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## Therapeutic and Evolutionary Implications of Retrocognitions (Past Life Regressions)

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the potential benefits of therapeutic past life regressions (retrocognitions) for personal development and the evolution of consciousness. The paper contains a qualitative analysis of cases stemming from the author's own therapeutic practice – conducted in English, German and Hungarian languages, while also taking into account cases published in specialist literature. It's been observed that the effects of retrocognitions unfold on three distinct levels: *cause and effect* (simple causality), *synchronicity* (acausality) and *syntropy* (retrocausality). At each of these levels the therapeutic benefits become more profound and the evolutionary relevance increases: depending on personal maturity, retrocognitions can help from simple phobia cures to ensuring the completion of ones life task.

### INTRODUCTION

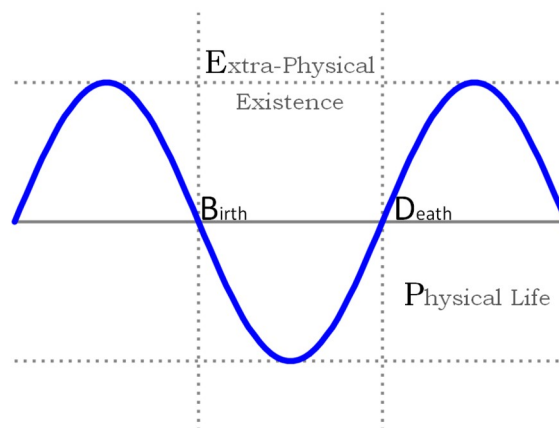
The concept of reincarnation, or seriality of life, is as old as history itself: Schopenhauer observed that the idea ‘presents itself as the natural conviction of man whenever he reflects at all in an unprejudiced manner’ (Schopenhauer, 2008). Anthropological data indeed shows that indigenous people throughout the world hold convictions about rebirth (Head/Cranston, 1961: 72-73; see also Mills, 1988). It is a central tenet in some of the world religions (notably Hinduism and Buddhism), moreover, *all* world religions teach it in at least one of their esoteric sects (Bache, 1994: 15).

Only recently, however, has the Western academic world been in a position to study the concept scientifically and go beyond faith. This is due to the emergence of new foundational theories and a growing body of suggestive evidence.

Foundational theories do not serve to prove or disprove the seriality of life, but provide a scientific framework in which reincarnation becomes intellectually feasible. Before these new theories emerged, consciousness was seen as derivative of matter – a mere epiphenomenon of the brain – hence its continuity after death remained a logical impossibility. On the contrary, supporters of the new theories regard ‘consciousness as fundamental,’ and ‘matter as derivative of consciousness,’ as Max Planck (1949: 33-34), winner of the Nobel Prize in physics says. This new paradigm now has supporters from disciplines as varied as physics, biology, medicine, psychology and computing, including numerous other Nobel Prize laureates such as Wald (1984), Compton (1913: 12-13), Prigogine (cited by Williams, 2009: 64) and Eccles (1989: 241).

Scientific theories which have emerged from the new paradigm are varied, yet have a common denominator: from Burr's L-fields to Laszlo's A-fields, from Sheldrake's morphogenetic fields to Bohm's holographic universe and the unified spacememory network they postulate the existence of a field, which carries information (Burr, 1973; Laszlo, 2007; Bohm, 2002; Sheldrake, 2009; Haraein/Brown/Val Baker, 2015). The brain can interact with the field, like a single computer connects to the internet: it uploads its experiences onto it, and at the same time can tune in and download any information which is contained in the field. According to these theories, consciousness does not rely on the functioning of one particular brain, any more so than a computer software relies on one particular computer to run. Thus consciousness *can* continue beyond the physical death of a particular body.

Regarding suggestive evidence, a growing number of reincarnation-type cases emerged in therapy from the 1960s onwards, as psychology opened up to transpersonal dimensions. Patients who were regressed to the origins of their phobias or other neurotic troubles, began to talk not only of events which occurred in their childhoods, but apparently in past lives (see e.g. Kelsey, 1967; Fiore, 1978). Of course, the goal of therapy was always to help patients, not so much to verify or falsify reincarnation, yet verification sometimes did occur unintentionally, even despite initial scepticism. Therapist Linda Tarazi, for instance, was treating a woman obsessed with memories of a past life in 16<sup>th</sup> century Spain. In an attempt to discredit the reality of this past life – which seriously interfered with the present – Tarazi wanted to find errors in the story. However, after ‘verifying hundreds of detailed facts in Spanish and English, and through trips to Spain, the Caribbean, and North Africa, no errors were found’ (Tarazi, 1990). Other therapists encountered further surprises: Psychiatrist Brian Weiss found that two of his patients, who initially did not know of each other in this life, were describing shared past lives in stunning detail (Weiss, 1997). Helen Wambach, who conducted past life group sessions, found that her collected cases showed remarkable statistical accuracy in terms of gender ratio, social status etc. when compared to historic and sociological data (Wambach, 1979). Thereunto came to the discovery of the *interim period*: memories of experiences in-between two physical lives, which were remembered as times of reflexion, study and planning of the next evolutionary steps (e.g. Newton, 2012). Overall, a system began to emerge, in which consciousness does not only develop from birth to death during one physical life, but also between death and a new birth, through a series of consecutive lives (c.f. Alegretti, 2004: 71-72).



A systematic search for cases in which children spontaneously remembered past lives began with Ian Stevenson from the University of Virginia, whose research is now continued by others, notably Jim Tucker. Cases from all over the world have been and are being uncovered, in which children – typically toddlers as they learn to speak – talk about another life in which they had a different family, were of a different age (often adults) and status. Of scientific interest are the so-called ‘solved cases,’ i.e.

cases in which a previously deceased personality who matches the child's description could be identified (Stevenson, 1974). The number of these solved cases is as astonishing as is the detail of the descriptions upon which they are based. In some cases, the evidence includes birthmarks found on children which matched the mortal wounds, injuries or handicaps of the previous personality. The wealth of evidence contained in these cases is not widely known, yet it transpires: if reincarnation research has not yet proven reincarnation, it seems surprisingly close to doing so.

