

## Anita Moorjani - BATGAP Interview (#152)

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{BATGAP theme music plays}

Rick: Welcome to Buddha at the Gas Pump. My name is Rick Archer, and my guest this week is Anita Moorjani. Welcome Anita.

Anita: Thank you.

Rick: Anita is pretty well-known, at least in certain circles, as a result of a rather dramatic near- death experience she had - or maybe "NDE", we'll be calling it. She wrote a book called *Dying To Be Me*. And, I read your book, cover to cover, I also listened to about a dozen of your interviews and I never got tired of the story. So, hopefully you're not tired of telling it. You've probably told it thousands of times by now.

Anita: Yeah, but I'm not tired of telling it, and I'm so happy you've read my book, because the interview is actually a lot more fun, for me, it's a lot more fun, when the person interviewing me has read my book.

Rick: Well yeah, I try to prepare as much as possible for these things, and I found your whole account to be fascinating and full of all kinds of interesting ideas that we can discuss, so I've really been looking forward to this, as have many of my guests, in fact, some people sent in questions they want me to ask you, so I'll be doing that too.

Anita: Sure.

Rick: So, you're an old-hand at telling the story, so why don't we just get right into it, and you could give us an account. Because many people who are listening to this won't have heard your story, even though, of course, some will be familiar with it.

Anita: Yeah, well, in 2002 I was diagnosed with cancer - with lymphoma. And over a period of 4 years, the cancer spread throughout my lymphatic system. So by about early 2006, basically, I had tumors all over my lymphatic system and swollen lymph glands, from the base of my skull, all around my neck, under my arms, my chest, all the way down to my abdomen.

And on February the 1st 2006 is when I went into a coma. And at that point, apart from all the tumors that had spread throughout my lymphatic system, I had open skin lesions, I was breathing with the aid of an oxygen tank, I had fluid in my lungs, my muscles had completely deteriorated, and up to that point, I hadn't even been able to walk anymore. I used to get taken around in a wheelchair and I constantly had a low-grade fever.

And because my lungs were filled with fluid, I would constantly be coughing and choking. I couldn't even lie down flat. I was in a tremendous amount of discomfort. And on February the

2nd 2006, I went into coma, and my doctors had told my family that these were my final hours, because my organs were now shutting down- that's why I was in coma.

So basically, the doctors said I wouldn't be coming out of the coma. And unbeknownst to everyone around me though, even though it "appeared" that I was in a coma, I was actually aware of everything that was happening around me. And I actually felt really amazing. I felt really light and free, and for the first time, I felt healed and well. It was like all the pain had gone.

All the fear and everything I'd been dealing with was just gone. And I just felt incredible. And I felt as though I was surrounded by beings that were taking care of me, but I also felt that I was just loved - unconditionally loved, and it was the first time that I had felt this way in my entire life.

And words can't even begin to do it justice - to this experience. Because it was like, for the first time, I didn't have to work at being loved, I didn't have feel as if I had to do anything to deserve it, or be worthy of it; I was just loved, just because I existed.

And I became aware of my father, who had passed away 10 years prior to this experience. And I sensed his essence; his essence was there with me. And it was like his essence and mine just merged. He was communicating with me, but in that realm, the communication is not like we have it here; it's not downed language or voice; it's like we just merge with the essence of the other being, and we become one, and we just know everything that they want us to know, instantaneously.

Rick: When you were in that state, did you feel like you had a body? You say you felt so comfortable for the first time, in a long time, was there a sense of physical comfort, or was it more just the comfort of being released from the miserable physical condition you had been in, and you were in, sort of, a disembodied spirit at that point?

Anita: Yeah, it's the latter. I didn't feel any physical body, or anything. Even my communication - there was no biology with which to communicate. No voice, I had no eyes. So, even though my awareness was not through physical eyes, it was like I had 360 degree peripheral vision.

Like I was aware of everything that was happening all around me, not just within that room, but beyond. So, because I did not have a physical body, it was almost as if my consciousness was just expanding and expanding, because it wasn't limited to a physical body. So I felt as though I was just expanding and expanding, beyond that room, beyond the hospital building, and just continued to expand. So it felt as though I could be anywhere and everywhere I wanted to be, at the same time.

Rick: So you didn't even feel like you had a *subtle* body; you were just a being of awareness? Like, you couldn't have lifted your hand up and looked at your "subtle hand"; you were just intelligence, or awareness, or whatever?

Anita: That's what it felt like, yes. And yet, I was aware of me - the body - was lying there, and I was aware that there was this person taht existed that was me, and I was aware that there were other beings. But it was like, there was no where that they ended and I began; where I ended and they began. There was no separation.

Rick: Hmm. Interesting. So, I kind of interrupted you. You were just saying that your father came to you. And I think you also mentioned in your book that your best friend, who had died of cancer, also came to you, and so please continue from there.

Anita: Exactly. Sure. So my father had passed away 10 years prior, so he came to me. And my best friend, who had died... she had died of cancer 2 years prior to that, and I had missed her a lot, but also, in her final weeks, I hadn't gone to see her, because I had my own cancer to deal with.

So watching her deteriorate was very fearful for me, but at the same time, I knew she wanted me to be with her, so I had felt a lot of guilt for not actually being with her, not spending time with her in her final weeks. And when she finally died, I just felt this awful guilt, and I'd been carrying that with me.

But when I saw her in the other realm, all I felt from her was unconditional love. -- It wasn't even a forgiveness; it was like there was nothing to forgive. The feeling I got from her was like, total understanding. She completely understood why I had done what I had done, and there was just total compassion, total empathy, total understanding. There was nothing to even forgive.

And even with my father, I had felt that during my life I had let him down, a lot, because I didn't conform to a lot of his cultural expectations. And I always wondered how it would be, you know, whether I would experience that karma because of it, and because of things, which in my culture, are considered wrong. But all I experienced in the other realm was just nothing but unconditional love from my father. Generally, that's all I felt. I felt no judgment whatsoever.

Rick: This may be a trivial question, and it's along the lines of what I just asked you. You say your friend came, your father came, how did you recognize them as your friend and your father? Did *they* have any recognizable physical form, or was it really just, sort of, an essence that would come and commune with you?

