

The Evidence of the Soul

Now I may be a Mystic, but I'm a *rational* Mystic, so in the following pages you'll find that in my quest for evidence of the Soul, I focused on three *types* of evidence:

1. Scientific evidence in the form of quantum theory
2. First-person accounts that were *verified by third parties*
3. Common and consistent *patterns of experiences* reported from multiple, first-person accounts

Don't sweat the quantum theory stuff, I'll just describe a single experiment and its conclusions—no math or equations (I wouldn't understand them either).

To me, the *verified* first-person accounts are the most convincing type of evidence (and it is only in the life-between-lives phase where verifiable evidence is lacking) but the second type of evidence—common and consistent patterns of experience—can be nearly as compelling when one realizes that these patterns occur regardless of age, country, culture, religion or life experience. Across the board, these "patterns of experience" are common to every make, model and race of human being in existence. Because of the *consistent* nature of these reports, I consider these patterns (not the individual accounts) as authentic evidence of the Soul.

I'll also present some results from my personal experiments into recalling past lives. While these accounts should not be taken as *evidence*, they'll demonstrate two key points:

- How I came to distinguish the difference between an authentic memory and a vision, hallucination or an overactive imagination
- How these past lives influenced (and continue to influence) my current life

Finally, I'll provide a list of the books from which most of these accounts were taken. Since I only have a limited space and the evidence for the Soul could fill multiple volumes—even *bookshelves*— I'll only present a few select highlights from each of these works, so I strongly encourage you to peruse these books yourself as the research, investigation, and professionalism put into them points to some overwhelming evidence which is quite convincing.

But first, a little scientific support for the Soul—for a disembodied consciousness—from some people far smarter than myself.

Evidence of Reincarnation

While the concept of reincarnation has been around for thousands of years—it is a central tenet of both Hinduism and certain branches of Buddhism—until recently, reincarnation has largely been dismissed as wishful thinking by much of the scientific community.

After my initial, unexpected past life recollection—being a devote atheist at the time—I sought to find out if my "vision" was an authentic memory or a mere

hallucination brought about by the rapid breathing technique of the breathwork session. Was there any evidence that souls are real and return to life? While the breathwork experience *felt* real, my doubting mind said, "No. Reincarnation is for the gullible."

Still, I've always been a rational man—I knew that I was just *guessing* that reincarnation wasn't real, that I did not have any actual evidence to show it wasn't true—so I did a little investigation of my own. To my surprise, I found that there is an extensive amount of deeply researched, documented, and third-party verified evidence practically *proving* the authenticity of reincarnation.

What follows is largely taken from the works of Ian Stevenson and one of his proteges Jim Tucker (see *Further Reading* below), and involves the spontaneous recollections of past lives by young children.

The Professionalism of the Research

At the time of the publication of the 2000 edition of *Children Who Remember Previous Lives*, Dr. Stevenson and his associates at the University of Virginia had amassed a collection of more than 2500 cases indicative of reincarnation. These are cases which had been investigated by professional researchers and found to have verifiable evidence to support the claims of these young children. 2500 cases!

Dr. Stevenson began his research in the early 1960's and—when faced with the overwhelming number of cases that he was confronting—soon was faced with a difficult decision: Should he investigate a few cases intensely or a large num-

ber of the cases less thoroughly (although, to quote Dr. Stevenson, "sufficiently to be reasonably confident of their authenticity").

In the end he personally chose to study a "smaller number of thoroughly investigated cases" (over 400) and "at least another thousand less thoroughly, but yet sufficiently to consider them deserving of inclusion." The remainder of the cases were investigated by his colleagues at the University of Virginia and his other professional associates.

To combat the possibility that the children were coached or had gained the knowledge of their previous life by some other means, Dr. Stevenson would conduct

interviews with multiple firsthand informants; recording who said what and when; evaluation of the credibility of informants; repeated interviews with the same informants to check for consistency of their reports and to study details previously missed; independent verification, whenever possible, of the subject's statements with informants who either knew the previous personality or had reliable information about him; and locating and copying all pertinent written documents, such as records of significant dates, hospital records, and reports of postmortem examinations.

According to Dr. Tucker, for each case reported and investigated, he and his team would encode over 200 variables into a database for later analysis.

My point (and why I find these reports so convincing) is that *none* of these 2500 cases were of the "Patton's kid is claiming he was a Roman legionnaire in a previous lifetime" variety. These cases were thoroughly documented, investigat-

ed and verified by professional scholars using widely accepted research methodology and analysis.

Some Common Features

Many of the cases studied by Dr. Stevenson and Dr. Tucker would have some or all of the following features:

1. **An announcing dream.** Often a mother-to-be (or a close relative) will have a dream of someone coming to visit or stay with them. Usually this "dream person" is a stranger, but sometimes it is a deceased member of the family. Later, after the child is born and able to talk, the child will claim to be that person—and provide verifiable details of that deceased person's life. What I find fascinating with this pattern (and a little disconcerting), is that the mother-to-be is sometimes not even pregnant at the time of her dream. This raises some interesting questions about free will.
2. **An untimely or violent death.** Dr. Stevenson and Dr. Tucker found that over 50% of previous lives recalled died due to some form of violence. Compared to the norm (currently .09% to .0003%, depending on the country), this statistic suggests that the trauma of a violent death directly influences the likelihood that a child will recall their previous life.
3. **Birthmarks that match wounds or physical disabilities.** Probably the most concrete evidence is how often (around 35% of Dr. Stevenson's cases) a child is born with birthmarks that coincide with either physi-

cal disabilities or wounds received during their previous life. What makes this such compelling evidence is that the birthmarks could be compared to postmortem reports and photographs of the deceased individual.

4. **Using the present tense when describing the past life.** Children who recall past lives often seem to confuse the two for their first few years. Many times they will speak in the present tense when talking about their previous life. For example, a three year old toddler may suddenly announce to his parents, "My wife's name is Marilyn."
5. **Unusual behavior.** Children will often demonstrate unusual behavior that was the norm for their previous life. Some examples: a partiality to a type of food or style of clothing not native to their culture; demonstrating unusual gestures or body language such as favoring a perfectly healthy leg as if it were injured; or unusual (for a toddler to have) addictive-like cravings such as demanding alcohol or tobacco from the parents.
6. **Phobias.** In about 50% of the cases where there was a violent death of the previous life, the child would exhibit a phobia directly related to that death, even though in their current life there was seemingly no reason for this fear. For example, an infant terrified of baths may later (when they had developed verbal skills) claim to have drowned in their previous life.