Equally important, however, other than verifying reincarnation, is the question of its relevance. If there is such a thing as reincarnation, what happens to individual consciousnesses if they begin to explore the multidimensional past? Does the process bring concrete therapeutic benefits? Does it aid personal growth? Can the remembrance of past lives serve as a catalyst for the evolution of consciousness both on the individual and collective level? This paper is a qualitative analysis of past life regressions from the author's private therapy practice. Sessions have been conducted cross-culturally, with subjects from five different countries, using three different languages. To ensure therapeutic anonymity, names of the subjects were fictionalised, and details of the cases which could give any hint to the identity of the subjects (incl. country names and professions) were omitted. Past life dialogues between client (*C*) and therapist (*T*) presented in this paper are from original session transcripts, only minimally edited and abbreviated for the sake of easier legibility. The analysis shows that a three-level evolutionary pattern tends to unfold for individuals who are ready to explore their past, their present and their future and how it all is connected.

#### INDICATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS

Ghandi famously called it 'nature's kindness' that we usually do not remember our past lives. Even today, when past life regressions are increasingly utilized in therapy, they must be considered the 'hard-road' to self-discovery. The life-stories which emerge from regressions are hardly ever ego-strengthening, quite the opposite. Contrary to the commonly held misconception that people escape into believing they have been some glamorous historic figure (the 'Cleopatra-cliché'), most past life memories are humiliating and full of unresolved trauma. People I worked with have found out about previous lives in which they have been slave traders, prostitutes, frustrated housewives, kidnapped boys, defeated soldiers, grieving mothers, robbers and murderers, cruel priestesses and Nazi interrogators, crippled clowns and tortured children – hardly the types of personalities one would be likely to identify with in wishful fantasies. Unpleasant abreactions to the revival of past emotions are not uncommon either.

Therefore, it is crucial to have a practical test to determine, which individuals are not just strong and grounded enough to go through, but also able to draw the necessary conclusions and benefit from this kind of treatment. A certain openness to transpersonal and multidimensional reality is a basic prerequisite. Ernest Pecci writes (Pecci in Blake-Lucas, 2012: 47):

*Past-life therapy is not a therapy for the narrow-minded or sceptical but for the already partially awakened spiritual traveller who is ready to embrace the reality*

*of spirit guides and the existence of other dimensions and other worlds, and who is unafraid to explore consciousness in all of its unlimited varieties and forms.*

Pecci, who is a pioneering psychiatrist with multidimensional awareness, developed a simple, yet surprisingly reliable test for ascertaining readiness. It consists of requesting the candidates to ask ten questions they are currently occupied with in life, and evaluate the nature of the questions, not of their answers (Blake-Lucas, 2012: 47). The rationale behind the question-test goes back to the discovery that the human energy body is organised hierarchically, paralleling the evolution of consciousness which occurs in stages (c.f. Vieira, 1999). Each chakra of the subtle energy body was found to correspond to certain psychological areas of life (Myss, 1997; Bache, 1994:141ff). Lower chakras, such as the root chakra, the sexochakra and the solar plexus are connected to base issues: belonging to the tribe, forming family ties and establishing personal and material power. Similarly to Maslow's pyramid of needs (Maslow, 2013), once lower (more basic) needs are fulfilled, consciousness can be directed towards higher goals corresponding to higher chakras, such as the cardiochakra (corresponding to compassion and cosmoethics), laryngochakra (corresponding to finding and expressing one's existential program), frontochakra (corresponding to multidimensional perception), and the coronachakra (corresponding to multidimensional connectedness). As long as the individual is mainly concerned with lower chakra issues and predominantly asks questions around personal relationships and personal economy, there is no need or readiness to explore past lives. Once higher chakras are reached and the ten questions include various aspects of evolution (how to grow personally, how to assist others effectively, how to fulfil the existential program and how to gain greater multidimensional awareness), that indicates readiness to attempt retrocognitions.

This readiness must also be grounded in a well-established personality structure, into which the results of retrocognitions can be integrated. It includes persistence (c.f. Blake-Lucas, 1992: 46-53) as well as the willingness to take responsibility. The criterion of persistence serves as a self-selective filter: retrocognitions require hard work, and those who are not willing to invest in it, will abandon the project. For example, a spiritually aware and curious woman came into my practice: after finding out about a remarkably interesting, prehistoric past life, in which she lived alone in an abandoned underground tunnel system, she testified to the relevance of this experience for her overall personality. At the same time, she honestly confessed that she 'never thought this would be so much work.' She left, never to return, even though there was much potential for personal growth and multidimensional exploration.

It is worth mentioning that research into children's past life memories similarly indicates that spontaneous memories tend to occur when the personality is more *mature*. Initially, it was hypothesised that high suggestibility and social isolation were causes for children reporting an alleged previous life (Brody, 1979). However, when Haraldsson (1997) subjected this hypothesis to proper psychological tests, he came to different results: compared to the control group, children who remembered past lives were found to be significantly more intelligent, had higher levels of cognitive functioning, performed better on the vocabulary test and had much higher grades in school. Their teachers rated them significantly higher on adaptive functioning, and

reported that they tend to learn more, behave better in school and work harder than others (Haraldsson, 1997: 327ff).

### *'Incurable' Symptoms*

In therapy, an exception from the general readiness test can be made for cases involving targeting of specific symptoms (physical or psychological), especially the ones which are not explainable and curable by standard medicine. In such cases, past life therapy might be the last resort. A striking example was reported by Tineke Noordegraf. In this case, a 12-year old Belgian boy called Ludovic was suffering from a curious ailment doctors couldn't cure, but labelled as 'Minimal Brain Disorder.' Ludovic was unable to walk without crutches, because his legs trembled too much, unable to sit on a chair without touching everything, as he simply couldn't stay still. In his regression session he remembered an extreme situation in which everything was shaking, as if the whole world was falling to pieces. There was something terrible, like a thunder, which caused the Earth trembling, his body and skin burning, while he *couldn't stay still*. Then everything went black. It turned out that in a past life he died in the atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima. After he worked through this memory, Ludovic's limbs stopped trembling and he could give up his crutches (Bontentbal/Noordegraf in Blake-Lucas, 2012: 354-366).