Anita: It was purely the essence and it was unmistakable. It's everything from what they wanted me to know...it's like I became one with them. And so it was completely unmistakable that it was them. And even the type of messages they'd get me was exactly the kind of thing that I'd know they would say.

My father was very protective and he wanted me to know that it wasn't my time. My friend wanted me to know that I needed to go back and be more fearless, and you know, it was just so typical of her.

Rick: And that probably wasn't advice that you were totally enthusiastic about hearing, considering what you had to go back to, in terms of a body.

Anita: Exactly. No, I didn't want to come back at first, absolutely didn't want to come back. And apart from the fact that my body was completely deteriorated, it was dying, there was no incentive to come back, but not only was I suffering in this body, but my whole family was, because they had to take care of me. And so, I didn't want them to suffer anymore, as well. So, I really didn't want to come back.

But then I felt what I can only describe as, like, a state of *complete* clarity. Like as though, I had just woken up into this feeling that everything made sense and I just understood. I understood

why I'd got the cancer, I understood everything. Like, as though I just understood everything in my life up to that point; how my life had got to be where it was at that point in time and there was just this *incredible* clarity.

And then I understood that we are supposed to be - I was an amazing - magnificent being, but I had always denied it. I'd never realized it and I'd always denied it. I'd always made myself a doormat, made myself small so others could be big. I'd always been a people-pleaser. And I realized that my purpose was really to come and be my magnificent self, and that's true for all of us, and I've always denied it.

And then there was such incredible clarity around why I even got the cancer. And then I realized that now that I knew all this, that if I chose to go back to my body, it would heal.

Rick: And of course that flew in the face of everything that all the experts believed and no one thought you stood a chance, whatsoever, of healing.

Anita: Yep, exactly. 'Cause when I did come back, well, it was at that point that my friend actually said, "Now that you know what you know, go back and live your life."

And my father was saying, "It's not your time, so go back."

So I was feeling it from both of them that I needed to come back. So when I did come back, and I opened my eyes... but a lot happened in the other realm. But time is very different in that realm, and so a lot happened. And even though I was only gone about 30 hours, it feels like it was a lot longer.

And so when I did open my eyes, everybody was really surprised. And I healed really, really fast, that doctors just wouldn't believe it. They didn't even know what to write in my medical records.

Rick: When you opened your eyes and regained consciousness, were you immediately cognizant of what you had just been through, in terms of that marvelous experience? Or did it take some days or weeks before it all began to come back to your memory?

Anita: It took some days, because when I first opened my eyes, it was like I had one foot on each side.

I didn't even know I had been in a coma, and for example, one of the things that I saw from the other state, was that I had actually...it was like I became aware that if I chose to come back into my body, it was like I saw the doctor coming into the room and telling my family, "We have good news. Her organs are functioning again." And I actually saw that, and how if I chose to come back into life.

And so, when it actually happened, after I came out of come, when the doctor did come into the room and say, "We have good news, your organs are functioning again," I actually said something to the effect of, "Didn't you say that already, yesterday?" I thought this happened, and so everybody was looking at me as though, like, what's wrong with her?

And I was actually saying to my husband and my brother, "But he came in yesterday and he said my organs are functioning." And they said, "No he didn't." And so it was so real for me, what had happened.

And so, I had been seeing what was about to happen. And also, I was recognizing people, and I was telling them conversations, and I had no idea I was in a coma. And so when they were saying, "How did you hear this? Your eyes were closed," or, "How did you recognize this doctor?"

And I said, "Really? My eyes were closed?"

And they were saying, "You were in a coma."

And I had *no* idea I was in a coma.

Rick: And I mean, not only that, but you saw your brother coming from India on an airplane, and you saw your husband talking to the doctor 40 feet down the hall, and you know, things that even people that were in that room wouldn't have been able to see, and yet you were cognizing all that.

Anita: Yep, yeah, so everybody was wondering what was going on. But it took me about 4 or 5 days, and one evening I just got really emotional and the memory just started to flood. And the first thing I started to remember was that my dad was the one that sent me back, and said it's not my time. And I just started to remember that.

And then I remembered seeing my brother in the plane and thinking that I can't die yet, because he's going to be really upset if he comes here and finds he's missed me. And so I just started crying, I got really emotional. And my family was saying, "What's wrong, what's wrong?"

And I said, "Something happened while I was in the coma. That's why I thought I was awake." And that's when I started to tell them. And then over the days, I just started to tell them more and more. And I found that, you know, once you start talking about it, once I started talking about it, I realized how much had happened. It was like I could've gone on and on - just so much had happened.

Rick: Do you find that even now, years later, you keep mining little nuggets from that experience? Things keep coming to your awareness that you hadn't even remembered?

Anita: Yes, in fact, it's not just that. You know, sometimes I say, a near-death experience is like a door that, once you've opened it you can't close it again. So, apart from what I learned there, in that state, there's a lot more that just keeps on coming. It's like the gift that keeps on giving.

And the only way I can talk about this is by, for example, using metaphors. If you imagine that you're going down a path, like you're just going down a path, and this is a set path. The road is already paved a certain way and you're going to travel this road.

Suddenly something happens, like a near death experience that *completely* changes you. It completely changes you and it takes you on a tangent, a completely different direction than where you would have gone.

So what happens is, no matter how much time passes, you never forget that, because the more time passes, the more different you are than the person you would have been, had you been going the way you were going.

So, many times people say to me that, "Oh, it's happened a few years ago, is the memory fading?" or, "How can you still get nuggets from it today, 'cause it happened all those years ago?" But it's not like that. It's like, you become a different person. And it's this new person that now thinks in a different way.

And thinking is happening every day, and we are constantly thinking, evolving, and growing all the time; we can't not be. But the direction in which our thinking, evolving, growing, is a different direction from the direction I was going in before.

So the person who I'm becoming every day, is more and more different than the person who I was then, 'cause the further I go down the path...

Rick: Yeah, neat. I thought about a metaphor as you were saying that. It's as if someone had been physically paralyzed, in a wheelchair, and then somehow, miraculously, they got healed from that and became able to function physically. They would have their whole lifetime ahead of them to learn new things to do, with their muscles, and their limbs, that they would have never been able to do in the wheelchair-state. You know, so there's no end to the unfoldment of possibilities, once that capability has been awakened.