Some Examples

The following account, from *Children Who Remember Previous Lives*, presents a three of the above patterns (announcing dream, violent death, and birthmarks which matched the injuries sustained in that death):

Necip Ünlütaşkiran's mother, before her pregnancy with him, dreamed about a man unknown to her who had several bleeding wounds. When Necip was born, he had prominent birthmarks that were later found to correspond to fatal wounds on the body of the man whose life Necip later claimed to remember, but his mother had known nothing about this man or his murder when she had her dream.

Often children too young to speak (less than two years old) demonstrate unusual behavior that they would only later (once they gained the verbal skills) explain were from a previous life:

- A girl who would lay on her back and make pedaling motions like riding a bicycle, later she claimed to have been the wife of a man who owned a bicycle repair shop.
- Another girl who would make the motions of pumping a bellows and hammering gestures who would later (once she could talk), describe her previous life as a blacksmith.
- A pre-verbal boy who would make the odd gesture of pointing two extended fingers would later explain that he used to own a double-barreled shotgun.

As with all of these cases, these accounts were later verified with both the families of the children and the families of the deceased. Indeed, in an analysis of 103 cases with Dr. Sybo Schouten, Dr. Stevenson found that the statements made by the children who recalled events of previous lives were between 74-80% accurate.

Another case: An infant, Shamlinie, who was terrified of both buses and being bathed. Upon learning to speak, she described how she had died as a child in her previous life when a passing bus splashed water on her, causing her to fall into a flooded paddy field and drown. The researchers found an account of eleven year old girl from a nearby village, Hemaseelie, who had died in this exact manner. Shamlinie—in two different chance encounters at age three and four—recognized both a sister and a cousin of Hemaseelie's.

Another case: At two and a half years old, a young boy, Gopal, described how he used to have a large home and servants and how his brother and business partner had shot and killed him because of his refusal to borrow money from his wife to help support the business. Not only was Gopal, at less than three years old, accurately able to describe the murder of a man who died eight years previously, but was able to describe events that only the deceased's family had known.

Another: Patrick, at four years old, began talking about his previous life as Kevin, Patrick's half brother who had died 16 years previously. He accurately described unusual and mundane details of Kevin's life and former home, but what is particularly remarkable are the physical similarities. Kevin, the deceased half brother, had suffered from a form of cancer called metastatic neuroblastoma.

Kevin had died blind in his left eye due to a tumor. Patrick developed a white opacity in his left eye that would leave him essentially blind in it. Kevin had a tumor over his right ear. Patrick was born with a lump above his right ear. Kevin had a central line inserted on his neck for his chemotherapy treatments. Patrick was born with an unusual dark, slanted birthmark in the same place. Once Patrick was old enough to walk, he would limp on his left leg with an unusual gait though there was no medical reason for him to do so. Kevin, who had died twelve years before Patrick was born, walked in this same manner from having to wear a brace due to the affects of the cancer on the bones of his left leg.

Another: At two years old, James would have terrible, recurring nightmares of a plane crash. *Two years old*. At three, he was describing a life as a pilot who "flew from a boat," and which got shot in the engine by the Japanese which caused his plane to catch fire and crash into the ocean, killing him. These statements were recorded by researchers *before* they found the identity of the pilot. James gave more details: In his previous life he was also named James, on a boat named *Natoma*, who was shot down at Iwo Jima and had a friend named Jack Larson. Researchers found that there was a Jack Larson on the aircraft carrier *Natoma Bay* in which a twenty-one-year-old James Huston had died when his plane was shot down by the Japanese antiaircraft fire during an Iwo Jima combat operation on March 3, 1945.

2500 documented and researched cases of past lives spontaneously recalled by young children by the University of Virginia alone.

But that's just the *beginning*—a small portion—of the evidence supporting the existence of the Soul.

Scientific Evidence

There is a common assumption that consciousness is generated by the brain, that consciousness is just the result of a bunch of neurons firing in response to stimuli, but many prominent scientists have refuted this belief—and make no mistake, the idea that the brain *creates* consciousness is simply a *belief*.

Some of the world's most respected neuroscientists and physicists have posited that the body is only a "temporary physical expression" of a consciousness that doesn't require a body to function. Among them: Wilder Penfield, one of the pioneers of neurosurgery and best known for mapping the functions of the various regions of the brain; Nobel prize winner Sir John Eccles, an Australian neurophysiologist and philosopher; Neurophysiologist and pathologist Sir Charles Sherrington, another Nobel prize winner; Theoretical physicist and professor emeritus of physics at the University of Cambridge (and Nobel laureate) Brian Josephson. The list goes on.

The idea that consciousness can exist without a physical body is contrary to common sense, yet it has been proven again and again in repeated experiments at the quantum level. The famous two-slit experiment demonstrates this quite clearly.

In the experiment, a single photon (a particle of light) is shot from a "photon gun" toward a barrier with two slits cut into it. Rather than passing through one slit or the other as one would expect, the photon acts as if it passes through *both slits at the same time* in a way similar to how a wave of water would pass through the slits. The photon then strikes a back wall, marking its final location. Repeated firings of photons creates an interference pattern on the back wall, identical to

the way a wave passing through *both* slits would. In other words, even though a single photon is shot from the photon gun one at a time, the photon passes through both slits simultaneously and interferes with itself as evidenced by the interference pattern on the back wall.

Strange but true. The photon leaves the gun, de-manifests from physical reality and becomes a disembodied "wave," passes through both slits simultaneously, interferes with itself, and reanimates as a particle when it strikes the back wall.

But it gets stranger. If a detector is set up at each of the slits to observe (but not interfere with) the photon passing through them, then the photon contracts back into a particle and only passes through one slit! Physicists call this phenomenon "the collapse of the wave function." It is as if *the simple witnessing* of the disembodied photon wave causes the wave to collapse out of the ether into a physical particle. But it gets even stranger...

