

BOTH SIDES NOW

Just mention the name John Edward and some people's eyes widen as though they've just seen a ghost. It's not an unusual reaction when you consider that this psychic medium is synonymous with re-connecting people with loved ones who have "crossed over."

John Edward has amazed and deeply touched the hearts of the countless people he's served as a medium. People get that deer-in-the-headlights look about him because he's a ticket to what they'd love to do themselves—communicate with people they've lost from this life.

Talking to the dead is not a "normal" ability, but John Edward brings his gift mainstream and manages to remain a very normal, down-to-earth guy in the process. Therein lies the esteem so many people hold for John Edward; he shares his gift with a compassion and patience that takes the fear factor out of the process and makes hearing from a lost loved one seem as natural as picking up the phone and hearing their soothing voices again.

Part of Edward's authenticity is that he's walked down his own road of grief. The loss of his mother ranks among his deepest, and he brings that dimension of personal empathy to those he reads.

Despite the extraordinary path his life has taken, Edward, as a kid growing up on

By ERIN HARRINGTON

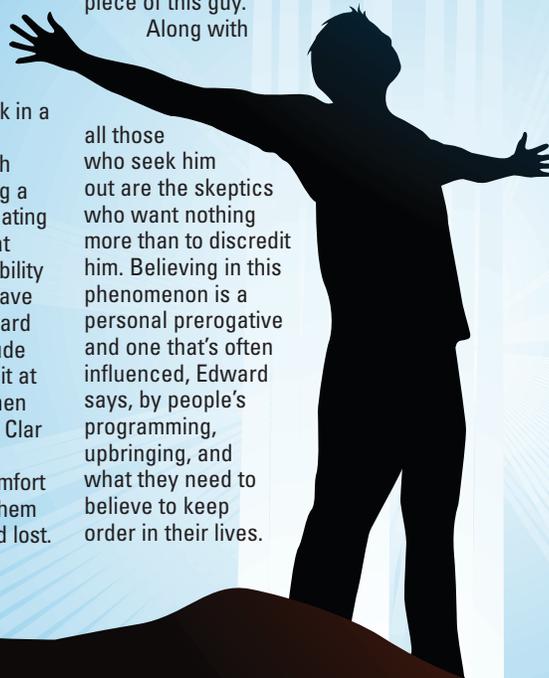
Long Island, enjoyed a pretty ordinary childhood. When he was in the sixth grade and his parents separated, Edward moved with his mother from Queens to his grandmother's house in Glen Cove. There, he was surrounded by a big, close-knit Italian family that dictated every Friday as pizza night. Edward attended parochial school and was a working-class kid; he washed dishes in a local deli and, at age 13, was made manager. His salt was rooted in the earth early.

John Edward is still a hard-working, salt-of-the-earth kind of guy. A husband and father of two young children, he doesn't work in a deli anymore, or in a health care profession—an occupation in which he's just a few credits shy of holding a Master's degree. Instead, he's dedicating his life's work to something else that also dates back to his youth—his ability to communicate with people who have passed from this life. Although Edward knew he had this exceptional aptitude since he was really young (he puts it at somewhere about age 4), it was when he was 15 that famed psychic Lydia Clar sat him down and confirmed it. She knew his life's work was to bring comfort and hope to people by reuniting them with those they had loved and lost.

Not your typical job description, but demand for his work has been just huge. In the 22 years since Clar's confirmation, John Edward has moved on from private readings to radio and television appearances, his own show *Crossing Over with John Edward* which debuted on the Sci-Fi channel in 2000, several best-selling books, two Australian tours, his new *John Edward Cross Country* program on the WE Network, and an aggressive tour schedule throughout the United States in 2007. Everyone, it seems, wants a piece of this guy.

Along with

all those who seek him out are the skeptics who want nothing more than to discredit him. Believing in this phenomenon is a personal prerogative and one that's often influenced, Edward says, by people's programming, upbringing, and what they need to believe to keep order in their lives.