Anita: Exactly! So if you say to that person - and I don't mean you, but this is a question I get a lot - is that, "Oh, that incident happened six years ago, is that memory fading?"

And that person would say, "No, because I was in a wheelchair, destined to be in a wheelchair for life. Now I'm not only walking, but I've started running, I've started climbing mountains," - and lalalalala..

And so they're learning and they're growing in a whole different direction. That's exactly what I feel.

Rick: Yeah, I think I'll take up tennis, and then I'll learn to play the violin.

Anita: Yeah, exactly, so they become a different person, and who they're becoming, is more and more different from the person they used to be, and that's what I've been finding - exactly that. You know, it's like everything to do with the way we think about fears, about illness.

And so because as I go into this new direction, which is very different, I'm thinking differently. So I have new information, new growth, new things that I'm learning and realizing, every single day.

Rick: Yeah. Do you - having had that huge contrasting experience between the ordinary world that we live in and the world that you had a glimpse of - when you look around you, or walk around and live your life, do you see everyone as being in some kind of dream state? - the vast, vast majority of people?

You know, there's that phrase in the Bible, "Seeing through a glass darkly." I mean, does it feel like you are living in a world of dreamers and that the vast majority of people have no idea, whatsoever, that there is a much bigger reality that's just right under their noses?

Anita: Yes. I exactly feel that way. And I see the way people buy into things, they believe things. For example, just to give you a random example, when I was in the States, I noticed those ads on TV about cancer, about getting a cancer check-up, and these ads are all fear-driven.

Where they say, 1 in 3 people are going to get cancer by the year 2013, or something, and so, go and get your early detection, blah blah blah. And I'm listening to it thinking, "Oh my God," you know, and all these things, I feel as if I can see right through it.

And I know there are many people out there who are going to disagree with me, but I'm sorry that this is the way I see the world now. I feel that all this cancer-awareness is what is causing more and more cancer. And that's the way I see it now.

Rick: I was thinking about that, 'cause I've been reading your book, about how fear is such a powerful cause of cancer. But I was thinking, "Well, geez, certainly that's one category of cancer, but obviously there are other things which would definitely tend to cause it, such as heavy smoking, or exposure to radiation, or certain chemicals, or even a genetic predisposition. I mean, one of the Miss America contestants decided to have a double mastectomy because there's such a history of breast cancer in her family.

So, could you almost categorize cancer into ... you know, there's definitely the fear category, which was your case: fear and worry. But then there are other things, which may be exacerbated by fear, but which definitely predispose one to getting it, irrespective of one's attitude.

Anita: Okay, so I won't put the blanket statement of fear onto everybody, although it applied to me. So, totally, I agree with you on that, that I don't think everybody gets cancer because of fear. But I think that in terms of other cases, like genetic and so on, I think it's far less so than what we think.

I think many of us are afraid that we will get it because a parent, a grandparent, an aunt, a sibling, had cancer. I don't actually think, and this is my personal opinion, I don't think we get cancer genetically; I think that it's not a physical thing. It's because we have seen it, we're aware of it, we're talking about it, breathing it. Everyday being told that so and so had it. Our aunt had it, our mother had it, our sister had it. "Oh my God, I'm so scared I'm going to get it, I'm going to have a double mastectomy."

I don't see cancer that way, and that's the issue I have. I don't see cancer as a physical disease anymore, and I'm unable to see it as a physical disease because I saw, and I experienced - I experienced, physically, how quickly it just reversed itself, just because shifts that took place internally. And even the doctors couldn't explain it.

Cancer is not an exact science. As much as you like to think we're closer to a solution, I don't actually believe the solution will be in medicine. After what I experienced, I view cancer completely differently from your average person, and probably more so than from your average oncologist - I really do. And I can't view it in the way other people do, after what I've been through - I just can't.

Rick: Well I can see why you couldn't, and your case is very convincing. I mean, if you can reverse cancer - if a person whose cancer was as advanced as yours was could turn it around, then certainly someone whose mother happened to have it and whose grandmother happened to have it, shouldn't necessarily go having mastectomies. I mean, there seems to be something they could do on a spiritual level that would pretty much eliminate the possibility.

Anita: I think that it's this *constant* awareness of...you know when we start to feel like, "Oh the cancer is so close, my mother had it, my sister had it." It's this constant awareness, or this fear of cancer that just kind of brings it into our awareness, into our energy all the time. It's not the actual genes or the DNA - it's not that.

In fact, there's somebody who I admire, and after this experience happened to me and I was talking about it in this way - the way I'm talking about it to you, somebody actually told me, "You should look up Bruce Lipton." And when I did, I understood, completely, why. Because he's actually proven, using science, that it's not in the genes.

Even when we think something is genetic, it's not. He says it's the environment, and what he means by that is that it's not the physical environment, but the emotional environment. And it was interesting, you know, I thought, what he does and what he says dovetails, completely, to what I say.

Rick: Also, genetics are a lot more malleable than scientists once thought, you know, that the DNA can change and all that.

Anita: Yeah, and I think also that in not giving enough attention or research into how our emotions affect our bodies and open up our immune systems to *allow* cancer cells to proliferate, so we're not actually looking in that direction.

All the money is being spent, purely, on medical research, on medicine, on how to kill the cells. But at the same time, we're killing all the healthy cells as well. Nobody is looking at *why* are we getting the cancer, what's triggering it.

And I think that, in fact, we have so many cases of people, that actually, after I wrote my book, I cannot tell you the number of emails I received - certainly not hundreds, maybe thousands, maybe even tens of thousands of emails - from people who have had cancer who have said to me that, "Do you know, I've always suspected that it's my emotions that triggered my cancer?" So many people that said, "You know, you have written my story."

Rick: Still, to play devil's advocate, 'cause I can't completely shed this notion - obviously, there are statistical probabilities amongst smokers of getting cancer, and there was this situation near Buffalo, New York, called "Love Canal" some decades ago, where a *huge* percentage of people in the area got cancer, and it was discovered that there had been some chemical emissions that had been going into the water supply. So there still are things like that, you know, so you can't just say that the psychological component alone is the only factor.

Anita: No, I would never say that. On the one hand, absolutely, I would never say that. I don't advocate smoking because I don't smoke, myself - I never have. I don't advocate smoking, but just in

response -again, playing devil's advocate with you, why is it that there are some smokers who can live to be 90, and live to be completely healthy, whereas some get lung cancer?