When only one detector is set up on one of the slits the photon still acts as a particle *even if it doesn't pass through the slit with the detector*. In other words, the photon manifested (reanimated as a particle) not because it was observed or measured, but because the scientists could determine *through simple logic* that the particle had to pass through the other slit. In other words, simply *knowing* which slit the particle passed through (not the actual measurement or observation itself) caused the photon to collapse from a wave into a particle. *Consciousness* caused the photon to manifest as a physical thing.

The result of this "observing nothing" variation of the two slit experiment, led physicist Richard Conn Henry, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Johns Hopkins University, to conclude, "The Universe is entirely mental."

Variations on the two slit experiment have been performed time and time again with the same results: When left to its own device, matter assumes a disembodied wave state, but when consciousness observes this wave, the wave collapses into a material object.

One fascinating modification of the two slit experiment was performed so that the photon detectors were placed at both slits to look for passing photons, each was turned on, but each of the detectors' software was disabled so that the devices could *not record their findings*. In other words, *physically* nothing had changed with the equipment, but the *information*—the *knowledge* of which slit the photon would pass through—could not be determined and the single photon, somehow "realizing" it wasn't actually being consciously observed, went back to acting like a wave.

When the detectors *recorded* their findings—information that *only a consciousness entity could interpret*—the photons acted as physical particles. When the detectors did *not* record their findings, the photons acted as "disembodied" waves—they did not manifest as physical objects until they struck the rear wall.

Strange but true. Consciousness "materializes" the physical world.

As one of the founders of quantum theory, Max Planck explained (emphasis mine), "I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as *derivative* from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness."

Consciousness comes *before* matter. Consciousness—the ability to see and think and become self-aware—doesn't require a physical brain to function, indeed, it's the other way around: *The brain requires Consciousness to function.*

Clean up and add in: Additional Evidence brain requires consciousness to function:

- In meditation, people often fall asleep. Implies brain tires b/c Consciousness is slowing down.
- Often people go to bed very sleepy (brain), but then can't get to sleep because of an active mind (Consciousness). Implies that brain is activated by active Consciousness.

The brain (and the body), *requires* a Soul to function.

But enough of this dry science stuff, let's hear from some people who have *experienced* the Soul in all its bewildering phases—and let's start with the phase that frightens us the most: *Death*.

Death

The majority of evidence regarding the death experience comes from accounts of people who have clinically died (no respiration, no heartbeat, no brain function), were revived, and then recounted their experience. These types of experiences are often called *near death experiences* (NDEs).

As with all experiences, there are two components to them: the *interior* (subjective) experience and the *exterior* (objective) experience. While the interior/subjective experience obviously can't be verified by others, the *exterior/objective* experiences often can, and in the cases I've included below, *all* were verified by third parties.

Does this mean we should discount the NDE'ers interior/subjective experience? Not at all. If their exterior/objective experience was *verified*, this lends

credibility to their subjective account. Additionally, if their interior/subjective experience corresponds with many of the common interior experiences of other NDE'ers, then this also lends credibility to their account.

Since to *live* as a Soul is to *deeply believe*—no—to *know* that you are a Soul, I'll present the common patterns of the interior experience in very assertive terms.

Here is what *you will experience* immediately upon your "death":

- You will detach from your physical body, rise above it and look down upon it.
- Your sense of "you" will not change at all. You will *experience* new things, you will have new *insights*, but you will still feel like *you*—same personality, same values, same likes and dislikes. This continuity of self is so consistent and transparent that many people report that initially they didn't realize they had "died."
- You will feel a deep sense of well being and inner peace.
- As you gaze down at your former physical body, you will feel either indifference toward it, or even revulsion at its coarse nature.
- On the other hand, your "new" body—your Soul body—will have a pleasant ethereal quality to it. If you see it at all, it will have a pleasing appearance.
- Upon realizing you are a soul, you will experience a profound sense of relief. Often this is accompanied with the thought, "How could I have taken my (incarnate) life so seriously before?" This reaction is almost

identical to the reaction most people feel upon enlightenment: "How could I have taken my personal self so seriously before?"

- Your senses will be hyper intensified—though they will probably be limited to seeing, hearing, and thinking/cognition (a few have reported the sense of touch and smell, but these are the exceptions).
- You will be able to move around in all three dimensions (fly). You will be able to effortlessly move through solid objects.
- You may feel frustrated with your inability to communicate with or comfort those grieving your "death," but this frustration is generally short lived.
- You may experience a form of one-way telepathy, knowing what the "living" around you are thinking or feeling, but (generally) you won't be able to communicate with them in a way that they can hear or understand.

The above, though they are *subjective* experiences, are so commonly and consistently reported by NDE'ers from all walks of life, ages, cultures, countries, genders, and races that they can be practically considered "guaranteed" events that you will experience upon your body's physical death.

Critics will often voice their theories—*beliefs* by any other name—that the dying brain is responsible for all these subjective experiences, but I would counter their *belief* with the following evidence (not *proof*, but powerful evidence nonetheless):

- Quantum theory (above) indicates that the brain (matter) is dependent on Consciousness, not the other way around.
- There are numerous accounts of *visual* experiences of the physical surroundings (and verified by others) reported by NDE'ers who were either born blind, or were blinded by the injuries that resulted in their "death." How would this be possible with the simplistic "dying brain" theory?
- Monitoring devices—when hooked up—often indicate zero brain wave activity, even through the subject was experiencing *hyper lucidity* during those moments—lucidity of *exterior* events that are verified by third-parties.
- Subjects are often anesthetized during these experiences. If you've ever been "under" during an operation, you know first hand this experience is a complete blank, and even when "coming out" of the anesthesia, you often don't remember events during the immediate recovery process. This "blankness" is completely contrary to the hyper-lucidity that NDE'ers experience.

A Study: Some of the most convincing evidence on the veracity of near death experiences can be found in unbiased medical studies. In his book, *Recollections of Death: A Medical Investigation*, Michael Sabom compared the accounts of 57 survivors of near-death cardiac arrest. Of the 57, 25 were medically knowledgeable but did *not* have a near death experience during their cardiac arrest. These

25 were considered the control group. The remaining 32 individuals had no medical training at all but who *did* experience an NDE.

