

Facing the Obstacles that Prevent Our Own Evolution

I imagine sitting in a beach chair watching the sunset. Our mind is empty. We can clearly hear, speak, and control our actions, but it is most comfortable to do nothing. It is most comfortable to remain relaxed: disconnected from our body and sense of self. We are receptive to our own thoughts and see clearly whatever appears in our mind's eye.

It is in this state of mind, with a little coaching, we receive visions, memories from, or imagination of, another life from places we have never visited or have never existed. We may encounter people we recognize but have never seen, and voices we've always heard but never listened to. And with continued coaching it is quite likely that we will experience physical and emotional events of such magnitude that they permanently affect our lives, altering our memories and changing our views of the world.

These results are typical of spiritual regression sessions – sessions that require no drugs, music, fasting, exercise, or training – no special technology, preparation, prerequisite beliefs, group affiliation or accompaniment. In fact, nothing is required but trust and relaxation. Everyone is able to experience this unprecedented level of autonomy. Why have we not heard of this before?

Trance

Trance has long been a tool for therapy and spiritual experience, playing a central role in everything from Freud's psychoanalysis at the turn of the 20th century, to today's transpersonal psychology. Trance is the doorway to our unconscious mind. As the connection between mind and body is more

widely appreciated, techniques that work with the unconscious are being incorporated into approaches to mental and physical health. Let us consider a number of cases illustrating how spiritual regression effects emotional and physical change.

The method of spiritual regression starts with progressive relaxation through guided visualization to release tension in our bodies. This is followed by a short hypnotic induction, which moves us to disconnected states of mind in which we are aware and responsive, but present at a distance, as if in a fog. In this daydream state we give ourselves permission to remain imaginative, sensitive, and vulnerable. The person facilitating the regression provides a calm environment, soothing support, and protection against agitation and disturbance. The facilitator "has our back" and we allow ourselves to sink more deeply into trance.

Sometimes referred to as Past Life Regression, this therapy is being presented as something new, but it has been the building block for mystical experience since the beginning of history. What is new is bringing a second person to facilitate the person in trance. Our facilitator guides us through different states of consciousness, helping us retain and amplify our focus. In this numinous state, partly out of time and mind, we can hear the voice of our higher self, soul, and perhaps past selves. The result is an experience as powerful as a psychedelic, but vastly more effective in positively changing the course of our lives.

The following story is recounted in the present because the client experiences it in the present. Unlike con-

scious memories, trance experiences happen in the present and are accompanied by strong emotions and physical sensations.

Truth

Paul is 44 and starting his own business in counseling after a career in the military. He says he has difficulty presenting his feelings and being assertive in groups of men. We begin a spiritual regression with the objective of connecting him with his power to assert his truth.

I lead Paul into a relaxed, hypnotic state and ask him to visualize boarding a boat on the river of time, a boat steered by his higher self. I asked him to disembark on a shore where he might find the memory of when he lost this ability to speak his truth.

Paul is lying on a bed with his eyes closed. I described to him sounds and images of a river journey, until he raises his hand, our predetermined signal that he has come to shore. I then stop my leading description and he takes over, telling me what he is experiencing.

"There is a shack on a hill with an old woman sitting inside on a chair. She is dressed in a long skirt and bonnet. She's sullen and withdrawn. I am 24; standing in the doorway. I'm holding a pitchfork. I want to speak but I can't.

"She is my mother. She never leaves the shack. I take care of her. There is no one else; there is no one to help. This year I did not plant in time, the crop has failed. We won't have enough food. I cannot tell her."

I take him back to an earlier time. He is 18 and his father is dying.

"My father is in bed. He raises his arm to call me to him. He loves and

trusts me. I inherit the farm and the care of my mother but I do not know how. I am distracted and disinterested, I want something better: a better life, a girl friend. I am daydreaming by the river as signs come and go, and planting time passes. I he cannot admit I've failed - failed my father, my mother and the farm. I can't care for my mother. I can't keep the farm. I can't stay."

