

THORNS

PRINCIPLES

OF

PAST LIFE
THERAPY



JUDY HALL

The only introduction you'll ever need

Judy Hall
**Past Life Therapy: The only
introduction you'll ever need**

Аннотация

Many people are looking into their past lives as a key to solving the mental, physical and spiritual difficulties of their current life. Past life therapy can be a particularly effective treatment to phobias, chronic anxiety, inexplicable depression, relationship difficulties and addictive behaviour. This book explains:- What past life therapy is. • How to find a reliable therapist. • What to expect. • What it can do for you. • How to use this treatment in conjunction with other therapies. There are many levels of regression and many other ways to discover past lives, Judy Hall clearly describes the various methods that can be used to allow the reader to select the most appropriate one for them.

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INTRODUCTION INTO THE PAST

Do you believe you have lived before? Many people do.

Do you wonder if you might have? You are not alone.

More and more people are opening up to the intriguing prospect of having previously lived, and died. An increasing number seek aid in 'going back to other lives'. They may simply want to explore the possibility that they have lived before, they may be looking for evidence of past lives, or they may have a more pressing reason for wanting to know what happened to them. In a recent poll, a surprising 49 per cent of people in southern Britain said they believed they might have lived before. In parts of the USA the figure is no doubt higher. In the East, almost everyone believes in reincarnation.

Reincarnation is the belief that, having inhabited a different body, in another time and possibly another place, and having then died, someone returns again to earth in a new body, in other words reincarnates. Knowledge of past lives may be accessed through spontaneous visions, flashbacks, dreams, or *déjà vu*; or it can be induced through hypnosis and other techniques.

A flashback is a spontaneous vision of, or a remembering of, a past-life experience. It may come out of the blue or be triggered by a place or a person, or by touching the part of the body where the memory is stored, or it may surface during meditation. Flashbacks may be experienced by more than one person, either

at the same time or on different occasions. Such spontaneous memories may have started in childhood and carried through to adult life, as in the case of Jenny Cockell.

Yesterday's children: Jenny Cockell

Throughout her childhood, Jenny Cockell had dreams and flashbacks of living in another place. She drew sketch maps of her 'other home'. Over the years she gathered an enormous amount of material. She was convinced that she had been a mother tragically separated from her children by an early death with terrible consequences for those children. She was determined to find them again.

Though she is English in her present life, Jenny Cockell's search led her to Ireland and to a moving reunion with 'her children', who by now are much older than her. Her 'son' said that, whilst not totally convinced about reincarnation (he had been a Catholic all his life), Jenny Cockell had knowledge about his family that only his mother could have. Events had taken place exactly as she recalled them. The house was as she had drawn it all those years ago. The family had been split up following her death, which had been traumatic.

Many celebrities believe in reincarnation. Richard Gere, Tina Turner, Shirley MacLaine and a former Chief Constable of Manchester are just a few of those who have spoken publicly about their belief. General Patton, a Second World War hero, believed he had been both Hannibal and Alexander the Great in addition to several other lesser figures on the war stage of history. Interestingly enough, Alexander himself was a great believer in

reincarnation, as was Plato. The Spanish painter Salvador Dali remembered life as Saint John of the Cross. Napoleon Bonaparte was convinced that he was the reincarnation of Charlemagne, head of the Holy Roman Empire. Henry Ford and Benjamin Franklin were both firm believers.

Having lived before implies a continuity of consciousness: the continuous existence of the human soul. After all, if you have lived and died before, the implication is that you will do so again ... and again. This may well explain the imperative urge to 'prove it' that many people have. An urge that is now being catered for by television and magazines.

Actress Paula Hamilton was hypnotically regressed to a former life as a man, Ashley Brown, for a British TV programme. When questioned, Ashley gave his name and details of his family, including an address in London. He said he had sailed to Ireland from Parkgate, a little known, long disused port near Liverpool that once handled the bulk of Irish sailings. Paula Hamilton had never heard of the place, nor, in her present life, been to Ireland. In her former incarnation, Ashley ended up as a baker in Dublin, giving details such as the name of a (now vanished but verifiable from old maps) alley in which his shop was situated and the Protestant church close by in which he was married. He died of a lung disease due to ingested flour: a common cause of death in bakers of the period.

Hypnotic regression

Hypnosis is an altered state of consciousness during which previously inaccessible memories are accessed. In hypnotic regression, the subject is taken back, or regressed, to another lifetime. There are other methods of regression.

A researcher employed by the programme was able to verify many of the details in this obscure person's life, although it was not possible to actually prove Ashley's existence as many of the relevant Irish records have been destroyed. The researcher did find someone named Brown at the London Kensington address, who could well have been a relative, but of Ashley himself there was, unfortunately, no mention.

This is one of the difficulties. It is not easy to prove beyond doubt that the apparent memories and experiences of past lives mean that reincarnation is true. But this does not stop people trying. It occupies serious researchers, sometimes for years as with Professor Ian Stevenson. There is a popular magazine devoted to past life memories, and many people have a vested interest because they believe they were historical personages. Tina Turner, for instance, believes she was the Egyptian Pharaoh, Queen Hapshepsut. Unfortunately, even if the details gained under hypnosis are confirmed, it is almost impossible to prove that a person now living was that long-dead person. There are other possible explanations, as we shall see.