The other thing is where you have, or what you were mentioning, let's say, radiation from a chemical plant or something that affects people, again, not everybody in that area will get cancer; only some. Why would that be?

Some of us have a weaker constitution, and I actually think that our emotions contribute to whether we have a stronger or a weaker constitution. And I think that there's not enough emphasis is given to that in our upbringing. As children, when we grow up, we are not encouraged to actually have stronger self-esteem and a stronger belief system in our own physical ability to heal. And I think that also plays a part.

Rick: That's a good point. Some people might argue, for instance, that some smokers don't get cancer because they're on the edge of the bell-curve of people who have stronger constitutions, or maybe genetically-superior situation, but they're thinking just in terms of the physical; whereas you would say that a good many of those people, if not all of them, perhaps might have a different emotional or psychological orientation, which, kind of, protects them against it.

Anita: Yep. I think that has a lot to do with it, I really do, because my own emotional make-up has changed from before I had cancer to after. So I'm just projecting, I'm just saying, "This is what happened to me. It may be the case for you, or anyone."

So I had to put it out there: this is what happened to me, and if you relate to it, great. I hope this can help you. But, of course, I'm not saying to people that it's ok to go out and smoke - I don't smoke, myself - or live near a chemical plant or anything like that.

Rick: Why handicap yourself?

Anita: Yeah, exactly.

Rick: One question I had while reading your book and listening to your interviews which relates to what we're talking about, and somebody else actually sent it in yesterday -wanted me to ask it- is, if the psychological component, fear or lack of it, is so instrumental in determining whether or not we're going to get cancer, how is it that some great saints have gotten cancer? Like Ramana Maharishi, who arguably was completely free of fear and living in a state of bliss and grace, but yet, even *he* got cancer?

Anita: It may have been his time and his way. Because I can't guarantee, even myself, having been through everything I've been through, I can't guarantee that I won't get cancer again. I won't say that. I'll never say, "Oh, I'm never gonna get cancer again." All I do know is that I would handle the cancer very differently.

I know what caused my cancer that time, and I know it was -one is because of fear and the other is because I just didn't love myself enough. And I know that when you love yourself more, it does make you a healthier person.

What we don't know, even with the greatest saints, well one thing we don't know is, what is their inner self-talk. Are they still insecure inside? Do they love themselves, do they not?

So not to undermine any of them, but if I were to get cancer again, I would say maybe this is my time and this is my way out. 'Cause it could be even, something that happens for my benefit. It's like a way out, to leave this world. And it could be something that even teaches something to the people around me.

But I don't see, even the cancer that I had before, I don't see it as people say, "Oh, you've had cancer. Your cancer nearly killed you." And I say, "No, I see that cancer as a gift that saved my life."

And I don't know, we all have to exit the world at some point. I don't know how I'm going to exit next time. It might be cancer might come and save me, because, again, if I can also add, I don't see death as a bad thing. I don't see it as a bad thing at all. I think that, in fact, it's wonderful. I feel the people who have died are very blessed. They've gone on. Because people say, why did it happen to me and their loved ones didn't come back? Maybe their loved ones are the lucky ones and the blessed ones that got to go onward, and I was sent back because I still have things to do. So if cancer is what I manifest as a way out, then that's what is, and I would accept it.

Rick: Interesting point. I've listened to and read a lot of NDEs over the years, you know, Danny Brinkley and Betty E. and James Von Prague, and now Eben Alexander is very much in the news these days. And you get the feeling from all of them that the fear of death has been completely wiped out, because they had such a sublime experience. You even get the sense that maybe they're kinda' looking forward to it a little bit.

Anita: Yeah, I've had my moments when I kind of thought, "Oh my God, why have I come back?" Because life is a little denser and heavier and slower than in that realm, and when I came back, I was like so euphoric, I still had that feeling.

But then of course once you're back in life, there are times when there are obstacles and things that frustrate you, and so yeah, it's just incredible in that other realm.

Rick: Let's talk about that density point a little bit. I find that very fascinating, how dense the world is, or appears to be, anyway, and how sucked into it we get, you know? Because presumably, before we come here we're all in that realm, and then we come, a little baby, we're born, and the density just kind of takes over and over and over.

And by the time you're a teenager, you're right in the thick of it, you know? And, it seems like... maybe you can talk about this. I have in my notes here "Life's True Purpose," but it seems to me the name of the game is, 'while in the density, rediscover the sublime level of life, and then learn to live them both, together.'

Anita: Yeah, in fact, it's important to be grounded here because I think some people feel that they need to escape this density. But I think the best thing we can do is to be *grounded* here, but also not take life seriously and be able to access this sublime level - this subliminal level.

One of the things - there's so many things that I talk about, as to how to do this or how to achieve this - one of them is that I actually tell people to stop setting goals, chasing, competing, pursuing - that's what keeps us in this density level. It's this constant feeling of needing to

compete with the others, to get ahead, this constant comparing ourselves with others. That again, keeps us in this density and this feeling of frustration.

If we talk about teenagers, why do they feel so insecure all the time, [it's] because they're constantly comparing themselves. So I think one of the things we need to learn, and we need to teach our children, is that it's not important to compare up with other people, it's not important to compete or to get ahead, or to chase or to pursue; all you have to do is be yourself. It's to just go into self-discovery and discover who you are, express who you are. And express who you are with abandon. Like, don't be afraid to be yourself.

From the time we are children, and again, this is why we get caught up in density, from the time that we are children, we're actually taught to conform. And this is actually what keeps us in this dense energy, because we're trying to conform, we're trying to gain people's approval - again, gaining people's approval - that keeps us in that density.

The other realm is so liberating and freeing. What we feel in the other realm, it's like a feeling of that... I just have to be who I am, I just have to allow. It's a real freeing feeling. There's no feeling of needing to do anything, chasing, pursuing. And all of that stems from fear - this competing, chasing, comparing - all of that stems from fear. Fear of not being good enough, not having enough. And once that's gone, we actually are touching that level that we experience in the near-death experience.