The medically knowledgeable group experienced what one would expect when rendered unconscious during a cardiac arrest—loss of time, confusion, concern, and disorientation. When asked to describe the procedures which were performed to revive them, *only two of the subjects were able to do so.*

When the medically naive subjects *who did experience an NDE* were asked to describe the procedures used to revive them, *all of them—100%—were able to accurately do so.* These are patients who—unlike the control group—weren't even qualified to *guess* at how a trained medical staff could have revived them. But as this evidence suggests, they didn't have to guess—because they witnessed the whole procedure first-hand as a disembodied soul.

Does this study suggest that not everyone has a soul? That those who did not have a near death experience are soulless? I seriously doubt it—and for a number of reasons:

- You will only experience yourself as a soul—have an NDE—if you detach from your body in that short window of time between clinical death and the moment you are revived. Many cultures believe that it can take hours, even days, before the soul leaves the body after physical death.
- As you will find out later from this book, the higher levels of spiritual development recognize that "everything is Consciousness." That every living thing is a conscious thread of the Divine, a wave on the ocean of

a much larger Intelligence. To put it another way, every living thing—humans, animals, and plants—has a soul.

- On a more personal note, I once ran into a man who—having known nothing about my background or interests—mentioned rather offhandedly that he had "died twice." I asked if he experienced anything during his "deaths" and he replied, somewhat hesitantly, "Not during the first one, but," and he looked around rather uncomfortably, "definitely during the second one." He then went on to describe both the medical revival efforts and his being drawn "toward a brilliant and loving Light." Two deaths, but only one NDE.

Moving About While Dead. Case 1: A woman, June, dies in her hospital bed, detaches from her body, floats out to the lobby and overhears her brother-in-law, who was planning a business trip, on the phone explaining, "...it looks like June is going to kick the bucket, so I better stay around and be a pallbearer."

When he came to visit a few days later, he was surprised when she told him, "Next time I die, you go off on your business trip because I'll be just fine."

Both these conversations were confirmed by the brother-in-law.

Moving About While Dead. Case 2: A woman was rushed to the hospital after suffering a severe heart-attack. She "dies" then leaves her body, floats outside the building where she spies a "a man's tennis shoe, left-footed and dark blue with a wear mark over the little toe and a shoelace tucked under the heel" on a window ledge on the third floor. The shoe was later found exactly as described... on a third-floor window ledge of the hospital.

How is that possible? This is a woman who just suffered a heart-attack, was rushed to the hospital, died and was revived. Most people I know would have been alarmed, confused and concerned for their future health, not talking about tennis shoes on window ledges. Something mysterious and amazing is obviously going on here.

Following the Dead Body Around. An 8-year-old boy fell from a bridge, hit his head on a rock and remained submerged underwater for at least five minutes before a policeman pulled him out and attempted CPR for 30 minutes before a hospital helicopter arrived. He was pronounced dead by the EMTs at the scene, but later revived at the hospital. The boy, in a coma, did not regain consciousness for two days.

To summarize: A young boy, underwater for five minutes and concussed with a head injury from striking a rock from a high fall. Unconscious, unresponsive, pronounced dead, revived but in a coma for two days.

Upon awakening, not only was he able to describe in detail all the efforts to revive him both at the scene and in the hospital, but also how long it took for the helicopter to arrive... and even knew the name of the police officer who had rescued him. Yes, somehow this drowned, concussed, dead and unresponsive little boy had seen all this from a position *above* his dead body—even while his body was being transported to the hospital.

This account was verified by the police officer, the EMTs and the medical staff at the hospital.

No one has ever died. We simply detach from our bodies at physical death, and float above them a little while...

Floating Above the Body. Case 1:

When Diane's raft flipped over in the rapids of the Chattahoochee River with eight other people, she was forced under, blacked out, detached from her body and then rose above the river to an elevation of about 100 feet. While her body remained under the water, she was able to accurately describe the drama of the scene from her vantage point above: Two men in the raft looking for her; A woman who had fallen out, downstream and clinging to a rock; Diane's husband and daughter, who had been in another raft, running back up the hill to help; Diane's husband climbing onto a rock trying to hear what the two men in the raft were shouting.

She experienced all this while her body was passed out and trapped underwater.

All verified by the parties involved.

Floating Above the Body. Case 2: A woman, under general anesthesia, dies during surgery, "wakes up" above her body and watches as the surgeons struggle to get her heart started again. She later accurately describes the procedure.

How? She was unconscious, under anesthesia and clinically dead. Yet she accurately described the scene from a vantage point above the operating table.

Floating Above the Body. Case 3: Seventeen year old Valerie's account of her NDE during surgery: "Then she (an angel/guide—a common experience we'll cover in the next section) pointed down, and I could see the doctors doing CPR on a little girl. Not really understanding that was me, I watched my whole operation, CPR and all. I told her that was so sad, she looks so young. Then she said

they are bringing her back, and I felt like I was pushed and thrown back into that painful body."

While under anesthesia, no form of conscious experience should take place—no dreams, no grogginess, no memories, no knowledge of what is happening in the operating theater—yet in this and the previous case, the women knew and accurately described the procedures performed not only on their *anesthetized* bodies, but on their *clinically dead* bodies.

"Impossible" Vision and Hearing: A soldier was "killed" from an explosion during a battle. His eyes were burned and his eardrums perforated from the blast, rendering him both blind and deaf for weeks. Yet this blind and deaf soldier was able to describe not only visual images of the efforts to revive him on both the battlefield and the operating room, he was also able to later—after his eardrums had healed—identify the surgeon by the sound of his voice alone.

Not only was he "dead" during all this, but it was physically impossible for his organs (eyes and eardrums) to have functioned—yet he was somehow able to see and *hear* everything that occurred around his "dead" body.

Other NDE'ers who were born either blind or deaf have related similar accounts, often having a hard time describing them because they had never experienced either the ability to see or hear before.