Notwithstanding, experiences like those of Jenny Cockell are compelling reasons to believe. Especially for the recallee. It is usually the experience itself that convinces, not the 'evidence'. Paula Hamilton commented that what impressed her most was that, during her regression, she felt, and spoke, as a man would.

There is, however, another reason for exploring the past other than simply curiosity or a desire to prove the truth of reincarnation. This is that the key to the present can lie there. This is what past life therapy is all about. The value of past life therapy lies not in what it may prove about your former life, or lives, but in how it can enhance your present one. Past life therapists believe they can heal the past to change the present. Certainly, in my own practice, I have seen some dramatic improvements in health and well-being. Phobias dissolve, chronic diseases disappear, emotional disturbances heal, relationships improve. Nevertheless, it does not have to be dramatic, or traumatic either. Many people simply feel better able to handle their present life.

Past Life Therapy

Being guided to a time before birth in the present life, that is, into another life, to uncover and heal the causes of problems and difficulties that have arisen in the present life.

The sense of something suddenly clicking into place, of understanding the previously inexplicable, can throw light on many of our day-to-day feelings. A woman regressed to being a much loved only child. A real 'daddy's girl'. She was given a pony for her birthday and was ecstatically happy. She leapt onto the pony, which bolted. She was thrown and killed. Asked what connection this had with her present life, she replied that whenever she was happy she would start to worry. There was always a vague sense of dread. She associated being happy with fear and loss. Being killed in a moment of supreme happiness in that other life made sense of her fear.

In a similar way, another woman wanted to know why she had always felt so responsible for her sister and had a compulsion to rush to her side whenever she was unwell. As a young child, this had caused her great anguish when she was sent away to school on the other side of the world. As an adult of mature years, it created many inconvenient situations, continually disrupting her life. In the regression, she was a happy healthy child, with an invalid sister. It was her duty to stay with her sister, she was told, whenever she wanted to go out to play. Indeed, her sister would

beg: “Don’t leave me, promise me you will always be here.” She was, not just in that life but in the present one too. Recognizing that fact allowed her to detach from the old, no longer applicable, promise.

The result of such an experience may not always be dramatic, but it can be. It may not always have physical repercussions, but it often does. The effect of a past life can be emotionally crippling. It may also explain a great deal about present life relationships.

My first solo regression was instigated by someone saying to a friend of mine: “I see you dressed as a nun.” His method of regressing people was to ‘tune in’ to their past lives himself, and tell them what he saw. The person was then supposed to join in. It triggered a ‘flashback’ in her, but one she strenuously tried to block out. She immediately began to shake her head emphatically and to make a most distressed noise. Tears poured down her cheeks. As the ‘regressor’ was not looking at her, he did not at first notice what was happening. When he did, he simply said: “Oh, don’t want to do it? Ok, I’ll go” and did, leaving me with a woman still deeply distressed and violently shaking her head. The noise had risen to a crescendo and she was wringing her hands. Clearly something had to be done.

I took her through a difficult incarnation as a nun, one with no physical comfort at all and little spiritual sustenance. She had, apparently, been put into the convent to stop her marrying her great love, and she missed him every moment of her life. To her, love was something set aside and sacred. It had nothing to

do with physical life. The regression was graphic: she had body lice and scratched at them continuously. Her clothes were heavy and uncomfortable and she pulled fitfully at them. Her hands and knees were raw from kneeling and scrubbing floors. On the rare occasion she took a bath, it was in cold water in her linen shift. She never saw herself naked. The body was anathema. Her hair had been hacked off by the mistress of the novices, and her scalp never healed properly. Interestingly enough, she commented: "And she bloody well did it in this life too." I had to return to that comment later as I felt it had great bearing on her life now.

The only way out of that life was to take her forward through death, but she was still wearing the robes in the between life state. She took them off and burnt them. She pictured having a bath to clear the lice and fleas. We grew her hair and used lotions on her skin. She dressed herself in silken clothes. Eventually she burnt the convent down, but she kept the chapel as she had found what little sustenance and comfort she had there. All the time her language grew stronger and bluer and she was not a person who ever swore. Indeed, in her present life she prided herself on never having lost control of herself, "in anger or in passion." Burning down the convent seemed to be a release for great feeling, of deep anger that had lain beneath the surface all through her present life.

I asked her about the 'she did it in this life too' comment. She explained that, as a 15 year old, she had gone out with a boy

against her mother's wishes. Her enraged mother hacked off her waist-length blonde hair with shears, cutting into her scalp as she did so. Her mother, whom she hated in her present life, had been the mistress of novices in that past life. Her great love then was her great love now. But she had not married him. Her mother had broken up the relationship. However, they had continued to see each other every week for over forty years as they were "deeply in love". The dichotomy between 'sacred' and 'profane' love was strong in her. Her distaste for the body and 'things of the flesh' all too apparent. She had married someone merely to have children. When she had a child, the sex stopped and eventually the marriage broke down. She had never had sexual intercourse with the man she 'loved'. She said she did not know what it was to 'make love'. Her emotional life was frozen back in that previous life. Her difficult relationship with her mother certainly seemed to be a reflection of just how much she had hated that mistress of the novices. These were just some of the many correlations between that life and the present. Much reframing and releasing needed to be done.