Similarly, there would be potential in exploring past-life therapy for cases of *Body Integrity Identity Disorder (BIID)*. Here, sufferers feel that one of their limbs is not part of them and desire their amputation or think they should have some disability and desire – for example – to be blind. Currently, it constitutes a serious ethical question for medical practitioners whether it is permissible to amputate a healthy limb or cause blindness upon request, arguably to ease serious psychological discomfort (see e.g. Bayne/Levy, 2005). Looking at this issue from a single-life perspective only leaves one perplexed about the seeming absurdity of the feelings these patients are experiencing. Therefore, these cases need to be addressed on an energetic level, by gaining information about the person's past life in order to understand where the strange perception derives from and which energetic patterns might have been carried over into the present life.

### METHODOLOGY

Albeit past life regressions are deeply rooted in hypnotherapy, which is also the background of the author, a great break-through in hypnotic regression work came with the 'removal of hypnosis' (Dethlefsen quoted by Blake-Lucas, 2012: 9). This means that only those elements of classic hypnosis (relaxation, visualisation) are now kept which allow for self-determination of the client; others, which were based on the therapist's authority (including energetic authority) are omitted. Sessions focus on the self-empowerment of the client, and must therefore be non-invasive and energetically neutral. (Simple gestures can help to ensure that no unwanted energetic transfer occurs, for example avoiding eye-contact, sitting parallel to and not directly facing the client.) The term *retrocognitions* (c.f. Moore, 1977: 3; Alegretti, 2004) is preferred,

which implies that the process serves to recover the subject's memories at one's own pace and own terms.

The primary factors, which facilitate retrocognitions, are relaxation and focusing of intent. Research has shown that the state of mind in which past life recalls occur differs both from the waking state as well as traditional altered states of consciousness. Studying the brain's electric fields as measured by electroencephalography (EEG), it has been found that certain neural oscillations (brain rhythms) highly correlated with specific states of consciousness (Cade/Coxhead, 1979). While in the waking state the brain functions mainly within the Beta band (frequency of 16-31 Hz), in altered states of consciousness (like meditation, hypnagogy or dreaming), frequencies slow down to Alpha (8-15 Hz), Theta (4-7 Hz) and/or Delta (<4 Hz). Retrocognitions differ from all these altered states through the prevalence of *all* bands with *striking flares of Beta* – which suggests that the subject is retaining cognitive and energetic control (as in the normal waking state), while in a deeply relaxed state which is associated with accessing the paramemory (Whitton, 1974). These EEG findings also explain why many subjects do not feel that they are in an altered state during the experience (Blake-Lucas, 2012: 572ff), yet can access information normally not available to them.

This particular state of mind is achieved by inducing relaxation with any of the well-established techniques (e.g. Hartland's progressive relaxation), and the use of specific imagery which diverts the attention away from ordinary perception towards the retrocognitive goal. As a preliminary, it helps to familiarize the subjects with their own internal representational system (visual, auditory, cognitive and/or kinaesthetic) and how their memory works. (For example, they can be asked to recall a simple memory, such as last night's dinner, and observe the kinds of internal representations through which this memory came to them. This exercise also helps to release unrealistic expectations: past life memories appear in the brain very much like present life memories, less in any fantastic manner.)

Once the mind is relaxed, imagery is used to induce the retrocognitions. That imagery *can* be fantastic (metaphors such as the *mist of time* or the *rotating globus* to land on, were used with good results). The aim here is to dissociate from present day reality. Once dissociation is achieved, retrocognitions can be induced.

The individual starting point for each retrocognition depends on its particular objective; symptoms and therapeutic goals can serve as triggers. For example, if the objective is to find relief for a certain symptom, focusing on and feeling into the symptom itself can be a good starting point. If a particular life question is asked, this question can be mentally repeated, until impressions are beginning to come up (c.f. Bache, 1994: 72). The therapist may ask questions to help accessing and moving forward the remembrance, as long as leading-suggestive types of questions are avoided. For example:

- the therapist may ask what kind of footwear the subject is wearing to gain a first impression about a bygone life;

*T: Now I would like you to look down at your own feet. What are you wearing: some kind of footwear, shoes, anything at all?*

*C: Some pointy shoes.*

*T: Pointy shoes, all right. What are they made of?*

*C: Leather.*

*T: Can you see what colour they are?*

*C: Deer-brown.*

*T: Now that you can see this footwear, look a bit higher up: what are you wearing on your legs? Are they covered by anything?*

*C: (surprised) I look like a clown!*

*T: Can you see whether you're male or female?*

*C: Male.*

*T: Describe the rest of your attire.*

*C: Colourful top, funny hat, a drum in my hands.*

- the therapist may suggest that by the time she will count from 0 to 3 the subject will be able to recall a difficult detail, without giving any suggestions what that detail might be;

*C: I was sold.*

*T: Sold – for money?*

*C: Yes.*

*T: Who sold you?*

*C: My parents.*

*T: How old were you?*

*C: (Cries.) I don't know.*

*T: I will now count from 0 to 3, and by the time I reach the number 3 you will know exactly how old you were when your parents sold you. 0, 1, 2 ... 3. How old were you?*

*C: Nine.*

- the therapist may repeat the information just given by the subject as reassuring feedback and ask for further details, but must refrain from evaluating it;

*T: Let me know as soon as you see the land or get a feeling for it.*

*C: Dry.*

*T: Dry. How dry would you say: desert, half-desert...?*

*C: Dry trees.*

*T: Can you see anything else other than trees?*

*C: Small houses. A small village.*

*T: What are the houses made of?*

*C: Wood and stone.*

- the therapist may help to manage the experience emotionally, but must not interfere in the experience;

*T: You are now able to experience this memory, while at the same time stay objective, almost like viewing a movie. Regardless what kind of information will come to you, you will be able to deal with it. Remember, my voice will always be with you. What you are experiencing is simply a deeper level of existence. Everybody has that, only not everybody knows of it. It is all part of one gigantic evolution.*

- the therapist may move the timeline back or forth, so that a workable, rounded story can emerge;

*T: Let's now move forward in time – which is easy in this state of mind – to the next significant event in this life.*

#### THERAPEUTIC AND EVOLUTIONARY IMPLICATIONS

Using the therapeutic techniques of past life recalls sets an internal dynamic into motion, which allows the individual to see at increasingly more profound levels his or her evolutionary path. From cases worked through in my own therapy practice, as well as cases reported in specialist literature three levels can be observed. On the first, most basic level *cause and effect* connections between past and present can be found and learned from. However, on the second level, which is the level of *synchronistic*, non-local and acausal connections, it becomes apparent that multidimensional reverberances are much more complex than the simple mechanism of cause and effect. Finally, on the level of *syntropy* it becomes apparent, that in a seemingly paradoxical, yet mathematically and psychologically logical way the present is not only caused by the past, but also by the future.