Rick: But let's say that you're a young person, and you have the aspiration to be a doctor. Now, you're going to have to work really hard in school and get good grades, and medical school is very competitive; only a handful are going to get in. So, there is this sense of competitive mentality that you're almost, necessarily, caught up in. How would you advise a young person to approach that so as not to violate what you just advised?

Anita: I would ask the young person whether they want to be a doctor because they're passionate about being a doctor, is it something that they want to do? Or, are they wanting to be a doctor because it appears to be a good job, because they want the job security, the money? They want the status? Are they doing it because of the status, so they can appear to be a "winner" compared to all their other friends who have lesser jobs? Or are they doing it because they passionately want to be a doctor? That's what I would ask them. And if it's because of the status, the money and all, I would actually advise them to find something else.

Rick: That's a good answer, because obviously, if you're passionate about it, then you're doing it 'cause you love it. You're not competing with your fellow students; you're just absorbed in what you enjoy.

Anita: Exactly, and that's what I tell people to do. If you do what you enjoy doing, you will do it well, anyway. Nobody needs to tell you to study hard or work hard.

Rick: Hmm. That's great. Ok. Let's talk about God a little bit. I have a note here where you say, "God isn't a being but a state of being, and I was now that state of being." So, I'm sure you can riff on that.

Anita: Yeah, easily. When we're in this physical world, because we're physical beings, we call this world a duality. And what duality means is separation: good and bad, negative and positive, hot and cold, war and peace, and so on. But it also means that we're separate, we're physical. Your physical body is separate from my physical body.

When we are not expressing from our physical bodies, your essence - your consciousness and my consciousness are actually one. You and I are one, and our consciousness are one. Everybody out there, when we're not expressing through our physical body, at our consciousness there's no separation. There's no separation between you and me, or me and anyone else, or Obama, or Mother Teresa, or Hitler. There's no separation between any of us, because we all share the same consciousness.

So when we're without our body, there's no separation between me and God, but when we are *in* our bodies, we feel there's separation - you and me, or whether it's a Hindu, or Christian, or Muslim, we feel we're all separate - and we feel that any kind of guidance or help, or what we pray to, we feel that even that is something separate.

When we're not in our bodies, there's no separation; it's all one. It's a state of non-duality. So even God is not a being that is separate from you and me; we're all merged, we're all one. And that is the state of "God". It's a state of being.

Rick: Now of course, religions say that God is omnipresent. And if He's omnipresent then there's no iota of creation which He doesn't permeate already. And so, really, in reality, we're not separate, we can't be separate, right?

Anita: Yes.

Rick: Now being in the body is not necessarily a sentence of separation, because we hear of saints who are God-realized, and presumable they've learned to appreciate the essential unity of everything, while in a body.

I imagine that, to a great extent that has become your experience. I'm sure you don't feel the sense of separation that you once felt. There must be a great deal of unity or oneness, or something.

Anita: Yeah, so when you've had such an experience, you lose that sense of separation, and this is why I say that there's no separation between us and what we call God. We think, we think, we're separate.

We think you and I are separate, we think you're separate from Buddha or Jesus or Krishna, but we're not. We're absolutely not. We are all expressions of this consciousness. And the more that people realize that - I mean, if we were to teach our kids, at school, that we are actually not separate, that we are all one, we're all the same - if we were to teach that, and if we were to teach them to collaborate with each other, because we're all part of the same one, rather than to compete, we'd have a very, very different race of people. We'd have a different planet.

Rick: You don't sound like you're much of a capitalist. Along the lines of this density discussion, I was listening to the radio yesterday and someone was referring to a Scientific American article, in which the author mentioned that if it were not for our delusion really, that we are separate

beings, there actually would be no sense of time. It's somehow our separateness that gives us the whole concept of time.

And you talked in your book about your experience in realizing that everything is really happening simultaneously. There is no past, present, or future, and I find that fascinating. And I think that in many ways, our dense physical structure serves as a filter, and just as a prism breaks light into the various colors, this filter of our physical being takes one whole reality and breaks it into fragments, one of those fragments being time.

And it seems like that's necessary in order to function in the world, you know, you can't book a plane ticket if you don't have a sense of time, but it gets the upper hand, doesn't it?

Anita: Yes, in fact what's happened is that we allow time to rule us, rather than the other way around. When in actuality, time seems to be a mind-function. And in the other realm, it really was as though there was no time, or maybe instead of "no time", maybe a better description would be "all of time" existed at the same time.

Every point in time existed all at the same time, so what I could interpret as past lives felt as though they were happening simultaneously - right there, at the same time. And what I perceived as future events, like even seeing the doctors come in with the results, and seeing that my body was healing very rapidly, all of that felt like it was happening then and there, simultaneously, at the same time.

So there was no separation, no differentiation, and interestingly, it's both time and space. So I was not separated from other things or other people by space. It was like I could be anywhere, and I could be at any time. So there I was seeing my brother getting on a plane in India, and then I was in Hong Kong, watching my family around my body.

So, space didn't matter, time didn't matter. I was perceiving what appeared to be a past life with my brother, future - what was panning out with my life. So space and time, all of that, just didn't seem to matter.

Rick: Hmm, interesting, so if reincarnation really is the way it works, then on some level, right now as I'm having this conversation with you, I'm also a washing-woman in India, and a soldier in Germany, and a caveman, or whatever I've been. All those lives are somehow being lived simultaneously?

Anita: Yes, and I believe when people have what we call "past life regression" therapy or memories, they're not actually accessing something that happened in the past, they're able to access it because it's happening right now. And that's why we're able to access these memories, because they're happening right now.

And also, the whole perception of all of time and all of space existing at once, it's quite confusing for people, so I use the metaphor for a tapestry. So if you imagine a huge tapestry that's really complex, where the picture is very complex, with lots of different colored threads woven through. Now imagine you, your life, is one of the threads, one of the colors woven through. And your life isn't over yet, so you are somewhere along that thread, but the rest of that thread still continues, yet to be lived.

So imagine if in a near-death state, where you are now not that thread, but you are out of that and looking at the whole tapestry. So you see the whole tapestry, completed, which means you see all the other threads and you see the completed picture. You see your thread, your life, you see everybody who you've touched and everybody who you've yet to touch. You see all the people around you that parallel the simultaneous lives, and you see it all woven in this perfect tapestry. You're in this state where you can see everything as though from the outside looking in, and you see the whole completed picture, and you see how it all fits in.