The Between Life State

A state of non-physical being to which souls pass after death. It may be a bright light, a place, a colour or energy. Cultural and religious expectations influence the experience. People see what they expect to see: heaven, hell, paradise, Valhalla, or whatever. Conscious awareness and memory is retained and expanded here and an overview of all lives is possible: forwards or backwards. In some levels of the between life state, the soul may appear to be housed within a body, while in others it is non-corporeal. Healing and reframing can easily be carried out here and the effect carried forward into the present life.

Reframing

To reframe a past life experience involves changing the 'life script'. It may entail a change of scenario, replaying it with a different outcome. It may need to be seen from a different perspective. Changing the past in this way changes the present life experience.

That that 'regression' was precipitated by someone else and not carried through illustrates one of the pitfalls. Not everyone is prepared, or able, to deal with something that traumatic. They may activate it but not know how to handle it. I was fortunate in that I, as well as having a natural affinity with the work, had been in training with an expert who had over forty year's experience, and so I was able to pick up the pieces.

But!! It is difficult to ensure that all past life therapists are knowledgeable, experienced and properly trained. There are some gifted amateurs who simply fell into the work and found it came naturally, as I did. But most of us supplement that natural ability with other training. Many therapists come into past life therapy via other disciplines such as psychotherapy or hypnosis. But even then, extensive experience in the specific work of past life therapy is essential if the therapist is to be able to deal with everything that arises. Some hypnotherapists do not believe in past lives, and if they trigger one, they will not work with it.

There are several approaches. Techniques differ. The number

of sessions required will vary. The approach you seek will depend on whether you simply want to explore other lives, or to deal with deep-seated problems. Some therapists merely re-run the past life. Others work at reframing and healing the root cause, utilizing a variety of therapeutic options. Which one will suit you depends on your reasons for seeking therapy in the first place.

Whatever your reason, prospective users of past life therapy should seek knowledgeable guidance and a reputable therapist. Personal recommendation is always a good start, but the right therapist for you is still very much an individual matter. Do not be afraid to ask questions before you book a session, or to go for an exploratory chat before a regression. You need to feel safe and well cared for by an experienced and empathetic professional. Such people do exist. This book will show you what to look out for, and your life may well change for the better as a result of meeting such a person.

1 WHAT IS PAST LIFE THERAPY?

Past life therapy is an holistic therapy, that is to say it works on the body, mind, emotions and spirit. It takes you back to before your birth, regresses you to another lifetime, to sort out difficulties you may be experiencing in the present. The reason for undertaking past life therapy is to improve your life, now. Its object is to make life easier, better and more fulfilling, in this present moment.

Regression

To re-experience or relive a former life as though it were happening now.

Past life therapy is based on the principle of cause and effect (also known as karma). What has been set in motion at some time in the past creates an effect on a person's physical, emotional, mental or spiritual well-being, now. This cause may be a desire, thought, feeling, emotion, vow, promise, decision, evasion or traumatic experience, amongst others. Very often, at a moment of trauma, a section of our consciousness (part of our overall self) detaches itself and remains 'stuck'. Past life causes may manifest in the present as a phobia, chronic illness or body state, addiction, mental disorder, inability to make relationships, inexplicable attraction or aversion to someone, recurring nightmares, or a simple sense of unease.

Karma

Karma means action. It is the principle of cause and effect. Taken simply it means that for every action there is a consequence. What has been put into motion in the past has effects in the present. Karma is, however, both subtle and complex. Thoughts and attitudes can create karma just as strongly as can tangible deeds and events. What we set in motion now, and our motivation, will influence our future. Karma is also the conditions our soul needs in order to grow spiritually, it is what we create for ourselves. Karma operates at different levels: personal, group/family/racial, collective and cosmic.

The other side of the coin is that particular skills, interests, likings, or for that matter passions in this life may well also be the result of past life experiences. Knowledge of these may help someone to handle their present life better, or point the way to an appropriate career choice, hobbies, etc.

So, as well as clearing blockages and old dis-ease, past life therapy can be used to trace relationship patterns and old connections, to reconnect to the purpose of incarnating, and to previous knowledge and skills. It can also look forward to 'future lives': what is still to come.

WHAT CAN IT DO?

Past life therapy can be helpful in many different areas: phobias, irrational fears, health problems; removing fear of death; understanding eating disorders, family dysfunction, addictions, sexual difficulties, marital and relationship problems. It defuses negative patterns, finding the reasons for present life difficulties, and setting positive change in motion.

It can change your life dramatically, eliminating guilt and anxiety. It will help you to develop your potential, unlock latent talents, create better understanding of others, reveal your life purpose and reason for incarnating, and initiate new patterns of response, not reaction. By rewriting your life script, you can remove outworn emotional and doctrinal conditioning, and attune to an inner source of knowledge. Past life therapy creates a sense of knowing and accepting your whole self as an immortal spiritual being on a human journey.