Telepathy: A cardiologist rear-ends a car on his way to work. Even while he was attempting to revive a patient who "died" from a heart attack, he couldn't help but worry about whether the other driver would sue him.

Later the patient—even though he had his eyes closed and was under anesthesia while being revived—accurately described what the medical instruments

used to revive him looked like, in what order that they were used, and even the settings of the various dials on the machines in the room. But the kicker was when the patient said to the cardiologist, "Doctor, I could tell that you were worried about that accident. But there isn't any reason to be worried about things like that."

Visual experiences while the eyes are closed... while under anesthesia... while clinically dead. And the ability to read minds too.

Is there a vast conspiracy going on here? Did all these doctors and nurses who verified these accounts simply disregard their professional reputations and conspire to pull off a great (and oddly consistent) lie—a lie in which these medical professionals colluded with the very patients whose lives they had just saved? Why? And to what end?

Most of these cases had *multiple* disinterested third-party observers confirm the accounts described by the NDE'er. *Each* of these cases would have to be a true conspiracy, with all parties agreeing on the same story, and if any individual in the party were to later "confess," then the reputations of all the other parties (doctors and nurses) would be irrevocably tarnished. Would it be worth it for them? For what benefit?

No, all the evidence suggests these accounts are true, that at death, we-as-a-Soul simply detach from the body while not only remaining conscious, but hyper-alert and lucid.

As quantum theory suggests, consciousness is not dependent on the body, it's the other way around. Conscious simply *inhabits* the body until the body dies, then we-as-a-Soul simply detach from it.

It is only a *belief* that consciousness ends at death. All the evidence suggests the contrary: that consciousness—the Soul—lives and continues on long after physical death.

Life Between Lives: The Soul Realm

Either here or further up, remind them WHY the Soul evidence is IMPORTANT: Ultimately living as a Soul weakens the ego.

As we've seen above, at the time of physical death, we-as-a-Soul detach from the body and rise above it—fully conscious, cognizant, and alive. Our personality and memories remain intact. The sense of "me" remains so stable that at first we don't realize we are even "dead." Our experience of the world changes, but not our sense of self. So what happens next? Where do we go and what do we experience in the afterlife?

Unfortunately, what happens on "the other side" can't be verified by third-parties in the same way as our examples above, but this doesn't mean we can't gather evidence in the form of *common patterns* revealed from hundreds of cases of near death experiences and hypnotic regression.

I am a Mystic, but I am a *rational* Mystic. I have always been (and, though it may surprise you, still *am*) skeptical of the accuracy of events recalled under hypnosis. While it is widely reported that patients cannot *lie* about what they see or experience in the hypnotic state, this does not mean that what they see or experience is 100% *accurate* in terms of memory recollection.

It's been shown in many studies that memories are often "bent" by our values and prejudices, but this doesn't mean that those memories are 100% *false*, it

just means that they are not 100% true. The core, major events of most memories are usually very accurate, it is just that the details—the tiny specific items of recall—are often overlain with interpretations based on our culture, beliefs, fears and hopes.

This "overlying" of the details can be thought of in the same way some computer software works. In some video games, the player can use a "skin overlay" to change the way their virtual character *looks*, they can change the clothes, hair style, facial features, etc., in order to fit a style that matches the player's preference (culture, beliefs, fears and hopes). Though the looks of the player's character has changed—the skin overlay—the overall gameplay and events in the game has not. While the core of the game remains constant and true (the core memories revealed during hypnotic regression), the looks and details (the skin overlay) can be quite varied.

So when I examine these stories of the life in the soul realm, I try to remove the "skin" from the details ("I saw Jesus." "I saw Buddha.") and translate the event into something more generic ("I saw a representation of my ideal spiritual being."). Then I look to see if this is a common occurrence in the accounts of others who either had NDEs or were regressed hypnotically. When these patterns become consistent enough—common in many accounts—I consider this as *evidence of a likely truth*. It's not perfect, but it seems to me to be as close as we will ever get to what really happens in the soul realm—at least until we experience it for ourselves.

Additionally—and this is powerful evidence of the authenticity of these experiences—is that many of the events recalled *via hypnotic regression accurately*

match the events recalled from near death experiences. Two very different *physical* experiences—a person deeply relaxed in a calm and soothing environment versus a person physically traumatized and dying amid the chaos of an ICU unit—yet their experiences of the afterlife, once the "skin overlays" are removed, are practically identical.

So there you are, looking down at your dead body, quite happy to be rid of it (a common experience), and you're wondering, "Okay, what's next? Where do I go from here?"

The Tunnel: One of the first other-worldly objects that people often report, is the opening of the mouth of a tunnel in their immediate vicinity. Seemingly without their own volition, they pass rapidly through this tunnel (the term "propelled" is often used), toward a bright light at the other end. Descriptions of the tunnel vary (the "overlay skin"), but it is quite commonly remembered and always leads to the soul realm.

The Light: Almost universally, at the end of the tunnel, is a brilliant, bright light. Though it may shine as bright a "a million suns," it does not cause pain or discomfort to gaze upon it. Practically everyone who describes this light speaks of it in awe, often referring to it as *the Divine itself*—intelligent, loving, alive, calm and soothing. There is a strong desire to enter the light and to merge with it.

Relate your LSD experience. Research the Bardo experiences of Tibetan Buddhists who merge with the Light

Insights and Limitless Knowledge: On encountering or merging with the Light, it is often reported that subjects are given profound insights and even limitless knowledge. This is often a source of frustration to those recalling this experience.

rience as universally they can't remember the details of the insights or knowledge.

What I find fascinating with both the Light and the Insights is that these are remarkably similar to the initial experience of enlightenment. At the moment of spiritual realization, the dropping of all personal and physical boundaries feels like an expansion into everything—an almost mystical feeling of merging with the One. This is very similar to the merging with the Light in the soul realm. Additionally, many people, upon awakening to enlightenment are flooded with profound insights—usually so quickly that most of them can't be fully grasped or retained. For my own part—and perhaps this is because I had already fully integrated the Soul stage—I receive these insights on a more regular, easier to grasp basis, about once a month. Long time readers of my blog see this often, that I blog about general mundane stuff for awhile, then for about a week, I'll be blogging about deep, spiritual topics that just pop into my brain. I don't claim these insights as my own, since they don't seem to come from me but directly from *Her* (TaoGod).