But when you're living your life, you're one thread in that tapestry. But from this near-death state, you're seeing all of time and all of space, all at once. But when you're that thread, you're travelling along that one thread, you can't see all the distance of all the other colors and all the other threads - it's all a distance away. That's kind of how I try to explain it.

Rick: Yeah, it's a good metaphor. And the thread view is very compelling, you know, we're just sucked into...there's like a gravity, or a magnetism, that sucks us into the individual perspective over and over and over again. And someone like yourself had such a huge shift, that it's irreversible, to a great extent.

I was just talking to someone yesterday, in a store, and I was saying I was going to interview you. And she says, "Well, how about the rest of us? We can't all have these near-death experiences."

And I said, "Well, maybe somebody like Anita is like Columbus, you know? All of Europe couldn't come over to discover America, so he went with a few guys and a few little ships. And then they came back and told everybody about it. Then over the centuries, more and more people came. And now, people go back and forth every day. It has become commonplace. So maybe Anita is like a pioneer, and as a society we need to find ways of discovering this deeper dimension without having to almost die. So it can become more and more the norm, and then what a wonderful world we might have?"

Anita: That's exactly what I'm hoping. Because when people say, "What's the purpose of you sharing your story, or you telling people what happened?"

And I say, it's exactly that. It's so that people don't have to go through what I went through, to realize the gift that life is. Because one of the things that I realized is that, life is truly a gift, and I didn't realize it until after I came back, that this is a gift - to be able to experience it.

And the other thing is, what I can see now, so clearly, which of course I couldn't before, because I was in it too - we talk about that one thread, when you're sucked in, when you're that one thread you can't see how everybody is living - we *are* all living in fear. Many, many, many of us are living in fear, and we can't see it.

Every single day, our decisions, from the time we wake up in the morning, our decisions are made from a place of fear. And what I mean by this is that we fear the consequences. Every job we take - just like we were talking about the kid who wants to be a doctor, is he making that choice out of fear or out of passion?

Most of us choose our major in school out of a fear, because we want to get ahead. We choose our jobs out of a fear, our careers - we choose it out of fear, because we want to compete, we

want to be number one, we want to get ahead. And everything, even the way we choose our healthcare, the products we use, the foods we eat - we fear the chemical content in them. We get a double mastectomy because we fear cancer. So we all live our lives, we become a race that is fearful; we make our choices out of fear.

Now imagine if you made every single choice in your life from a place of love - love for yourself, love for your life, love for the people around you, a passion or a reverence for life. So every food you ate, you chose it because you wanted it, you loved it, or you knew it was good for you, because you want health. Every job you chose, every career you chose, it was because you're passionate about it, and so on. Your life would look completely different. The planet would look completely different.

So this is one of the things that I want people to know, is that most of us are unaware. It's like we're asleep, and we're just being told by people - the advertisers, the big companies - that you need to fear this, you need to fear that, and we do. We all fear, or we all follow like sheep.

Rick: There's a line in one of the Upanishads that goes: "Certainly all fear is born of duality." And my interpretation of that is that, if you are in a dual state, if you're in a state of separateness, there's necessarily going to be fear, as the foundation of that, even though you might not be constantly aware of it, but there's this underlying foundation of fear because you're estranged from your true nature.

Anita: Yeah, and the thing I question is whether it has to be that way?

Rick: Well, hopefully we're moving into an age where it isn't that way, ordinarily. It has been that way, predominantly, for most of recorded history, but a lot of people are optimistic that we're going to turn that around pretty soon.

Anita: Yeah, I'm pretty optimistic.

Rick: One thing I loved in your book was, towards the end you used the words 'uncertainty' and 'ambiguity', and I think 'paradox' also, maybe, which are some of my favorite words. You kind of know where I'm going with this because you have it in your book, but maybe you can talk a little bit about that way of thinking.

Anita: Ok, so what I was talking about in my book is that most of us have this need for certainty - again, that's a fear. But when we have this need for certainty, and this applies even when it comes to our health, or when it comes to our work, when it comes to the economy - we have this need for certainty. This need for certainty is actually a form of control. And with this need for certainty, we actually *limit* our experiences.

When we need the certainty, we limit our experiences to only what we can imagine to be so, because we say, "This is what we want, I need this. I need this to feel secure." And so we limit our experience to what we need it to be. But if we can let go of this need for certainty, and if we can get comfortable with living in ambiguity, and living in this state of not needing to know, not needing to control, not needing things to be a certain way, we'll actually realize that we can experience a lot more gifts and a lot more synchronicities, and we can even watch a life unfold before us that can be even greater than what we imagine.

Because I actually believe that we, as human beings, are capable of being and doing things much, much greater than we give ourselves credit for. Most of us suffer from low self-esteem. We're capable of much more, and we limit ourselves. And because of our lack of confidence, lack of self-esteem, we then need certainty, and then we control things. And we control them to bring them to a place that we feel comfortable with, in our lack of self-esteem.

But if we were told from the time we're young, if we constantly were told and believed that we are capable of greater things, and greater things do happen, and if we were more able to get into this place of more trust, trusting in the universe, what we would find is that actually, the life that unfolds before us would be much greater than the one that we create if we're constantly having to control the outcome, because of our need for certainty.

Rick: I once heard "humility" defined as, the quality of not insisting that things happen in any particular way.

Anita: That's a good one. That's a really good one.

Rick: And it's an interesting theme, you know there's that bumper sticker, "Let go and let God," and the points you brought up about fear and control. I think there's a misapprehension about whose calling the shots when we exert excessive individual control over events which, in reality, are beyond our control.

There's a lack of trust in the grace of life, in the deeper intelligence of life. And if that trust can be awakened somehow, cultivated, and we'd just relax a little bit and let the universe do what it's doing anyway, and just begin to become a willing participant, rather than trying to be the task master, life will go much more smoothly.

Anita: Yes, I absolutely agree. Because I think one of the things that people have got confused - again, this is a dichotomy, that people got it confused - is that we're being encouraged to take our power back. And I agree with that, you know, stop giving away your power to other people, otherwise they can control you - I totally agree. Don't give your power away to other people, because when you have your own power, you don't control others, and you don't allow others to control you.