Lifescrypt

A lifescrypt is made up of all the ‘oughts and shoulds’, the ‘I musts’ and the conditioned responses and expectations arising from the past – whenever that past was. It is the sum total of all our karmic experience and it includes our lessons and intentions for the present life. If we follow a lifescrypt unconsciously, we rerun all the old patterns. Changing our lifescrypt can bring about profound healing at all levels of our life.

Past life therapy teaches us that the conditions we encounter in our present life are not simply a punishment for ‘bad karma’ – our misdeeds in a former life. Nevertheless, it may well pinpoint where we are inflicting misery on ourselves as a way of ‘shriving our guilt’ from the past. It shows us that, as spiritual beings, we are part of a lives-long learning process. We may need to experience what we construe, from the limited perspective of our present earthly life, as an ‘awful life’ in order to balance out other experiences, or to round out our compassion and empathy for other people. It shows us the long, intricate strands of our relationships weaving their way through many roles and interactions over dozens of lifetimes. It can also teach us that the people we think hate us most, in fact love us enough to put us through hell. Not because we deserve it, or as a punishment, but because we have chosen to learn that particular lesson, to have that necessary experience.

The regression techniques used to reach the past life cause can include hypnosis, deep meditation, guided imagery, shamanic journeys, massage and bodywork. All entail a change of consciousness, a moving out of ordinary, everyday awareness. This enables 'time travel' to take place, a moving back in time to re-experience the incident. By reframing this incident, if necessary, healing takes place. For convenience, in order to make sense of our experiences, these other lives are called past lives, although time is by no means linear nor chronological. However, by 'going back into the past', we can change our present life.

Blockages

A point where we are stuck in the past. Blockages may be physical and bodily-based, emotional, mental or spiritual. An ingrained attitude such as 'poor me' (victim mentality) is a blockage as it impedes well-being. An old scar or wound, invisible though it may be in the present life, may block the free flow of energy through the body creating a state of disease or illness.

LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Our ‘personal consciousness’, or self awareness has several levels, or sub-strata, some of which incorporate ‘universal consciousness’ and connect us with everything around us – and all that has gone before.

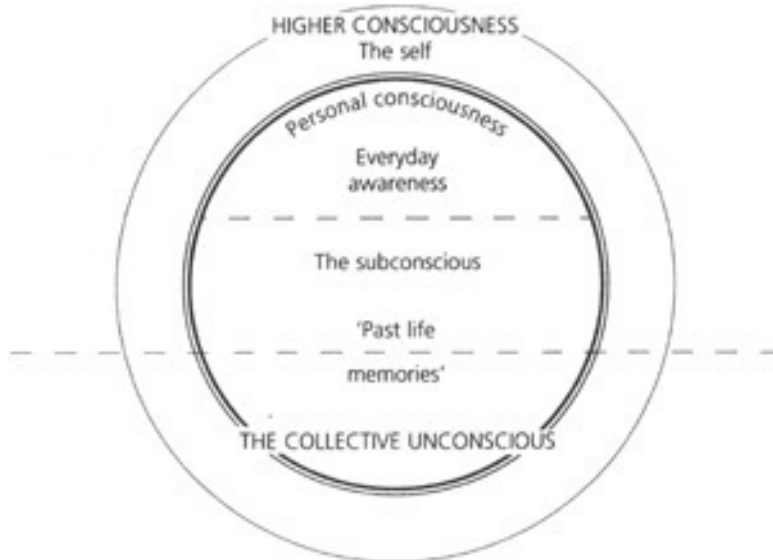
Besides our everyday, ordinary awareness, we have a hidden consciousness of which we are only dimly aware. This is the subconscious, the repository of all our experiences, memories, dreams, hopes and expectations. The subconscious mind motivates much of our experience in life, without us being aware of it. We repeat patterns, live out ingrained expectations, follow its dictates. Much of the contents of our subconscious mind are the direct opposite of what we consciously think. By accessing the subconscious we can change our behaviour and heal our dis-ease.

Beneath the subconscious is the unconscious, the collective unconscious as Jung called it, where lurk family and racial memories going back into pre-history. This too has a powerful effect on our lives. The collective unconscious is global and universal, we share it with everyone else.

Surrounding all of this is the ‘higher consciousness’ of our spiritual self. Time does not exist for the higher consciousness. This consciousness is past, present and future – there is no distinction. Higher consciousness is more than global, it is

cosmic: we are everything else at this level.

In past life work, all these levels of consciousness may be activated.



The Levels of Consciousness

IS RELIVING A LIFE ENOUGH?

It depends on your reason for regressing. It is sufficient to satisfy curiosity, to give a sense of: ‘Yes, I have lived before’. It may give you an insight into what is going on. However, as Denys Kelsey, one of the pioneers of past life therapy, puts it: “Insight does not necessarily imply cure.” Simply reliving a life is rarely enough for more serious purposes. Most of the therapeutic work involves freeing something which has become stuck in the past, the burden of which has been carried forward into the present. That burden may have created a pattern of reaction, based on the now inappropriate past. This pattern needs to be rewoven so that a new response is possible. The primary cause may be emotional, physical or mental, but it will imprint on the present life and may be experienced as some form of illness or other dis-ease, not necessarily physical. Past life therapy seeks to clear the cause, and the dis-ease is healed.

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIVING A PAST LIFE AND HAVING PAST LIFE THERAPY?