Let us now in detail discuss what is occurring at each of these levels.

#### LEVEL 1: CAUSE AND EFFECT

On the most basic level, past and present seem to be connected through *cause and effect*: an event of the past causes certain effect(s) to unfold in present and future. On this level it becomes apparent, where certain phobias, philiias, pains and preferences, even fundamental life situations originate from and what lessons are there to be learned.

#### *Phobias, Philiias, Pains and Preferences*

Phobias of many sorts are commonly brought into therapy, which in many cases stem from past life traumas. Death by fire, water, suffocation, animal attacks, knives or natural disasters all have been found to originate in former lives (Wolger in Blake-Lucas, 2012: 227). Pains, disorders or weaknesses of certain parts of the body are sometimes also related to events from some former lifetime. Stevenson reports a past life case in which a woman who suffered from pimples on her nose, remembered a past existence with the same 'slight, but definite disease,' which was confirmed by previous family members (Stevenson, 1974: 87). Headaches, including migraines, are routinely found to be the result of having been guillotined, clubbed, stoned, shot, hanged, scalped, or in any other way being injured, often fatally, on the head (Fiore in Blake-Lucas, 2012: 253).

Philiias, sometimes extreme and bizarre, can also have a past life origin. Shaun, a man I worked with [name fictionalised] fostered the ongoing sexual fantasy of being



a slave – not in form of an occasional, piquant role-playing, but as the deep-seated desire to be fully owned by somebody else. Past life explorations with this man revealed that he had a long history of lives in which he was alternately rich, successful, and domineering in one life, objectified, incarcerated and victimised in another. The lesson for Shaun to learn from these two extremes was still open. This (unconscious) task drew him to the type of drama which could give him the opportunity to learn. Regretfully, however, as soon as he started to become aware of the seriousness of the issue, he self-proclaimed having a lack of courage to pursue therapy further.

A lady, who was much more determined to advance her development, felt her whole life a great sense of compassion for people who were ridiculed, especially for a handicap or disability. Anna [a fictionalised name] saw herself in a clown's attire during her first retrocognition session:

*T: Walk ahead then in this clown's attire ... and walk to the place where you normally are. Soon you will have the feeling that you have arrived somewhere...*

*C: In front of a church.*

*T: Are there others, as well or are you alone?*

*C: Horses, coaches. Yes, there are some people, also.*

*T: All right. You are standing in front of that church. What is it that you are doing there?*

*C: I would very much love to go in.*

*T: You would love to go in.*

*C: My feet are freezing.*

*T: Do you want to go inside because your feet are freezing or do you have some other reason?*

*C: I want peace.*

*T: All right. Let's go back in time – that is easy in your current state of mind – to the situation which made you conclude that you just want peace.*

*C: They're being nasty.*

*T: Who are?*

*C: I don't know.*

*T: Ok, I am now going to count from 0 to 3, and by the time I reach the number 3, you will be in a situation, in which they are being nasty. You will know exactly who is being nasty and why and how that makes you feel. 0, 1, 2 ... 3. Now they are being nasty.*

*C: They are laughing out loud, they are making fun of me ... they look down on me.*

*T: What is it about you that makes them laugh and look down on you?*

*C: I'm just a bit slow, not very smart or witty. I am a clown.*

*T: People usually laugh about clowns. You still perceive this as them being nasty. Have you not chosen this profession?*

*C: No, I was forced.*

*T: Go back to the time when it becomes apparent: who forced this upon you?*

*C: I was sold.*

*T: Sold – for money?*

*C: Yes.*

*T: Who sold you?*

*C: My parents.*

*T: How old were you?*

*C: (Cries.) I don't know.*

*T: I will now count from 0 to 3, and by the time I reach the number 3 you will know exactly how old you were when your parents sold you. 0, 1, 2 ... 3. How old were you?*

*C: Nine.*

While there was a definite emotional abreaction during her first session, Anna also reported that this was 'one of the great experiences' of her life. This was when she began to understand herself deeper, specifically

*'why I could never stand when people were laughing at me and why I tend to stand up for the underdog. As a little girl I used to fight, beating up those who harmed the weak'.*

### *Life Challenges*

Retrocognitions can be attempted specifically in order to understand why certain life challenges and situations have arisen. Multidimensional understanding of the current situation often helps finding the causal root of certain hindrances which stand in the way of individual evolution. Sebastian [name fictionalised], a young professional, who currently lives and works in Europe, felt a negative pull from his birth country. As a child, he had experienced a cruel upbringing there, spent in poverty. Even after having left that country years ago, he still lived with the irrational worry that one day it might be his fate to return, albeit he clearly didn't wish to do so. He wanted to know why he was born in *Country X* [name of country omitted]. After the induction, we went on with his first session by using this question as a retrocognitive trigger to bring up a related past life memory.

*T: In this relaxed, focused state of mind, I want you to repeat mentally the question 'Why was I born in Country X?' ...*

*C: (After a couple of minutes.) It's a punishment.*

*T: When you say 'punishment,' is that more of a thought or a feeling?*

*C: Feeling. I have the complete goose-pimples now.*

*T: Ok, seems like we're on the right track... If this was a punishment ... a punishment you always get for something: what was it a punishment for?*

Slowly recovering his memories from the relevant past life, Sebastian remembered that he had been some sort of building overseer. Originally from Holland, he tried his luck overseas and helped to build something which appeared a fortress on an island. For the project, they utilised forced labour.