We move forward in time.

"I'm looking at my mother's grave. I don't know what I'm going to do... Now I'm an old man, I'm alone... Now I'm hovering over my own grave, beside those of my parents on the hill behind the shack where the wildflowers grow. I am a failure. I feel a heavy weight around my chest. I couldn't communicate



what I felt, or say what I'd done. I could not connect because I could not admit how much I felt myself to be a failure. All the emptiness... All the connections that were never made..."

He whispers aloud: "the flowers are my parents." I ask him to speak to them. I ask him if he'd like to tell them after death what he could not tell them in life. He confesses to them his shame and failure, his fear and his guilt. I ask him to listen to the flowers, his parents, and learn. He weeps as he feels their forgiveness and their love for each other. He feels their arms around him. I ask him what he needs to do now, and he says he wants to do it over, do it right.

I take him back to the doorway where he stands looking at his fragile mother. I reconstruct the story and I ask him if he would now like to speak. He does, and he tells her what he has done, and what they must do. "We need to get help," he whispers, "... from the neighbors, from the other farms."

I ask him, "And who are they, whom do you meet?" Smiling he answers, "She has red hair... and we

survive, and my mother helps." We follow the story to a new life, a new self, a redeemed self, a loved self.

Placing his hands on his chest where he before felt the suffocating burden of silence, I tell him he can always connect to his truth by feeling this freedom in his chest. I lead him out of trance by counting from 1 to 5. With

each number, I remind him to claim clarity, vitality and balance, affirming his ability to remember his story and to return to these feelings whenever he feels the need.

Trance states are easily entered and exited. Anyone can be hypnotized because the trance state is just a rearrangement of our normal and ever changing states of mind. If we want to, we can do it; if we

don't want to, we won't. Our normal states of mind are transitory, what is important are the changes that happens within them.

Spiritual regression can trigger a major reintegration of body, mind, and emotion that leaves us stunned and shaken, sometimes unable to stand. In a minute we're back to normal awareness, but it is a good idea to wait a few hours before re-engaging the normal business of your life. There is a good chance we'll never return to the person we were before.

Strength

Whether one's memories are true or imagined is irrelevant to the positive effect of spiritual regression therapy. In fact, most of my clients' regression experiences are closer to dreamscapes than past lives. Though, it should be mentioned, this does not mean these memories are false.

Cathy was so late to my presentation that she didn't arrive until it was over. We sat and talked after everyone else had left. She had read Brian Weiss's seminal 1988 book "Many Lives,

Many Masters," the book that launched Past Life Regression into the public spotlight, and ever since felt she needed to do her own regression.

We decided to have no agenda and explore whatever came up, and a lot comes up in 3 hours. It is assumed that we get the stories that we're ready for: lives and images complete or otherwise. My role as facilitator is only to make her feel safe, help her keep focused, and encourage her to fully understand all that her unconscious is telling her. On some occasions I can help direct stories that are becoming too threatening so that they fade away. In other cases, where it seems safe and appropriate, I can help bring them into focus. What follows is the last of many short stories Cathy recounted.

"I'm running with bare feet and I'm a little girl. My mother is there too; her name starts with 'M'. She's running with me, we're laughing and I'm so happy. Something stings my foot but my Mom helps me.

"I roll down the hill, down to the bottom of the hill. It's steep and I can't get out. It's full of thorns and brambles and I don't have shoes. The darkness is all around me. I'm falling further into the thorns and the darkness. I can't move because of the thorns. The thorns are hurting me. The walls are closing in on me!"

I ask if she can connect and ask for help from the goddess beings whom she met earlier in her session. I speak back to her the description she gave when she encountered these protective spirits. These spirits come to her now, and they guide her out of her nightmare.