But at the same time that you don't have to give your power to other people, I do encourage people to surrender. And there's a huge difference between surrendering and giving your power away. When you surrender, you're surrendering to universal energy. You can call it universal energy, source energy, God - whatever makes people feel comfortable. So when you surrender to this greater part of yourself, or the connection to the All-that-Is, what happens is that you allow this universal energy to flow through you and the life that it creates is something far greater than what you could create, if you were in this state of controlling.

So when I say take your power back, take it back from other people, but it doesn't mean: now hold it close to your chest and control your life, and feel that you need certainty. It means, don't give your power to other people, but do give it to universal energy and allow it to flow through you.

Rick: Wwhich is obviously infinitely more powerful than any individual expression of power. We might think of people like Napoleon or Hitler, or somebody as having been powerful people, but probably, they were very insecure people, you know, feeling like they needed to amass personal power because there must have been a deep disconnect with that universal energy.

Anita: Yes, exactly. The clue that they're not powerful people is their need to control others. If you truly are powerful, you have no need to control others. If somebody has a need to control others, they're not actually powerful; they're actually insecure and they're overcompensating.

Rick: Yeah, I was watching this TV show about which was called "The Little Ice Age," which was this climatic period that lasted hundreds of years, where the weather got much colder. And they talked about how that defeated Napoleon. He went into Russia with 600,000 troops and came back to France with 4,000.

And what would France have done with Russia? What was going through his head? Why would they want to control that country, so far away and so different? There was a kind of sickness in the mentality...

You talk in your book about karma, punishment and judgment. Let's talk about those a little bit, because, you know, so many religions have concepts about heaven or hell, and new age people have ideas about karma and what's going to happen to those who do bad things, and so on. And so, what do you say?

Anita: Well, I didn't experience any judgment whatsoever, in the other realm; only absolute compassion. And my understanding is that I understood that even things that we do, which are considered wrong in this realm, we do it because of where we are at, at that point in our lives, and we do it from our own pain, we do it from our own suffering.

Somebody who is totally self-fulfilled and happy, and living a joyous life, would never hurt other people. So, those who are in pain, it's inevitable that they will cause pain, because they are in pain themselves. There isn't more judgment and punishment waiting for them in the other realm.

Rick: How do we learn then? Does the rapist get raped in the next life, or the murderer get murdered? I mean, how does the balance get rectified and how does the person who is misbehaving change their ways, if there is no feedback or blowback from certain types of behavior.

Anita: As soon as you feel, as soon as I felt that level of compassion, when I felt that level of compassion and love for me, there is no part of you that would want to hurt or rape anyone or anything; you just are loved. And a fully and unconditionally loved person who learns to love themselves, who realizes that their life, their presence, is a gift, would not hurt anyone. All they would want to do is share that goodness with everyone around them.

Rick: So if there is no karma or judgment, and if God is a loving and just God, then how do you account for the people who go through such miserable things? You know, people starving and getting hacked with machetes, and just all the terrible things that happen in this world? Why is that happening to those people?

Anita: It's part of the duality of this world that we live in. It's just the way it is. It's the perceived separation that we all have for each other. One day, if everybody were to wake up and realize that we are all one, it wouldn't exist anymore. There would be no more starving people, no more capitalism, no more competition - we're not there yet. We're not there.

Rick: We're not, but in terms of where we are, one person is born in a nice wealthy family and is fed well and loved and receives a nice education, the other person is born, kidnapped and forced into prostitution, or something. How do you account for the difference in the fates of those two souls?

Anita: It's part of the duality. It's just part of the duality. There is good, there is bad, there is negative, there is positive, and we're all in it together. That prostitute is the same consciousness as you, or as me -the perpetrator as well as the victim. We're all part of one and the same consciousness, the same reality, creating this duality. If we were to all wake up, it wouldn't exist.

And so the idea is to wake people up, but the idea of having 'somebody punished you,' - when you think about this... Imagine if the only thing keeping you from killing someone is the fear of the afterlife. Wouldn't it be better to touch people, to wake up to a different consciousness, or to wake up to feeling empathy for other people, rather than for them to do good because they fear the afterlife? All that does is bring more fear. And the whole reason our race is the way it is, is because there's so much fear.

Everything we do, the reason why people act out, the reason why people kill, the reason why people compete and chase and rape is out of fear - out of fear of not having enough, not being enough, not doing enough. What we need to do is touch people to empathize, not to fear the afterlife. Not to fear religion or to fear God, or to fear punishment, or retribution.

We have jails and all here, already to put people behind bars if they are doing those things. But we need to touch people so that they feel empathy, so they realize that we're all one, that what I feel, you feel as well.

Rick: Yeah. I totally agree, I'm just a little puzzled on the philosophical point. I agree that fundamentally we're all one soul, we're all one consciousness, but then we have these individuated expressions - you have your bank account and I have mine. You're probably not going to empty it out and give it to me just because I say, "Hey, we're all one."

So, as individual souls do we bounce around arbitrarily, from the good life to a horrible life, and this and that, just to collect a variety of experiences? Or do we chart the course of our destiny in a particular direction?

Anita: See, the thing is, your question is rooted in linear time; there is no linear time. It's all happening all at once. You probably have the times running, right now, where you're a starving soul in a poverty-stricken country. You might be having a lifetime where you're a prostitute, and you might be having a lifetime where you're a perpetrator of something.

So, it's in linear time that we're talking about punishment, and so on. You could be having all of those experiences right now, just as part of your experience.

Rick: Hmm, interesting. And I guess from a God's-eye view, to anthropomorphize, God wants to have this *variety* of experience, just for the sake of diversity and play. There's just such a diversity of creation, obviously, that God seems to love. And if you're going to have hot, you have to have cold, so naturally there are these polarities.

Anita: Exactly, exactly.

Rick: Interesting. Here's a question that somebody wrote in:

“Knowing what you know now, in terms of the importance of self-love and being authentic, what would you advise other women to do if faced with a traditional family that is trying to force them to conform to cultural norms, such as being submissive or agreeing to an arranged marriage, if it is not in their hearts to do so? Are there instances where deciding to become estranged from one's parents is actually the most self-loving thing that one can do, if the parents are unrelenting in trying to force their views upon a child?”