*T: Which country is this?*

*C: (emotional) Country X.*

*T: What is the year?*

*C; 1750.*

*T: Tell me about the workers you oversee.*  
*C: They are all clearly undernourished. They hate me.*  
*T: Are you the one starving them?*  
*C: No, I'm not the owner. I don't manage them. I just supervise the building.*  
*T: What's your role?*  
*C: I can think mathematically and logically.*  
*T: Why do the workers hate you?*  
*C: Because I think I'm better than them.*  
*T: How do they know that?*  
*C: The way I speak to them and my gestures.*  
*T: Are you aware that you talk to them in such an uppish way?*  
*C: Yes.*  
*T: Does that bother you or not?*  
*C: No. I'm enjoying it.*

This theme of cross-cultural inequality is still prevalent in Sebastian's current life, where he now lives in a much more developed country than the one he was born in. He is concerned with economic or political inequality, but even more so with the suffering and suppression caused by unresourceful thinking and religious dogma. As it turned out, this stems from a learning experience his own consciousness made a long time ago.

### *Learning Experiences*

In a next decisive session, Sebastian found himself in an arid climate. The land was marked by dry trees and a small, dirty village, which he described as unhygienic, featuring flies buzzing around animal carcasses.

*T: What kind of clothes are you wearing?*  
*C: Black, short trousers. No shoes.*  
*T: Are you male or female?*  
*C: Male.*  
*T: Male. And how old are you?*  
*C: Mid 50s.*  
*T: All right. And what is your feeling: do you own any of these houses?*  
*C: Yes.*  
*T: Then I would like you to go there. Go and search for the house in which you live. Can you see it?*  
*C: Yes. It has no door, just a curtain.*  
*T: Just a curtain, I see. And inside?*  
*C: Dark.*  
*T: Is there any furniture?*  
*C: No, not really.*  
*T: Does anyone else live with you here?*  
*C: No.*

Going further back in time, it has turned out this man was not always alone. He remembered the joyful celebration of the birth of his daughter. While he lived with his wife and daughter, he used to work on some sort of plantation: the labour was hard as the days were hot, but he didn't mind, because 'everyone else was doing it, too.' He had a friendly relationship with his daughter, less so with his wife, who was somewhat alienated and slept with him out of duty rather than love. Tragedy hit, when both wife and daughter died.

*T: In a moment, I will say the word NOW. When I say the word NOW, you will know exactly how your wife and daughter died. [Pause.] NOW.*

*C: They were ill.*

*T: What kind of illness?*

*C: No one knows. They were very thin.*

*T: What did you do when they were so thin and ill?*

*C: I prayed.*

*T: And what happened?*

*C: They died.*

*T: Did you call a doctor?*

*C: No, I was praying.*

*T: You thought that was enough?*

*C: Yes.*

This man spent the remaining days of this life alone and feeling betrayed. His prayers failing when his wife and child died, caused him to doubt religion altogether. The end of the session revealed that he actually died with this feeling. This fact is particularly relevant, as thoughts held at the moment of death constitute a powerful thosenic carryover (c.f. Bache, 1994: 76), and determine future issues.

*T: Let's go forward to the time of your death. You are now dying. Where are you?*

*C: In front of the house.*

*T: Is there anyone else there with you?*

*C: Nay.*

*T: So you are completely alone. What do you feel: what are you dying of? Are you ill ... or injured?*

*C: I'm ill.*

*T: For how long have you been ill?*

*C: About a week.*

*T: Did anyone help you?*

*C: No! (emotional) I have not eaten anything...*

*T: All right. Remember, this is just a memory. Let's go to the moment in which you actually die. What happens in this moment?*

*C: I can't see anything.*

*T: What do you feel?*

*C: I feel betrayed. My religion has betrayed me.*

We can see that in Sebastian's case it became apparent at the simple level of cause and effect where the issue he was concerned with originated from: he has caused social inequality in the past (participated in a project using slave labour, looked

down at the workers), and he was born into social inequality in this life. He also remembered a crucial first experience he had relating to the dangers of dogmatic thinking and religious superstition.

### *Lessons to learn*

Beyond simply remembering past lives and becoming aware of causality, however, in therapy it is crucial to work with these memories. Finding ways to work through the experience is important so that therapeutic healing and personal development can occur. There are a number of therapeutic techniques which can be used with good results at the cause and effect level (see Duda, 2015: 188-190), especially:

- *Getting into the mind of the opponent.* Letting go of victim identification and negative thoughts, sentiments and energies (in short: thosenes) related to guilt, shame and remorse is essential for personal evolution. Still, it is routinely difficult to achieve that when events of the past remain traumatic. One technique is to use the increased awareness which characterises regression sessions, and getting into the minds of the persecutors. A powerful example for this technique was published by Denning, who was working with a woman who could not let go of an undetermined feeling of guilt. In a past life, she remembered having been a young girl, who was burned as a witch by local priests. They were telling her that she had committed 'an unpardonable sin' – even though she simply had been a herbalist. When the therapist suggested that she get into the minds of those priests and see what prompted their action, she was surprised that *fear* was their underlying motif. As soon as she could see those priests themselves as victims, who were just ignorant and weak (and still believed in the devil), she was able to release her feelings of guilt and remove the evolutionary obstacle which was blocking her from using her talent as a healer (Denning in Blake-Lucas, 2012: 204-205).

- *Dealing with polarity.* Experiences with retrocognitions show that nobody ever is a pure victim. For those suffering from victim consciousness it is invaluable to see that abuses suffered tend to be somewhere down the chain of abuse and revenge (the murder victim was once the murderer and so on). It is therapeutic to find the original act which set the chain of suffering into motion. At the same time, it is hard to see oneself as the aggressor: this technique is usually only tolerated by more mature consciousnesses, who do not harbour (even unconscious) illusions of ego-grandeur. If successfully attempted, it allows for the integration of the shadow elements of the personality.