"There are stones now, I can follow these stone steps out; I can climb out of the darkness. I'm at the moon, in space, floating, alone, moving around near the moon. My arms are spread wide. It's feeding me... through my belly button, throughout my body. It just feels full. So nourishing... I'm floating, flying around the moon...filling my body...so deeply."

Cathy's trance sinks into sleep and I do not disturb her. After 10 minutes I bring her slowly out of trance using my

voice. I affirm that she will remember her experiences, visions, and gifts as she returns to her current life. As I bring her back to full wakefulness she says, "I didn't know I was so powerful!"

Two days later Cathy writes:

"After I left the other day I was a bit tired and dazed. The following morning I had a quiet morning, getting up early to sit by the lake. Later that day and today I felt absolutely fantastic. I've spoken in detail about my experience to a number of close friends and am a bit bogged by how positively it has impacted me. I spent the afternoon with my dad. Telling him about my experience brought him to tears."

Hell

There is no way to distinguish a true from a false memory, and past lives rarely provide enough detail for verification. Memories are not records of fact, they are paths of behavior. Memories are neither true nor false; they are the building blocks of our character. They are mutable and evanescent, and memories that no longer serve us, or serve us badly, can be rebuilt into new memories that reflect different events, and events seen from a different perspective.

Gail's hearing had been failing for years. She now wears two hearing aids to maintain her role as a professional coach. As it continues to degrade her inability to hear herself, she is now so impaired that it affects her speech. Without any medical explanation of her conditions or suggested recourse, she has looked to regression therapy to explore its psychological origins.

One's degree of trust in the regression affects how quickly visions emerge. Ultimately, it's trust in exploring one's own mind, even knowing that this may be unpleasant. Moving from the relaxation to the induction phase, before she even reached her river of time, Gail found herself a dirty, barefoot child in a huge port city.

It was London in the 1500's. Clothed in rags, gaunt and malnourished, she has watched her family perish from the plague one by one:

brothers, sisters and parents. Abandoned, she is now like thousands of children in a city consumed with panic, obsession, and despair – destitute child amidst a desolation that is killing all destitute children. Surrounded by cries of hunger and despair she cannot bear and cannot help, she shuts down and stops hearing.

Lying on the floor in a state of panic, tears, and shock, Gail seems unresponsive. I listen as David, who is facilitating her regression, asks her current self to go to and hold this child, and to tell her child that now is a new time, and she is safe and protected. Her child cannot go back to help those thousands of children, but she can grow up to help children today, and those reborn from the decimated masses. Building a bond of love between Gail of today and her ancient child, dead 600 years, David asks the ancient child if she will come forward to join and grow with us in modern times. Gail can teach her to be the healer, and her child can be a guiding spirit for Gail today.

Gail and the ancient child must speak. Both must agree to forge a bond of care, and trust, and love – and they do. David asks the ancient child to go back to the thousands of abandoned, dying children to ask them if they will let her go. Gail's ancient child says these thousands support her; they say "We will wait for you!" Gail is lying on the floor, beaming, eyes closed in trance.

David asks her to take out of her ears all the blockages that have psychologically blocked her hearing and her healing. Gail pantomimes, removing yards of stuffing from her ears as David brings her back reminding her to regain clarity, memory, vitality, and connection past and present. Gail has no idea where this story came from except that it did, and she is astounded.

Will this regression have a therapeutic effect? Can emotional healing translate into physical healing? There is much evidence that the two are connected. David reports he too rejected the hopeless prognosis of irreversible hearing loss, and performed his own emotional release followed by a pro-

gram of physical healing after which he recovered his hearing. His story is available at the website listed below (1).

Heaven

Chris is a light skinned, middle aged man working in alternative energy. He is thin, lean, and clear eyed. He came for a session without any problem or agenda. I walked him through the relaxation and induction exercise and he began his story as a dark skinned, barefoot man in jeans and a straw hat looking across the forest canopy of a jungle.