The (optional) Greeter: After the encounter with the Light, many people report being greeted by a beloved but "deceased" relative. The purpose of this greeter seems to be to help the newly departed soul adapt and adjust to this soul realm. Not everyone seems to need to be met by a greeter though. More advanced souls—souls who've "been around the block" a few times—no longer seem to need the services of a greeter, nor the time to acclimate to the soul realm.

The Guide: Soon the subject encounters their guide, an entity vastly wiser and more learned than they are. Many refer to this guide as their "guardian angel" and report that he/she would often look out for them during their incarnate lives. One's guide seems to be permanently assigned to us, watching over and guiding each of us from life to life to life. Overwhelmingly, when one recalls encountering their guide, it is described as a *reunion*, as two old and beloved friends greeting each other after a long and lonely absence.

Again I find a surprising correlation between accounts of the soul realm and the experiences of the enlightened. While we'll cover this in more detail in future chapters, soon after enlightenment a second personality often awakens in the individual—a second intelligence. This second intelligence has access to what Richard Bucke called *cosmic consciousness*. Bucke referred to these people (the enlightened) as having a "duplex personality." **Bucke & duplex personality were mentioned in the "Life Changing Levels (Mystic)" section.** I experience this second personality as a divine lover, whom I call Tao-GodHer—an individual personification of God. She is always with me, always guiding me, always there to whisper insights and wisdom in my ear. When I first came across descriptions of this guide in accounts of the soul realm, of how loving and wise and nonjudgemental he/she is, I immediately thought of my own "guardian angel."

The Life Review: After the reunion with your guide, he/she will take you through a powerful and emotional life review. At this point, it becomes clear that incarnate life is used as a learning experience, an opportunity for spiritual and emotional growth. Events in your former life are not used to *judge* you, but to help

you learn and discover patterns of your psychological makeup. Probably the most important aspect of the life review is to see—with an unblinkingly clear eye—exactly how your previous actions affected both yourself and others.

The Barrier: The life review is often the furthest point that those who have had a near death experience are able to "go to" in the soul realm. Up until this point, the events recalled from the NDE'er—the Tunnel, the Light, ...—are remarkably similar to those recalled by patients under hypnosis.

But at this point, the soul seems to encounter a "point of no return." For the NDE'er if they were to continue forward, there would be no coming back to their present incarnate life. Obviously for them to *be* an NDE'er, they did not cross this barrier of no return.

The similarities of the experiences for those under hypnosis, plus those who had a near-death experience, plus those of the enlightened (no longer identifying with being a human being, merging with the Light, the Insights, the Guide/second "personality"), all add to the credibility factor of accounts of events leading up to this point.

Because of these similarities, I'm convinced that the above patterns of recollection of the soul realm are accurate reflections of actual events we experience upon physical death. The next phase, the "Schooling" I'm not so convinced of.

The Schooling: Before I get into any reasons for my skepticism for this phase of the afterlife, let's cover what it entails.

The purpose of this phase seems to be to uncover areas of development that the soul is weak on, and how best to improve or grow.

Accounts of this phase vary, but some talk of a group of souls who—being of a similar level of development—hang out together, learning from each other and from teachers or masters, then often incarnating together to assist one another in their individual developments. Other accounts speak only of the individual's personal guide acting as the teacher and assistant in helping the soul understand his/her strengths and weaknesses.

I base the above on the work of two hypnotherapists: Michael Newton and Dolores Cannon (see Further Reading below), and while the *purpose* of this phase remains consistent—to uncover and learn about one's developmental weaknesses—the *details* of this phase are not entirely consistent between the two authors. Because of the *consistency* of the accounts of the authors, yet the *inconsistence* between the authors, I suspect either the therapists were unintentionally influencing their patients (ie: "I've heard at this point, X happens. Is that happening to you?"), or the patients were previously familiar with the author's work and have thus influenced themselves.

Additionally, we have to keep in mind that accounts of this phase were all recalled by patients who had sought out a therapist in order to learn more about their psychological issues and how to correct them. This desire for seeking a "wise person" (therapist/spiritual master) for the purpose of self-improvement (therapy/schooling) is, I suspect, being reflected in the patients' recollections of this phase.

Additionally—and you should *not* take this as evidence one way or the other since it is simply my personal, inner experience—while I have "recalled" (via the

duplex personality) all the other phases of the soul realm written about here, I've never recalled the Schooling phase.

The *reason* for the Schooling phase—and this is agreed upon by both therapists mentioned above—is to reveal our developmental weaknesses and how we might correct them. Because I see this as the express purpose of the Life Review phase, maybe those souls who don't fully "get" the message of the life review are helped along in this area by "going to school." Regardless, I don't find the *details* of this phase particularly important either way.

Next Life Selection: The last phase of the soul realm, the phase just prior to rebirth, is the process of selecting one's next incarnate life. The soul is aided in this task by either their Guide, or as part of the Schooling process.

There seems to be four general types of lives chosen from: Resting lives, vacation lives, educational lives, and humbling lives. The evidence here is quite anecdotal, so I'm forced to be quite speculative as to why we chose certain lives.

The Resting Life: A very simple, mundane, uneventful life is chosen: Go to school, get married, land a mindless job, have kids, play golf every weekend, take scheduled vacations to the same spot year after year, retire, and play more golf.

I used to work with a man who had this exact life, and he was one of the happiest, most content people I've ever known.

Souls often will select a Resting life directly after having had an either emotionally or physically difficult previous life.

The Vacation Life: A hedonistic life: Power, prestige, financial security... the good life. These are the people "born with a silver spoon," where everything seems to be handed to them "on a silver platter."

Similar to the Resting life, the Vacation life seems to be chosen as a form of reward for having toiled through a series of difficult or taxing educational lives.

The Educational Life: A life of tests and learning experiences: Fail, fail, fail, then succeed. Life is a struggle, but never so much that the soul can't handle it. Real-world experience (versus book knowledge) leads to the wisdom the soul needs to help advance his personal growth.