- *Reframing* is a well-known cognitive technique (Watzlawick *et al.*, 1974: 92-115; Bandler/Grinder, 1982), which can be successfully used in the multidimensional context, as well. It generally implies changing the perception of a situation from negative to something positive, while the facts remain unaltered. It can be, for example, traumatising to realise that one has been the aggressor: an individual, here to be named Ilse, who realised that she had been involved in the atrocities of Nazi Germany, first only identified with the (cosmo-)unethical aspects of that life. Later, however, she became aware that it was in this era that she began to explore the concept of conscious evolution. She was drawn to the German idea of the *Übermensch*

because she was attracted to the possibility of developing human nature beyond its current form, even though the regime perverted this ideal through racial hatred and acts of genocide. Reconnecting with the unspoilt idea of evolution gave this individual not only confidence, but helped to identify some of her present life's challenges: overcoming the concept of enemy and developing universality.

Albeit these techniques can be used with good results on a simple cause and effect level, some cases are more complicated and necessitate the understanding of deeper connections (like Sebastian's – which we will come back to later on). The following case illustrates that the causality inherent in the seriality of life is not as simple as linear cause and effect.

### *Entanglement*

A young lady, here to be called Andrea, came specifically asking for help in finding the root of a certain relationship. It concerned her boss Graham and the sexually provocative behaviour he displayed, despite his engagement to another woman, whom he finally married and procreated with. This situation caused Andrea distress, as she felt attracted to him, but knew he was 'off-limits.'

During her past-life session, Andrea remembered being a woman from the Swiss Alps, who emigrated to Canada after 'the war.' In that life, the present day Graham was a friend of her husband. He was a bad influence, getting the husband into suspicious business, even earning him a two-year prison sentence.

This straight past-life narrative revealed no cause for the present-day psychological game-playing Graham engaged in.

Answers began to emerge, as we accessed the metaconsciousness characteristic of the *intermissive*, or in-between-lives period.

Cutting-edge research shows that this crucial period is characterised by *higher* levels of awareness than physical life. A lot of learning is taking place during this period, in which courses are taken, friendships are formed and the consciousness is better aware of the evolutionary pattern. The missions and tasks for the upcoming physical life (existential program) are planned in advance (c.f. Alegretti, 2004: 71-73). After birth, much of this higher awareness is lost. Research subjects of Helen Wambach (1979) – who regressed over 750 people into the birth experience – testify that at the moment of birth the baby is fully aware of the entire situation, including the thoughts, sentiments and energies (thosenes) of the mother and everyone else present in the delivery room. As consciousness adjusts to operate within the parameters a new physical body, it loses lucidity.

This individual consciousness Andrea knows as Graham in this life, intended during the intermissive period to demonstrate the ability to lead a more serious and responsible life, as well as the ability to form and support a family on his own. The thosenes he was carrying over were full of shame and feelings of inadequacy. He carried no intentions to tease or hurt Andrea, rather to prove in front of her and perhaps gain her approval. This particular thosenes of him entangled with Andrea's predisposal to react to sexual innuendos, which came from elsewhere and was unrelated to him.

The mechanisms which govern the seriality of life are more complex than a simple billiard-ball type of causality. Our collective thoughts, sentiments and energies (thosenes) form an immensely complex web. Our past patterns determine which thosenic currents we engage with presently. Consciousness researcher Analaura Trivellato (2015) calls the underlying process *thosenic reverberation*. Individual thosenes reverberate throughout time and space and interact with qualitatively matching thosenes of others. The effects of this process are not limited in the Newtonian, mechanistic way, but can unfold in the way of quantum entanglement (allowing for non-locality and acausality).

The psychological phenomenon which allows us to access non-local and acausal determining factors is called *synchronicity*. Synchronistic events become apparent when therapeutic attention is directed towards the subtle and the seemingly irrational.

#### LEVEL 2: SYNCHRONICITY AND ACAUSALITY

Synchronicity occurs when a physical event matches a – seemingly unrelated – inner event, and this apparent coincidence carries psychological significance (meaning). Synchronicities were first described by the Swiss psychiatrist C G Jung (see Jung, 1969). He studied cases from his own therapeutic practice, as well as historic examples (e.g. the *I Ging*) and also held extensive correspondence with the physicist Wolfgang Pauli (see Jung & Pauli, 2014). His concept, very controversial at first, indeed found a lot of support in modern physics: quantum entanglement allows for seemingly unconnected particles to share a connection after all, just as in synchronicity seemingly unconnected events share a type of acausal connection (see e.g. Goswami, 1995: 9ff).

The paradigmatic example for synchronicity comes from Jung's own therapeutic practice. Jung was working with a female patient, whose 'highly polished Cartesian rationalism' made it impossible for her to adapt a deeper human understanding and make psychological progress. During one session, she talked about an impressive dream in which someone gave her a golden scarab, in form of an expensive piece of jewellery. Simultaneously, Jung heard something tapping on the window behind him. He turned around and saw it was a scarabeid beetle or common rose-chafer (*Cetonia auratoa*), a golden-green coloured insect, the nearest relative to a golden scarab in the Swiss climate. In an unlikely fashion, the bug attempted to come into the dark room. Jung opened the window, caught it in mid-flight, and handed it to his patient with the words: 'Here is your scarab.' This experience broke her intellectual resistance and the treatment could be continued with satisfactory results (Jung, 1969: 109-110).

Other types of synchronicities occur when a psychologically relevant motive appears in the outside world more often than it would according to statistical probability, (for example a person keeps encountering *fish* over and over again during the course of a regular day) or when archetypal symbols show up in life (it is relatively common, for instance, that birds are seen while a loved one at a distance dies: birds are archetypal symbols for consciousness departing at death).

In past life therapy, synchronicities mark the threshold between the simple cause and effect phase and the level of more complex connections. Whenever synchronistic events show up, the greater evolutionary picture is beginning to unfold. Nevertheless, it takes some training and attention to detail not to allow these

evolutionary markers to go unnoticed. It is in the nature of synchronicities that there is an outward event, which can be a very *small* thing, indicating an inner correspondence of *great* significance. We are not generally conditioned to notice small coincidences or tune in to the subtle language of the psyche. It helps to know that synchronicities usually have a strong subjective element to them: they shock, surprise and emotionally engage, often cause goose-bumps or teary eyes. These are not 'weird feelings,' but in the right context kinaesthetic reactions to pending messages which are cognitively not yet understood. Once dealt with, valuable cognitions can be gained, especially about relationships, existential tasks and turning points.