"I feel like I belong to this landscape. I'm by myself but not alone. In the jungle I have a community, a family. Waters flowing, lush jungle, leaves moving, I'm going home. I slept out that night, just to be by myself. I'm bringing something back to the village, a feeling... My task is to bring visions back. Getting closer to the village...lots of sky, barking dogs... still a way away, alongside meandering water – deeply satisfying. I know where I am: Central America, somewhere. I'm not seeing any technology. 1350, 1780, 1650, seasons, cycles, births and deaths.

"Dwellings, grasses, round familiar faces... I know these people and they know me. A couple of cooking fires, clay pots... There's a woman, I think it's my wife. We're happy... A council fire, lots of laughter, elders, dogs, kids...lots of chatter. A peaceful time...something meaningful is going to take place.

"I'm seated, my turn to speak, speaking about our relatedness and how it's a natural understanding, a group mind...feels like the jungle is leaning in to listen, foreboding but supporting us. There's a field of knowing. We do our piece within that.

I'm taken by the lightness of being. There's a safety in both belonging and in holding this higher knowing. No one feels estranged, whatever I did; others do as well. Others contribute to the richness of the community. Divergence and different points of view are welcome."

I lead him forward in time, to when he's older.

"I'm sitting on the ground; my face is wrinkled, older; still agile. An old woman is sitting next to me, grey hair. Very good

life; very connected..."

I lead him to the last day of this life.

"I'm inside a dwelling, lying down on a mat, drinking water offered from a gourd. Not sick, just old...no longer needed. Lots of golden light this whole time...I'm leaving. My body is still on the mat but another part of me is journeying. Not a lot of fear. Others are around me - spirits, my father, mother, a few aunts. People who feel familiar...there is a bird, owl or hawk - benevolent, welcoming; we've known each other. It's been a totem in my life. The communication is without words, just a kind of light. We're connected. I'm no longer an 'I'."

This is the afterlife journey, a slow and formless movement through fields of light and energy. In my role as facilitator I encourage detail: if there are colors I inquire about shapes. If there are shapes I inquire about form. If there are forms I inquire about meaning. We're looking for change and motion into, or through, a fantastic world.

"There is a crystalline temple, different sizes filled with information - repository of sorts. I'm importing my life's journey. It's just light - all light, golden white vibrating. I'm not separate from it. I'm just a part of it. Light - it is me; I've never been separate from it. I have this image of beautiful light. I'm completely filled with it...just light - loving kindness, compassion, gratitude. Stepping down the vibration into words..."

Love

Underneath the bravado of hypnosis, the spectacle of past lives, and tabloid appeal of reincarnation lies something much bigger. All of these regressions are stories of love. All the regressions that I have facilitated, ultimately, lead toward transcendent love in one of its forms. Whenever there is one word for something that everyone imitates, postulates, pontificates, and pretends - but no one seems to know anything about - we have a problem. We are largely ignorant of love.

Death is not our greatest fear, love is. It is the fear that, too terrified to open our hearts, we have not fully lived. And the largest life requires the largest love, which cannot be built from a small

notion. It is possible to gain a higher understanding, if we allow ourselves to be guided by the higher powers of intuition, the body, and the divine. Spiritual regression calls up higher powers and opens in each of us a path to love. Creating self love in others is the most important thing a facilitator of spiritual regression can offer. Finding it in oneself is our most important goal.

"The fear of death follows from the fear of life." - Mark Twain

"Roar, lion of the heart, and tear me open." - Jalaluddin Rumi

Lincoln Stoller, PhD is a physicist interested in understanding both relationships and equations. In 2006, he turned to the medical field of neurofeedback and now offers neurofeedback training, spiritual regression, and hypnotic reintegration from his home in Shokan. For more information, visit www.Mindstrengthbalance.com. (See his ad on page 24.)

Footnote:

1: www.alchemyinstitute.com/fix-hearing-loss.html

References:

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