Probably the most common type of life, the Educational life seems to help overcome a weakness or failing revealed in the Life Review or Schooling processes.

The Humbling Life: A life of physical or emotional disability: Blindness, loss of limbs, addiction, mental retardation.... A very difficult life. The realization and acceptance of one's "weaknesses" often leads to a profound "inner strength through humility."

This life seems to be chosen as a form of rapid spiritual advancement through some of the most difficult trials an ego can face: Humility, acceptance and surrender. Because of the trials of this life, the ego is forcibly weakened into accepting its powerlessness over its destiny. In so doing, the soul—though its humility and surrender to powers greater than its own—has the potential to gain a deep inner peace and radiant grace.

Of course few lives are going to fit exclusively into only one of these four broad categories. A soul determined to pay off "karmic debt" may choose a

Humbling/Educational life as both an act of contrition of a past transgression while at the same time learning how their prior actions affected others physically or emotionally. Others may want to work out envy issues by choosing a Vacation/Educational life, possibly to learn first-hand that money truly doesn't bring you happiness.

Regardless of why a soul chooses a particular life, we can now leave much of the speculation behind and bring the soul back down to earth—quite literally—with more verifiable evidence: evidence of souls taking on new lives.

The Return To Incarnate Life

A short recap of the evidence we've seen so far: Upon our physical death, we detach from the body, pass through a portal/tunnel to another dimension/realm, review our previous life to identify areas for further psychological or spiritual development, select our future life, and then...? Rebirth. But what is the rebirth process like for the soul?

Below I present the findings of Jenny Wade in her collection of accounts of pre- and perinatal memories revealed by various psychologists during their work "with the deeper layers of the psyche."

Taken from a mass of accounts where certain events in the subjects' recollection were verified by third parties (and thus adding credence to their stories) we can summarize the following for the soul who has selected a mother to be born to:

1. The disincarnate soul often views physical life to be unpleasant—even repulsive—but feels obligated to incarnate.
2. The disincarnate soul has no physical boundaries, but is limited to the area either in or around the mother.
3. The soul at this point still *identifies* with being a *soul*, and not as the fetus.
4. Around the point of the first, measurable fetal brain activity, the soul becomes "attached to" and inhabits the fetus. This supports the theory that Consciousness "activates" the brain and not the other way around (see *Scientific Evidence* above).
5. Even after inhabiting the fetus, the soul/fetus still possess the free will to either be born or self-abort.
6. Unlike newborn babies who experience a sort of oceanic awareness (everything is all mixed together), the concept of "other" is fully mature and understood by the soul/fetus. There is a distinct sense of separation between the soul/fetus and the mother or other humans.
7. The soul/fetus is highly insightful, intelligent, even telepathic in knowing the thoughts and feelings of both the mother and people in the mother's vicinity. This intelligence and sense of "other" (#6 above) may account for the odd and peculiar *alertness* that neonates demonstrate in the first few hours after birth, but which quickly fades to the normal, "dull and out of it" state that follows for a few weeks later.

8. Toddler's accounts of these experiences are normally shared when they can start talking (2-3 years), and are usually forgotten around the age of 5 (normally coinciding with when the child starts to participate in activities outside the immediate family). This age range coincides precisely with the spontaneous recollection of past lives by young children and suggests that from birth until around 5 years old, both the soul, past lives, and reincarnation are taken as a "given" by the toddler who simply didn't have the ability to talk about them yet.

What follows is a very small sample of a vast collection of pre- and perinatal memories collected by various researchers.

Case 1: The Soul in the vicinity, before and during conception. Ingrid remembers her parents having sex on a couch before they were married when her grandmother and aunt unexpectedly stopped by.

Mother was beside herself. She knew she got pregnant. She was ashamed. She didn't want to do it in the first place.

Case 2: The Soul, fully conscious and aware before the fetal brain had fully developed. Also the ability to hear even though this should be physically impossible at this stage of development. Here the child is remembering an attempted abortion:

I was hardly formed and my mom is using some kind of remedy to wash me away. It feels real hot.... I know she is trying to get me out of there. I'm just a little blob. I don't know how I know, but I know. My aunt seems to be

giving my mom directions. I can hear her voice and another woman in the background. She is not supposed to get pregnant. ... It didn't work either. It had a... vile strong smell. I can see where I was too; I was way up there, just teeny.

Case 3: Another attempted abortion demonstrating sight when eyesight should be physically impossible, and an understanding of the physical anatomy of the mother's womb ("the button hook coming up at me).

Subject: I saw that button hook coming up at me. I knew my mother was trying to get me out.

Therapist: Then what happened?

Subject: Nothing happened—only a little bleeding.

Case 4: Viewing events from outside the womb.

Mother is sitting on a couch knitting something. Daddy comes in and is asking why she is knitting something for a girl. Mother says, "It's a girl. I know it's a girl. It has to be a girl." ...She has on a green plaid dress. I can't see any other color. I think it is dark." The mother exclaimed, "I had a green and black plaid dress on and I can remember when that was! I had just begun feeling Debbie kicking. It was in April. ...I gave that dress away right after my pregnancy. I would have been almost five months along."

Case 5: Another example of viewing events outside the womb. Here the girl remembers, from a viewpoint outside the womb, her mother trying to steady herself while standing on the deck of a boat with her husband.

She's looking at an island. There are other people looking over the water, listening to someone tell them where they are going, explaining to them about the island. My father is standing by my mother, worried about her. He wants to know if she is all right. The rocking of the boat is making her sick. She sat down and is rubbing her stomach." Loretta's mother and father were surprised to hear this story coming out of the third trimester of pregnancy. They said she had correctly reported their outing on a sight-seeing boat but said they had never told her about it.

What is particularly fascinating with the above reports is—exactly like the reports of near death experiences—how *lucid* the accounts are, especially when you consider that there should be no physical ability to see or hear, let alone think at the prenatal level of development.

These cases demonstrate that there is a fully conscious, lucid and rational entity—a Soul—existing in and around the mother both before and after conception.

Four of My Past Lives

After my first, unexpected recollection of my 11th century Scottish past life, I decided to see if I could recall other lives using the same rapid breathing technique that my friend Sula had introduced me to (a method similar to holotropic breathwork).