### *Cognitions about Existential Relationships*

Anna – the woman who remembered that in a previous life her parents sold her as a clown – had a powerful synchronistic event after her session. A couple of days later she met a family friend who was wearing a *harlequin* patterned sweater, which triggered 'medieval sounds of laughter and mockery' on her mind. This powerful clairauditory experience immediately gave her the sense that there was a dramatic connection.

We held another session to explore the origin of these medieval noises:

*C: They are sitting around a table.*

*T: Who is?*

*C: Men. A lot of them.*

*T: Let's have a look at these men: what are they wearing?*

*C: Like ... puffed shoulders, belts, they have swords ... big bellies, beards and they just eat and eat and eat.*

*T: What do they eat?*

*C: Like ... whole pigs, and some sort of bird, I don't know what kind of bird, it's roasted.*

*T: Are they outdoors or indoors?*

*C: Indoors, in a gigantic room; it's only them and myself.*

*T: Do they have servants?*

*C: Yes, but they sent them out already. They laid out the food and then they were sent out.*

*T: Is there any music or entertainment?*

*C: I don't hear any music. They are talking and boasting.*

*T: Boasting of what?*

*C: You know ... this one says how he cut his head off ... must have been a great enemy, for he is very proud, immensely-immensely proud.*

*T: What kind of impression do these people make on you?*

*C: They are rather likeable. With these beards and big bellies they look like they are meaning well, even though I know they will laugh about me again. They are rather fatherly ... paternal: that's the right word.*

*T: Do they pay you any attention?*

*C: They don't, they are so busy with their tremendous heroic deeds. For them, these are heroic deeds, for me ... I'm scared of it all, for I'm just such a little nothing, but it makes them happy and that in turn makes me happy. I'm not sure,*



*whether I'm happy because they leave me in peace or because I'm partaking in other's happiness, but they are in a very good mood, in a very-very good mood.*

At this point she discovered that her friend, who recently had the *harlequin* patterned sweater on, was sitting among these bearded men around the medieval table.

*C: He is the one I was sold to!*

*T: All right. [...] Now go ahead in time, when you two interact in a way typical for that lifetime. What is he doing with you? Is he talking to you?*

*C: He lets me follow him. He's always saying: 'I'm going. Come!' Actually, he loves me, he doesn't know himself, but he loves me. Strange ... this thing called love, very strange; so far I have only felt that everyone is mocking me, laughing at me, nasty with me, but ... I feel some compassion from him now. He likes to tell me stories, he tells me about his adventures in the forest; he lets me sit at the fire with him. It's a stunning fire-place, I can enjoy its warmth, too. I'm feeling good, albeit I know, I'm his property, but it could be worse, the others are much harsher. They don't hurt me physically, no-no-no, but they are harsh.*

*T: Is there anything else important happening between the two of you in this life?*

*C: I'm dying. He's sitting here next to me. I'm glad that I'm dying. I'm glad that it will be over soon.*

*T: Is it good that he's there with you?*

*C: Very good.*

*T: How old are you?*

*C: Less than 10.*

This session helped Anna to see things from a new perspective, and reframe previously traumatic experiences. In someone she previously feared and despised, she 'discovered the human' [her original wording]. She descried that the master who brought the little boy, simply acted according to the customs of his days, but meant no harm as such. He even grew fond of the boy, and wept when he died in his arms. Today, the same consciousness is a friend to Anna, regularly trying to please her with immaterial presents, such as invitations to excursions and concerts, as if 'trying to compensate.'

Contemporary psychology offers very few tools to harvest the opportunities from seeing relationships in a multidimensional perspective. For Anna, it was enough to see the subjective element of this particular relationship to let go of her feelings of victimisation and humiliation. Others, however, may need more time and cognitive dealing with the subject. In our present culture we are not used to seeing relationship behind roles. We have been socialised to pursue relationships mainly for their economic-utilitarian value. Even personal relationships, like marriage and friendship are entered into for some mutual gain (such as raising children together or helping each other out), business relationships even more obviously so. However, as Zukav (2010) pointed out, it is the evolutionary calling of the present to form new types of relationships. He calls them *spiritual partnerships*, the predominant purpose of which is to foster each other's conscious evolution.

In past life therapy, there are a number of techniques which can help individuals to use relationships as catalysts for evolution. For example:

- *Retrocognitive analysis of lessons*. Here, retrocognitive memories are analysed in terms of what the individual consciousness has learned from relationships, not so much what temporary gain they ensured or how pleasant/unpleasant they have been.
- *Activation of intermissive friendships*. After numerous life-times individuals create not only temporary relationships, but increasingly stronger links which cause them to evolve together (see Alegretti, 2004: 70). In the in-between-lives state the progress of these evolutionary groups is evaluated and the ties strengthened (e.g. Newton, 2012: 87ff). Intermittent friendships are formed with the intent to help each other evolve and fulfil the existential program in the upcoming (physical) life. However, most intermissive friendships remain latent or passive later in life: the individuals either do not meet, do not realise their significance of their meeting or simply fail to work together towards the existential program. Retrocognitions help to identify these latent or passive intermissive friendships. If they can be made active, the chances of fulfilling one's life mission (existential completism) are greatly enhanced (Vogt, 2011). A fascinating personal attempt was published by Célia Branco in the *Journal of Consciousness*. She discovered through retrocognitions that her friendship with a girl named Colette had multiexistential dimensions: both of them, independently from each other, experienced a matching retrocognitive memory, which occurred in a Roman prison, in which foreigners were held (Branco, 2004). Individuals, who share multidimensional memories, may further attempt to remember the intermissive period: accessing the thoughts, sentiments and energies generated at that time helps greatly to maintain focus on the existential program (Vogt, 2011).
- *Mind training*. This is a group of techniques, which have their roots in Buddhist *Lam-Rim* meditations, the graduated path towards enlightenment (e.g. Pabongka, 2006: 546ff). These meditations are based on creating mental representations of the relative nature of relationships. Practitioners, for example, may visualise how someone else might have been their mother in a previous life or how a friend can change into an enemy or an enemy into a friend at any time. Exercises like this can be used independently of a religious context to promote universality, greater objectivity and an increased cosmo-ethical attitude.