Most definitely. Rerunning a past life is for the curious. The ‘who was I’ approach is not therapeutic. It rarely makes any major difference to your present life or brings about permanent change. It may give an insight, an ‘Aha, so that’s why ...’ moment. It may also boost your ego for a short time, depending on the experience. But the effect usually fades.

The therapy approach uncovers the reasons behind your present behaviour or difficulty and changes the picture. It expands your understanding of yourself. Therapy means healing. It is curative. Your life or health should improve, sometimes dramatically, after past life therapy.

WILL I RETAIN CONTROL OF THE PROCESS?

It all depends on the method used and on the individual therapist. Some regression therapists are strongly directive, retaining control of the process at all times; others work with a client-centred approach that allows the client to work at their own pace and in their own way (with help or direction from the therapist when needed).

CAN OTHER PEOPLE 'SEE' MY PAST LIVES?

Yes. Psychics, astrologers and shamans all have ways of reading past lives for other people. I use a combination of astrology and far memory to do karmic readings, for example. When I first started doing this work I would see lives unrolling in front of my eyes just like watching a film. It was most graphic. If I looked at someone's face, I would see their past life faces superimposed. I still use this ability, but now 'see' much more subjectively, and often work without meeting my client face to face.

Far Memory

The psychic ability to tune into other lives, whether one's own or other people's.

Some psychics and shamans use 'far memory', some contact your Higher Self, others contact a guide who knows your past, while others may use a 'set formula'. One astrological approach has a formula which purports to tell you exactly who you were, whilst karmic astrology identifies your patterns and probable experiences but not the precise detail of your lives. People reading for you may use the aura, the Akashic Record or the birth chart, or journey into other realms to gather information. These readings can be extremely useful in giving you an overview, or in pinpointing particular problems. Sometimes simply knowing, accepting at a deep inner level: "This is true for me," is enough to recognize the root cause or change the pattern. At other times this is a starting point for personal regression work. Indeed, some regressionists work by tuning into a past life for you and having you tune in too.

Guides

Guides are discarnate beings, that is they inhabit the spiritual dimensions rather than the physical. They come to assist us when required. It is widely believed that our guides are souls who have known us in other lives, although it is also possible that they are another aspect of ourself.

There are psychics who can enter into the other life with you, using their energy to bring about change. They are fully involved with you as you were then, feeling what you felt (or feel, if you yourself are doing the regression). At a subtle level they heal the past and you receive the benefit in your present life. Joan Grant and Christine Hartley frequently utilized this approach. I may do so myself during karmic readings or regression sessions but I prefer to facilitate my clients doing the work themselves in regression as I believe we each need to take responsibility for our own healing. Shamans, particularly those using North or South American Indian methods, may well journey to your past lives, 'recovering' a lost part of yourself, bringing it back and helping you to integrate this into your present life.

The Akashic Record

The Akashic Record is an esoteric narrative of all that has been, and will be. It is woven into the fabric of the universe. It encompasses all possibilities. It can be 'read' by psychics, amongst others, to give details of past lives and present purpose.

The Higher Self

The eternal, spiritual part of us that is immortal and which, because it experiences all our lives, contains our totality of being. It is 'higher' because it is vibrating at a faster rate than the physical body.

THE ADVANTAGES AND THE DANGERS

The advantage of any form of past life therapy is that it enables extremely deep change to take place at the source of the problem. It is not dealing with symptoms, it addresses the cause. In fully experiencing or reliving the past, in reconnecting to lost parts of the self, in integrating previously unacceptable facets or in allowing oneself to fully feel the feelings and emotions of that life, and in reframing and rewriting the past, profound healing takes place.

The greatest danger lies perhaps in the ego. If there is an underlying need to compensate for any feelings of inadequacy in the present life, then an ego trip is an ever-present possibility. So too is getting caught up in a ‘fantasy in fancy dress’; wishful thinking is hardly therapeutic. An experienced practitioner will know how to recognize a fantasy, and how to work with it symbolically to bring about healing. The danger from the practitioner’s ego arises when the practitioner is over-confident: “I’ve seen it all, I can handle everything.” Life has a funny way of throwing up a few surprises, so retaining humility and the ability to learn on the job are vital.

The other great danger lies in practitioners who are inexperienced and/or unable or unwilling to stay with the process if deep trauma surfaces. Many hypnotists immediately instruct

their clients to forget all about it, thus driving the trauma even deeper. Other practitioners tell their clients to detach, to move away from the experience instead of reliving the pain and blocked emotions that they failed to allow themselves to feel the first time round: thus perpetuating the blockage. They try to ‘make it better’, putting a plaster on it rather than real healing – which may require cauterization and catharsis. Just because it is forgotten at the conscious level does not mean it goes away. It wreaks havoc from the depths of the unconscious. The opposite may apply, someone may go back into an emotion in which they are endlessly stuck, recreating the situation from which they need to detach. Different problems require different solutions and the therapist must be flexible enough to deal with whatever comes up. The danger is that, if, for instance, someone relives having their leg blown off and the trauma is not healed once they are the other side of death, then leg problems may well be triggered in the present life as the ‘seed’ is activated.

