love and experience it, no matter what challenges people face. When we can come from that and connect with something powerful, it can help us through all of these challenges so we can create a much happier life no matter what's going on. Every single aspect of life can benefit." WW

Taking Heaven Lightly by Roisin Fitzpatrick is out now. For more information about Roisin and her artwork log on to www.roisinfitzpatrick.com