Over the course of a few months I would "recall" over a dozen past lives, but only three of these experiences were recalled *all at once* in the manner of my first past life memory. The remainder were recalled scene-by-scene, where I wouldn't know what was going to happen next. I have since disregarded these scene-by-scene recollections for two reasons:

1. They did not feel nearly as *powerful* as the "recalled all at once" past lives.
2. The scene-by-scene experience differs too much from the way I recall normal memories (all at once), so I attribute these to imagination brought on by trying too hard to recall a previous life.

But that still left me with four, powerful past lives which were vividly recalled. Properties of each of these lives still affect me today. Below I present them in the order I believe they were lived.

The 11th century Scotsman. In this life (discussed above), I committed suicide by jumping off a cliff. While I do not have any fear of heights, I do have a fear of *falling* which I discovered when I first parachuted out of a helicopter in the Army. When jumping from a military plane, your body is buffeted around by the blast of air and there is no sense of falling before the chute opens, but when jumping from a helicopter, you have almost a six second free fall before the chute deploys and it was then that I discovered that I was *terrified* of falling. Heights don't bother me in the least, but the thought of falling fills me with an almost physical dread.

I attribute this odd combination (comfortable with heights but terrified of falling) to life in the coastal region of the Scottish highlands—I was very familiar and comfortable with cliffs and their heights, but had never known what the act of falling would *feel* like... until it was experienced first-hand upon my suicide.

Additionally, because of the traumatic effect of religion on that life (I left my wife to join a Christian monastery and she killed herself because of it), I suspect this is why I have always been suspicious of the motivations of organized religions (I often tell new acquaintances, I may be the most *spiritual* person you've ever met, but I don't have a *religious* bone in my body).

American Indian. This was a very pleasant life somewhere around the Great Lakes region of North America. I'm not sure of the century, but we had no contact with other races or cultures. It was a peaceful time period with no warfare with other tribes or peoples. I had three wives and numerous children and grandchildren. I remembered somehow knowing it was time to die (of natural causes), climbing a bluff overlooking a valley and lying down in the grass to await a very peaceful death.

I attribute this previous life to my deep love, attraction and connection to nature. At the time of this writing, I have been living as a full-time "nomad" for the last seven years, mostly in national forests and other public lands.

African Slave Woman. Probably the 18th century. Captured and raped repeatedly while chained in the dark hold of a large wooden ship at sea. After gravely injuring one of my attackers, I was tossed into the sea (still chained) and drowned.

Oddly enough I have absolutely no fear of water nor drowning, indeed, I feel safe, secure and comforted by the embrace of the sea while swimming. I attribute this seeming contradiction to my attitude as the slave woman: The sea (and drowning) were a welcome release from terrible suffering.

Additionally, I have a strong aversion to powerful people, particularly dominant women (a sexual aversion to dominant women). This can be understood when you consider the affects of repeated rapes by members of the opposite sex.

Norwegian Ship Builder. Late 18th or early 19th century? This was a pleasant life. I had a son (my current nephew) but don't remember my wife. I died when a large, thick board sprang loose from the front keel of a ship I was helping to build. I had just enough time to start to duck when the board struck me in the forehead, killing me instantly.

This is a good example of birthmarks being reflected in the current life as I have an odd indentation in my skull (left forehead) remarkably similar to what the edge of a board would make, and an unusual "wrinkle" in the skin above the hairline of my right forehead. I was not aware of either of these "birthmarks" before this memory (I found the indentation immediately after recalling this life because my hand went straight to that part of my skull as I relived the experience, and the "wrinkle" I only discovered after I started shaving my head).

These examples should *not* be thought of as evidence, since I have no way to verify their authenticity, but I present them to serve as some examples of what we've learned about the Soul: "Lesson" type lives alternated with "resting" type lives; how these lessons from past lives affect our attitudes/emotions in our fu-

ture lives; and how physical trauma from a previous life can result in birthmarks or defects in future lives.

A Summary of the Evidence of the Soul

The two slit experiment of quantum theory says that consciousness is required for matter to exist—that consciousness exists *prior* to matter and bodies and brains. Quantum theory suggests that the brain and the body are simply physical vehicles for Consciousness to "drive about" while incarnate.

Quantum theory is a *vector of evidence* pointing to the reality of the Soul.

The thousands of investigated and verified reports of young children spontaneously recalling past lives—accounts from all over the world—point to the reality of a Soul that attaches itself to a body only temporarily, returning again and again to animate form over the course of multiple lifetimes.

The evidence of reincarnation is also a *vector of evidence* pointing to the reality of the Soul.

The thousands of extraordinarily lucid accounts of near death experiences—detailed accounts when the heart has stopped and brainwave activity has ceased—suggest that we-as-consciousness simply detach from the body at physical death. Detach and see and hear and think and feel just as we do now—sans body—at a time when the physical body is incapable of these experiences.

Near death experiences are another *vector of evidence* pointing to the reality of the Soul.

The consistency of the patterns of events in another realm—a Soul Realm—that has been revealed in hundreds of cases of hypnotic regression suggests

that after our physical bodies die, we go to a place to review our previous life and select another life to incarnate in.

Hypnotic regression of life between lives is another vector of evidence pointing to the reality of the Soul.

The recollection of hundreds of children of their pre- and perinatal experiences in and around their mother's body—verified accounts of events experienced when the fetus hasn't developed the sense organs to perceive these events—is further evidence suggesting that the Soul is a fully cognizant *entity* that just uses the body as a vehicle to participate in this physical realm.

The pre- and perinatal recollections of young children is another vector of evidence pointing to the reality of the Soul.

Taken individually, each vector on its own is quite convincing—especially when considering that most of these experiences had their accuracy verified by third parties. When we combine these individual vectors together, then the findings are practically indisputable.

Five separate vectors of evidence. Five different approaches that each arrive at the same incontrovertible conclusion: You are not a *human being*—you never were. *You are an eternal Soul.*

Further Reading

The evidence described above was taken from the following sources and the studies referenced within them. Due to space limitations, I obviously had to limit the number of cases and the amount of details included. For a deeper consideration of this evidence, please consult these works directly.

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