PSYCHIC MEDIUM
JOHN EDWARD
STRIKES A BALANCE

Edward well understands this need. His conviction is that the messages, visions, and vibrations he receives are a gift from God, and that everyone at a group reading can go home with the knowledge that life and love are eternal. "My job is to educate people; the love we have does transcend the big, bad wolf of death," he maintains.

Anyone who's seen John Edward in action would have a hard time disputing that. Once he greets his audiences and rubs those hands of his together, there's no stopping him. He is, quite literally, a bundle of energy. In his books, Edward explains that he can perceive the vibrations and frequencies of those who have crossed over. He equates the speed of these energies coming in to that of a helicopter propeller moving so fast you can't see the propellers themselves. He prepares for this phenomenon through meditation and prayer. A highly faith-based person, he usually prays the Rosary before his readings. This, he says, helps him raise his own vibration level, while the energies on the other side lower theirs, so that they can communicate on a mutual plane. The energies of those that communicate through him, he says, send him thoughts, feelings, and images that literally pull him to where the messages are meant to be delivered.

The *how* of the process is really secondary to the *why*. "I am bringing people the assurance that their loved ones have not really left them," Edward states.

What a truly phenomenal gift. You'd think that being able to provide someone grieving a loved one with just one validation that they're still with them would be an amazingly gratifying feeling for him. Most people would feel like a million bucks. But most people can't do what John Edward does to the extent that he does, and with that ability Edward's been given comes an equal measure of humility.

"No matter how amazing an event is, it's never enough," he concedes. For it to be enough, he feels, these people would all have to be together physically. "It's a very

humbling place to go to. No matter what you do or how much you can give, it's not enough. It's a really very tough place to go to."

"As a medium, I have to manage expectations all the time. People have grief and anger issues," he explains. "If, for instance, someone has lost a child—and there's no greater loss than that—and if



little Billy doesn't come through, or five other people come through first, it's out of my control. People want to hear what they want to hear. But the reality is, we can't put words in someone else's mouths when they're alive. And we can't now."

"Every audience is its own little universe," he adds. "After 22 years, I'm still blown away by the process. The day I'm not blown away is the day I should stop."

Although Edward says, "I've had some moments where I don't feel appreciated; I'm giving out pieces of my soul and it's never enough," his heart is in this work for the long haul.

While most people familiar with John Edward know he was brought up Catholic, they may not know how deeply rooted in

his faith his work actually is. In his most recent book *Practical PRAYING: Using the Rosary to Enhance Your Life*, he expresses that he's always felt that, since the beginning of time, God has continually allowed people to connect with their loved ones on the other side to let us mere mortals know that there's an afterlife and God actually exists.

Personally, praying the Rosary is a weapon for Edward in his life. "I've always been fascinated with apparitions of the Blessed Mother around the world. I developed a fascination for the magical side of prayer and faith and the healings that took place at apparition sites. I discovered the Rosary and found that, through prayer, I could manifest change in my environment."

When asked how he'd like his life's work to be remembered, he pauses, and states: "Passionate, brave and honest." He's a bit more thoughtful still when asked "When you pass, do you think you'll come through to your loved ones through another psychic medium?" "If the right opportunity with the right medium presented itself, I'd say yes. But my hope is that by the time I pass the subject matter of my work is more widely understood and that families have the ability to connect and know that their loved ones are around them without the need to go through a third party."

Despite all the grief and loss that Edward encounters in his work, there is much cause for celebration. On his website, he reveals, "The handicaps that we are wearing here in the physical world are shed on the other side like an old sweater." He'd read a woman who lost her daughter. "She came through with a lot of energy, and showed me herself dancing like a prima ballerina. Her mom told me at the end of the session that her daughter was not able to walk at all in life, and her greatest desire was to dance."

How wonderful is that? "It's huge," Edward echoes. "When God calls you home, it's the right time to go."