A subtle danger may arise from reactivating a past life ‘tendency’ or life state not relevant to the present life (or which it was hoped to reverse) but which is brought into the present through not being released when the regression finishes. For example, a man reconnected to several lives where he had been celibate and deeply spiritual. In his present life he was married and following a spiritual pathway. After the past lives surfaced, he suddenly felt that he could no longer follow his spiritual path and remain married. He turned away from his wife, excluding

her from his life and accusing her of sabotaging his spirituality. His astrological chart indicated that his purpose in incarnating this time round had been to learn to be both spiritual and sexual at the same time – something he had been unable to do in the past. He had the opportunity to heal a deep split in himself. It would have been relevant, following the many celibate lives he relived, to ask whether the vows of celibacy by which he was then bound were appropriate for his present life. Had the answer been ‘no’, then steps could have been taken to release himself from that vow. As it was, not only was his marriage destroyed, but he cut himself off from the potential to heal the two warring factions within himself.

A similar danger arises where people are told, or choose to believe, they are soulmates, that they have always been together and should be together again. I have seen marriages wrecked, relationships ruined, people devastated. Suddenly recognizing someone as a past soulmate can cause a wave of lust to arise that carries all before it, and may well obscure the real purpose in meeting again. Disentangling is difficult. So it is as well to look exceedingly closely at any potential ‘soulmate’ relationship and to check whether that really was what you intended this time around.

Soulmates

Sometimes called twin flames or twin souls, soulmates are often seen as two people (or souls) who have been together throughout eternity. They are ‘meant for each other’, complete each other. Plato said that, way back in the beginning, one soul had split into two, creating soulmates. (He also said that ‘ever the two shall wander, seeking each other’).

However, from regression work it would appear that we all have several soulmates, a group of souls with whom we travel throughout time. It is also apparent that our soulmate is often the person who is willing to help us learn the hardest lessons in life.

THOSE FOR WHOM IT MAY BE UNSUITABLE

Whilst it is possible that past life therapy may help a schizophrenic or Multiple Personality Disorder sufferer to bring together parts of a psyche that are fragmented, it needs an extremely experienced therapist to undertake this work. As a rule of thumb, anyone who has had psychiatric problems of any kind or who is taking drugs (prescription or otherwise) should approach the therapy with caution and should certainly be totally honest with any prospective therapist. Past life therapy can help, sometimes dramatically, with depression, phobias and some compulsive patterns. But it can also precipitate compulsions and obsessions of all kinds and may bolster up delusions and illusions through an apparent 'reliving'. People with psychiatric problems could, therefore, find the overview offered by a past life reading, or karmic astrology, a gentler introduction to other lives.

People who are prone to fantasy, and to living in the past, can use other lives as an excuse for not living the present life fully. Equally, it is possible to become obsessed by a character in a past life, or to become stuck in an old pattern. So many people say, "I can't help it, it's my karma," notwithstanding the fact that past life therapy is designed to prove just the opposite. So, if you fall into these categories or are not yet ready to take responsibility for your own life (or lives), you may find a bodywork, emotional

release or shamanic-based approach keeps you more grounded in the here and now whilst releasing from the past life patterns.

Anyone out to prove they were 'Someone' may have difficulty with past life therapy. They may well reject perfectly valid lives, and the healing opportunities they embody, in the search for that elusive 'proof' of position, power and authority. This approach is extremely vulnerable to fantasy and wish fulfilment, both on the part of the practitioner and the client. Hypnosis is probably the best approach if you must have facts, figures and historical presence.

Finally, anyone not prepared to look at their dark side should certainly steer clear of this therapy. It throws light on all of ourselves, not just those parts we find pleasing. Its value is that it helps to integrate our totality. But, if you are not ready for what this might entail, you are not yet ready to look at your past lives.

USING PAST LIFE WORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER THERAPIES

Past life work deepens and expands psychotherapy, bodywork, emotional release and spiritual growth work. It combines well with flower essences and vibrational medicine, reflexology, crystal healing and many other complementary therapies.

2 POSSIBLE PAST LIFE CAUSES

Each individual case is different, but ‘themes’ or common core experiences often underlie similar presenting problems. A few of these are explored below to give you an idea of the scope of past life therapy.

PHOBIAS

Many people consult past life therapists about phobias or chronic anxiety states of one kind or another. If the cause has not been found in a previous incident in the present life, then even conventional therapy might suggest exploring other lives. A common phobia such as fear of snakes, for instance, may well go back to a death from snake bite, or being lowered into a pit of snakes (sometimes as punishment, sometimes as an initiation). I have seen a case where fear of birds went back to being very badly injured in a battle, and regaining consciousness to find a flock of vultures pecking away at the apparently dead body.

A phobia which is seemingly much less common, but which I have frequently encountered, is fear of people vomiting. Almost everyone who suffers from this has regressed to a life where they were with a group of other people, usually in conditions of fear, who were vomiting uncontrollably. In at least one case it was on a ship during a violent storm, in several others it was during some kind of plague when all the sufferers were locked in a room together. It may also relate to one's own death under such conditions.

Sometimes phobias are very specific. I had one client, for example, who could not stand deep, still water. She was fine with running water, rivers and seas. In the regression, she had drowned in a quarry pool.