Anita: I think this is something that really a person has to ask themselves. Because one thing I never do is I never give answers to people, because I don't think anybody has the right to give someone else an answer to questions like that.

I feel for her, and I empathize with her, but she would have to live with her decision. She would really have to live with her decision, so she has to ask herself, would she want to separate from them? What is the choice that she can live with? But whatever choice she chooses, I would still say that in whatever limited capacity that she is able to, I would encourage her to still do whatever she can to find her joy, and do what makes her feel joyful, in that - whatever condition. In whatever situation she finds herself in, to actually still learn to love herself, respect herself.

And I've found that the more we love ourselves and respect ourselves, the more the people around us love us. In her case, it would be very important for her to learn to do this, whether it's through meditation, or through reading, or spending time alone. The more that she realizes or connects with that God-consciousness part of her, to feel self-empowered, so that she knows that she's not just a doormat, the more she will see that the family who she's married into, or her parents, will treat her with that respect that she feels for herself.

Rick: Hmm, that's a good answer. And even in your own case, obviously, before you were the new, improved Anita, you resisted arranged marriage and finally met the right guy. And so without totally alienating your family, you managed to do it.

Anita: Yes, and so if follow your heart, like if she followed her heart – and nobody can tell her what to do - if she follows her heart, she will find that whatever choice she makes will be the correct one. If she's meant to stay with her family, that is the stronger heart's feelings she will get. If she's meant to break away from them and find her own way, then she will feel the pull to go in that direction.

So she really has to ask herself and listen to what it says, and not figure it out in her head as to.. "these are the consequences if I do this, this if I do this..."; It's really about getting into that heart-space... "Can I deal with it if I go this way?"

Rick: Yeah, that's a very good answer. That answers all such questions in one fell swoop, because obviously you can't get into the nitty-gritty of everybody's lives, and figure out what they should do, but if you go down to that more fundamental level, they're going to be able to answer it themselves.

Anita: Yeah, and I would rather they answered it.

Rick: Here's another one from her:

"Now that you truly, viscerally know that you are the oneness, the All-that-Is, how does this impact your day-to-day life? Do you still feel confined to your limited human reference point as Anita, or are there significant amounts of time in each day where you experience yourself as one with all life?"

Anita: I think I experience myself, a lot, as one with all of life, because I don't worry about things anymore, I don't worry about how my life is going to turn out, or what's going to happen from day to day, or I don't worry about my future; I just allow it to pan out, because I know that I'm connected to everyone, connected to universal source energy. And if I don't try to control it, if I don't try to fight it, what it has in store for me- I know I'm not going to be disappointed. I just allow - I allow it to unfold.

Rick: Are you aware of Dr. Eben Alexander, who recently hit the news with his NDE? Have you been in touch with him?

Anita: Yeah, yes I have. We've been in touch. We've been in touch with each other for the last year, or so, even before he hit the news. We were supposed to be speaking together in March, earlier this year, but then I had to do another event for Hay House and so I couldn't show up. Then we were trying to do another event together, and then his book hit the New York Times. And then he got really busy.

Rick: One thing I noticed about him, when I listened to his interview with Oprah about a week ago, was that he said that - well, you know his whole story, and probably many people do. He was this neuro-physiologist who was, sort of, a materialistic agnostic, and he had this profound near-death experience and ended up completely shifting his perspective, as you have.

But he said that ever since then, he spends 2 or 3 hours a day in meditation, and has deep access to that level, in his meditation. Have you taken on something similar since your NDE?

Anita: Yes and no. I do say that meditation is really good, but I find that even if I don't do the meditation, I'm finding that I'm living a lot of my life as though I have one foot on each - I mean, I'm pretty grounded when I'm here, but I've been finding that I can access that pretty easily. So I do.

I touch on it for a little while before I go to bed, or when I wake in the morning. I kind of just release everything, and I just tell myself that I'm not holding on to anything so that I can just allow the day to unfold before me.

Rick: You're in the world but not of it.

Anita: Yes.

Rick: I have one final question for you, and this is from the same woman who wrote these other questions. And it'll be a good one to end on, because you can go out with a bang, so to speak.

"What is the purpose of human life? Why do you believe we are here?"

Anita: We're here to experience, and it's to experience individuality rather than being part of oneness. And I think only in this state of physical life with duality, can we really know who we are. And the way to find out who you are, really, is just to find your joy; do what makes you joyful.

When you do what makes you joyful, it means you're in touch with the heart. When you're feeling fear, it means you're coming from the head. Fear only comes from the head, but the more that you learn to do things that make you joyful, the less room there is for fear in your life.

And also, what I'd like to say to everybody, you know, we're all trying to prove ourselves, and trying to constantly - we read self-help books, and we follow teachers and gurus, and so on. I want everybody to know that actually, you are all, already, what you're trying to attain, but you don't realize it.

You are all amazing, magnificent, perfect beings, but we don't realize it. We're born perfect, we spend a lifetime fretting it, getting into fear, getting into our dramas, forgetting who we are, and then beating ourselves up for not being perfect. In actuality, we are all amazing.

So I think people should lighten up, laugh, don't take life so seriously, enjoy yourself. And I think the world would be a much better place if we did.

Rick: Beautiful, thanks Anita. So, that's really enjoyable, loved talking to you. Let me just make a few concluding remarks and then we'll end it.

I've been speaking with Anita Moorjani, who wrote the book *Dying To Be Me*. I'll link to her website and her book, from her page on BATGAP.com. And BATGAP.com is my website, where I have all these interviews archived and where I post new ones each week.

So if you happen to be listening to this on audio or something else, go there and you'll see the whole collection. You can, if you wish, subscribe to an email notification that you'll get once a week, when a new interview is posted. There's also a discussion group there, which crops up around each interview, and some of those discussions become very lively, so feel free to participate in that.

There is also a link to an audio podcast, if you prefer not to sit in front of your computer and watch things like this, but would like to listen while you drive, you can subscribe to the podcast. And there's also a donation button, which I appreciate people clicking, once in a while, if possible, to help keep the whole thing flowing.

So, thanks Anita, it was great.

Anita: My pleasure, thank you for having me on. Thank you so much. I enjoyed it.

Rick: Good. And thanks to those who have been listening or watching, and we'll see you next week.

{BATGAP theme music playing}