

Life Before Life

excerpted from the book *Life Before Life* by Jim B. Tucker, MD

Even though it may seem hard to believe, evidence might exist that life after death is actually a reality. Researchers have addressed this issue with the same open-minded analytical approach that we would use with any other question.

Some young children say that they have been here before. They give various details about previous lives, often describing the way in which they died. For more than forty years, researchers have investigated their reports. More than 2,500 cases are registered in the files of the Division of Personality Studies at the University of Virginia.

In a typical case, a very young child begins to describe memories of another life. The child is persistent about this and often demands to be taken to his other family in another location. When this child has given names or enough details about the other location, the family often goes there to find that the child's statements fit the life of a person who died in the recent past.

Many of the subjects in our cases are born with birthmarks or birth defects that match wounds on the body of the previous personality, usually fatal wounds. One case that includes both an announcing dream and a birth defect is that of Süleyman Caper in Turkey. His mother dreamed during her pregnancy that a man she did not recognize told her, "I was killed with a blow from a shovel. I want to stay with you and not anyone else."

When Süleyman was born, the back of his skull was partially depressed, and he also had a birthmark there. When he became able to talk, he said that he had been a miller who died when an angry customer hit him on the head. Along with other details, he gave the first name of the miller and the village where he had lived. In fact, an angry customer had killed a miller with that name in that village by hitting him on the back of the head with a shovel.

The key feature in our cases, of course, is the statements that the children make about a past life. As an example, when Suzanne



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Ghanem of Lebanon was less than a year old, her first word was "Leila," and she would pick up the telephone and say, "Hello, Leila." She began telling her family about a previous life that ended when she went to the United States for heart surgery. She talked about this life a great deal, but her family was not able to track down the previous personality until Suzanne was five years old. At that point, Suzanne met the family of the woman who she thought she had been, and she convinced them that she was the woman reborn when she knew details about that life.

The woman, who died at a medical center in the United States after heart surgery, turned out to have a daughter named Leila, who was not able to join her there because of passport problems. Before the woman died, her brother at the hospital tried to telephone Leila for her but was unsuccessful.

The children make these statements at a very early age. Most who talk about a past life begin doing so between the ages of two and four. The children almost always stop talking about the past life around the age of six or seven, and they seem to go on to lead normal lives after that.

The lives that the children describe tend to be very recent ones, and in fact, the median time between the death of the previous personality and the birth of the subject is only fifteen to sixteen months. Few report having been famous personalities, as almost all describe ordinary lives, often ending in unpleasant ways.

When the children give enough information so that one particular deceased individual can be identified as the previous personality, we say that the case is *solved*.

In addition to the statements, many children show behaviors that seem connected to the past-life memories they are reporting. Many show strong emotions related to their memories. In a case in which the previous personality was murdered, the subject may also display an immense anger toward the killer.

The children often demonstrate unusual play. For instance, Parmod Sharma in India became wrapped up in his play as a shopkeeper of biscuits and soda water, the occupation of the previous personality, from the ages of four to seven. In these cases, the children repeat the same play over and over, and it is play that is not seen in the other children of the family or modeled after an adult family member or close family friend.

Phobias seem to be linked to the past-life memories at times. Many of the children show an intense fear related to the method of the previous personality's death. Some children are unusually fond of certain things, including foods the previous personality especially enjoyed. When unusual play, phobias, and preferences are present along with statements or birthmarks or other features, the impression of a link between the subject and the previous personality is strengthened.

Our cases contribute to the evidence that consciousness can survive death in at least some situations...This means that each of us is more than just a physical body.

Dr. Tucker will present his findings at the "Yoga & the Matrix of Life" Conference November 3, 2013



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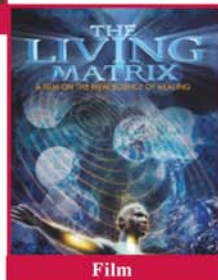
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