Once the past life cause is discovered and healing done at that point in time, the phobia usually disappears or significantly decreases in the present life.

EATING DISORDERS

Whilst many eating disorders do have roots in emotional causes in early childhood, some may be a carry-over from other lives. A common cause of over-eating is starving to death in the past, especially when the last thought in that life was, "I'll never starve again," but I have also seen the then socially-acceptable practice of bulimic vomiting at Roman orgies being carried over into the present life as a repeating pattern. (This also surfaced in a fear of vomiting when the slave who looked after the vomitorium was run through with a dagger for himself involuntarily vomiting as his master did so.)

Anorexia too may be linked to past life beliefs about the body as 'bad' and sexuality as sinful and can link into past life sexual abuse. Fashion can play its part. Not that long ago, many girls starved themselves in England, for instance, in order to achieve the desired eighteen-inch waist.

If patterns like these are not changed prior to the new incarnation, the hidden thoughts remain and create over-eating, bulimia and anorexia. Going back to the between life state can be therapeutic.

EMOTIONAL BLOCKAGES

There are so many emotional blockages carried over that it is unusual not to encounter one or two during a regression session. Emotional blockages often surface spontaneously during bodywork as our physical body can hold the memory. The blockages arise from two basic causes: one, part of oneself being stuck in that old emotion, continually re-experiencing it; or, two, having been afraid to feel the feelings, continually holding back. The trauma may be too intense, we cannot allow ourselves to feel. But so many of our emotions are deemed unacceptable that we get into the habit of not feeling. The healing consists of either detaching from the feeling, or letting oneself feel it until it dissipates – acceptance is a great healer.

ADDICTIONS

If we die with the thought “There will never be enough ...”, or desiring “More, more,” then we are likely to come back with an addictive personality. If the thought was, “There will never be enough love,” then the addiction is to relationships and what passes for ‘love’. If it was ‘money’, then the addiction is to material goods – the miser hoarding his wealth. On the other hand, that person may still be stuck in poverty consciousness: believing that there will never be enough money is often enough to ensure that there never is!

Denys Kelsey mentions addiction being linked to the practice of giving alcohol to deaden the pain of surgery in the days before anaesthetics. In battle conditions, on ships, etc, a bottle would be passed around those awaiting the surgeon’s knife. At least one alcoholic he regressed died with the thought: “There won’t be enough for me.”

People with this kind of strong desire often reincarnate quickly before any healing has been done, bringing the potential for the dependency back into the body. Something which has always struck me in my alcohol and drug counselling work is how young people are when they discover their ‘drug of choice’. I remember an alcoholic telling me with great relish that, aged 8, he drank a whole bottle of sherry and felt for the first time that he was totally satisfied: “It was something I had been looking for

all my young life.”

Some drug addictions continually re-run an earlier dependency on ‘medicine’: sleeping drops, ‘nerve tonics’, etc, which contained morphine or other addictive substances. Laudanum was very popular with several generations of women. In some cultures, drugs were routinely used either as sedatives or as spiritual aids. Other addicts may be replaying an opium addiction – thousands of Chinese were introduced to opium by the British government who had a vested interest in maintaining the addiction; and the gin palaces of the British Industrial Revolution killed the pain of existence for many thousands more people.

HEALTH

Health is an enormous subject when looked at from the past life perspective. Old attitudes such as ‘hard-heartedness’ can affect the present life: hardening of the arteries and heart attacks being common manifestations. Old emotions, injuries and traumatic experiences create physical dis-ease. A woman who had constant heartburn in her present life relived drinking a cup of poisoned wine given her by a lover. The heartburn was easily cured by erasing the memory of the poison through her imaging drinking the antidote. We can also recreate our old feelings when we put ourselves in present life situations which resonate. Before therapy, having her current-life lover feed her a tempting morsel had almost choked her, as she could never be quite sure that he wasn’t trying to kill her.

The past life reasons behind present life illness are sometimes dramatic. An elderly lady had suffered from asthma all her life. When she arrived for regression she brought with her not only an inhaler but also a friend who was skilled in resuscitation techniques and had revived her on more than one occasion. In the event, however, neither were needed.

She was guided back through time until she found herself in the Middle Ages acting as a kind of go-between who received the reports from spies and informers and passed these on to the witch-finders. It was something in which she had unwittingly

become embroiled and could not then break free. She described herself as an insignificant looking, lonely man. He felt suffocated by what he was doing but could see no way out. If he tried to leave or to protect people, he would be put to trial by his employers as they would assume that he had been bewitched. He wanted to commit suicide but this was a mortal sin and he was too afraid of the consequences.

Eventually the burden became too great to bear and he took a horse and rode off without caring what would happen. He was followed and was stabbed by a sword, which caused him to fall from the horse. The horse then rolled on him, crushing his chest. He died literally unable to breathe and gasped his life away in a most distressing manner that exactly matched an asthma attack. As the elderly lady relived it, the physical symptoms were very real. She gasped and fought for breath, making the most horrendous noises. But, because she was both reliving that life and aware of the present connections, she would assure me from time to time that she was ok. This was not an asthma attack. Knowing that she needed to go through this, I encouraged her to stay with it as she passed through death and into the between life state. There, the trauma fell away. Her breathing quieted, almost to the point of imperceptibility. We cleared the residues of that life to heal the present.

When she 'returned' from the regression, she was full of compassion for herself as she had been, saying that he had had no choice. What surprised her was how afraid to commit suicide

he had been as, in her present life, that would have been what she would have done in a similar situation. It is difficult to believe nowadays just how great the fear of mortal sin and resulting everlasting damnation was but this had graphically portrayed itself to her. The fear had been even stronger than the feelings of guilt and wrongness, which were in themselves overwhelming. With that kind of inner conflict combined with violent death, it was no surprise that her current life played out the drama in such a physical fashion.

She recognized that her asthma was the direct result of both the sense of suffocation and guilt that she had felt then, and also the physical sensation of her death. It had imprinted itself on her present-life body, which continued to ‘gasp her life away’. It also explained why she had become a pioneering psychic and healer. She wanted to make reparation. Her compassion and forgiveness for herself healed the root cause. Following the regression, her asthma attacks ceased.

Several points of ‘dis-ease’ may arise from one life. Muriel relived a life in the theatre. She was badly beaten by the manager of that theatre, who was jealous of her success. He constantly criticized her: “She was no good” (despite the fact that she was a very good actress). She could not break free and felt most inadequate. Much of the beating was on her back. In her present life, Muriel suffered from constant sore throats, back trouble and lack of confidence. These conditions were exacerbated when she and her partner got involved in amateur dramatics. She felt that

her partner was that theatre manager.

In the regression, she went to the end of her life. She hung herself on the stage, in a most dramatic fashion, saying, "That will show them all." She wanted to be seen when 'they' entered the theatre the next day. She wanted 'them' to be affected by her death. She wanted 'them' to notice her. The death was a slow one, her neck not being broken, and she suffocated to death. Muriel commented that it explained why, in her present life, she could never complete a performance without having a sore throat and a cold. She associated the slow asphyxiation and pressure of the rope around her neck with the current life throat trouble but also felt that she was in some way sabotaging herself as a result of that constant criticism in the past.

However, the 'dis-ease' went deeper than that. As a teenager, Muriel had suffered from nocturnal epilepsy. A chiropractor had then realigned the vertebrae in her neck, and she never suffered another fit. In the regression, she commented that her body jerking at the end of the rope was just like having convulsions. As her neck was not broken, the vertebrae were pushed out of alignment. In her present life, her 'etheric blueprint' had recreated that pattern.

When we began to look at the healing options, she simply wanted to leave that body there. To get away as quickly as possible and go into the halls of healing, which she described as 'absolute bliss'. In a spontaneous soul retrieval, she then saw a man rushing in and taking her in a 1950s taxi to the hospital

where she was born.

It became clear that, whilst that part of herself had ‘slept’ in the halls of healing, other parts of Muriel had had other lives. In order to be born whole in this present life, that ‘sleeping part’ had had to be rushed to join the rest of herself at birth. Its memories had been activated when she went back into the theatre. Past life therapy then healed the ‘cause’ and she was able to perform without difficulties. Later, when she visited a chiropractor again, she saw herself just prior to putting the rope around her neck. Her guide said to her, “You don’t have to damage your body, you have come to the end of that life and can come with me.” She then saw the empty rope. The situation had been reframed and her body was able to release the memory.

Soul retrieval

Reconnecting to a part of the overall self that has been 'left behind' in a past life.

Etheric Blueprint

The 'seed' from which the physical body develops in the present life. The etheric blueprint carries all the information, and scars, from past lives that will affect emotional and physical health and well-being in the life to come.

SEXUAL DIFFICULTIES

Sexual difficulties too can stem from varied past life causes. One of the most common problems is that vows, such as celibacy or everlasting faithfulness, taken in other lives are not rescinded before reincarnation. They then subtly interfere with present life relationships. Having taken a vow of celibacy, for example, may result in impotence when faced with a sexual partner. The subconscious can simply switch off sexual arousal when confronted with the deep inner conflict of 'I desire this woman' and 'I vow eternal celibacy'. The time frame may need to be renegotiated: 'for ever' becoming 'for this life only'.

Old patterns of behaviour can also be carried over. Some people endlessly recreate their past relationships, sometimes compelled by a vision of what they did not have, at others obsessed with the search for what they did have. They may also carry inappropriate patterns of behaviour. One man, suffering from premature ejaculation, experienced furtive sex with another servant in his past life. There was always an urgent need to 'be quick', someone might find them. Another man was sexually hung up on his mother. All his fantasies were about sex with her. Not surprisingly, he regressed to being her lover in a former life.

More difficult to adjust to are gender changes which can create underlying problems. Both men and women find themselves 'in the wrong body'. Some necessitate a sex change, others respond

to past life therapy. Some conditions are complex. Not every case of homosexuality necessarily relates to a man having been a woman before and retaining the desire for sexual contact with a man (or vice versa), but some do. If that person is happy to accept their sexual orientation, then all is well. But it can create a painful conflict in someone who cannot adapt or who comes under pressure to conform to 'a norm'. (Most homosexuals and lesbians are following their consciously-made life plan just as heterosexuals are, their orientation is different not wrong.)

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