### *Cognitions about Existential Tasks and Turning Points*

Beyond lessons to learn from unfolding multiexistential relationships, synchronicities within the context of retrocognitions can also point towards the existential program one is meant to fulfil.

In the case of Sebastian – after he discovered having been involved in using forced labour while building a fortress in 1750 – a remarkable synchronicity occurred the day after his session. The moderator of a program (Goodall, 2013) he watched spoke the following sentence:

*In the year 1750, something changed and that was you.*

Baffled, we began to explore what kind of turning point this year 1750 could have been. With the help of a non-physical guide named Larjn, we came to learn that

there was *too much arrogance* at one point in his evolution. We have used the phrase *too much arrogance* as a trigger to find more facts about the past:

*T: We are now deep in the past, exactly where you had too much arrogance. You do not have to do anything else, but look at your surroundings and tell me where you are.*

*C: I'm sitting.*

*T: You're sitting. Where?*

*C: Rough wooden table.*

*T: Are you sitting alone at that table?*

*C: No, there're other people, about five.*

*T: Where's that table? What kind of place is that?*

*C: Like a pub or a tavern.*

*T: All right. Now listen to your own conversation. What are you talking about?*

*C: We are negotiating.*

*T: Negotiating – what? What is the nature of your business?*

*C: Humans. We are selling humans.*

*T: You are selling humans. Where do you take the people from?*

*C: (becomes emotional) I don't know.*

*T: All right. Remember, this is like visiting a historic archive. Many strange things have happened in the past. [...] Go now to the next relevant event in this life.*

*C: I am in front of the church. In my community. I am getting some sort of lifetime achievement award.*

*T: For selling slaves?*

*C: Yes, that's respectable business around here. I'm doing excellent work. I'm being declared a man of God.*

Not only during his entire life, but even in death, this man has not perceived that there was anything wrong with selling people for profit:

*T: You are now in the moment of your death. How do you feel?*

*C: I'm afraid ... and I feel hatred.*

*T: Hatred – towards whom?*

*C: The people who killed me.*

*T: Who killed you?*

*C: The people I sold ... as slaves.*

*T: Do you have any other thoughts or sentiments?*

*C: No.*

Sebastian's case is typical for ongoing explorations into past lives insofar that after a number of sessions a pattern begins to emerge (c.f. *Table 2*). Subsequent lives tend to centre around the same or similar topics, yet contain an organic, sometimes subtle line of development. Negative patterns, once they reach a turning point, are slowly fading away, while learning takes place and positive traits are becoming stronger.

Throughout his sessions, Sebastian has experienced two types of ‘evil’ in the past: religious dogma and disrespect towards others, both of which gradually began to evolve into strengths:

- *Religious dogma*. After having experienced the shock of daughter and wife dying, because he only prayed and failed to call for medical help, this individual consciousness began to develop critical thinking. First, he used mathematical-logical skills egotistically (building a fortress still using slave labour), but later in attempt to help others. (One session revealed a past life in earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century, in which he travelled to a developing country to bring progress. Yet, he couldn't fulfil his mission, as a politically dogmatic enemy captured and executed him.)

- *Disrespect towards others*. Starting extremely strong (active slave trading), this trait became progressively weaker (passive tolerance of slave labour, outwardly arrogant attitude) until it turned into the desire to bring progress to other people.

Such lines of development tend to merge in the present life. Today, Sebastian a strong, scientific thinker, who has a developed concern for others. He is determined to learn and progress, and has a marked ability to overcome the odds.

Psychic archaeology into Sebastian's past lives has revealed the answer to the initial question why he was born in *Country X* while he lived and wanted to remain in a more developed country. He was still working on bridging the gap between different levels of development and ways of thinking. There was no indication in the past, however, of *how* he could do that. The answer was to be found on an even more profound level, where attention is directed towards the future, not only the past, which is the level of *syntropy*. This is the next level, at which past lives and future potentials must be synchronised, allowing for the highest evolutionary path to unfold. Once individual tendencies and evolutionary patterns from past lives are recovered, the next step is to evaluate the direction of the future.

Time	Significant Events	Strong Traits	Weak Traits
‘much earlier’	Simple labourer. Wife and daughter died, he prayed, but didn't call doctor	Love towards daughter	Religiously dogmatic
‘earlier’	Involved in slave trading, celebrated as ‘man of God’	Serves community	Promotes slavery, too much arrogance
~1750	Helps build a castle, while utilising slave labour	Ability to think logically and mathematically	Tolerates slavery, lack of empathy
20 <sup>th</sup> century	Executed for being politically on the ‘wrong side’	Wants to bring progress to less developed countries	Becomes victim of dogmatic thinking
Current	Caught up between two cultures	Critical thinking	Fear of becoming victim of dogma
Resource Life (theoretical)	Mission to inform people that they have been misinformed	Desire to teach critical thinking	Being too imposing
Future	Even a good job does not satisfy if no opportunity to teach (critical thinking)	Teaching skills	Going after money and prestige

Table 2: *The Seven Lives of Sebastian J. – His Challenge: Turning arrogance into tolerance, religious dogma into critical thinking.*

## LEVEL 3: SYNTROPY

Like in geometry, where two points determine a line and multiple points reveal a curve, in retrocognitions two or more past lives show the direction into which an individual is evolving. Thus there is a level, at which the past and the present cannot be understood without the future.

Cutting edge research indicates that in forming the present, the future plays as much a part as the past (DiCorpo/Vannini, 2015). We all carry a blueprint of the archetypal formation we are evolving into, like a seed carries the information of the flower it will be growing into. That blueprint (the result of our past actions and intermissive planning) determines our mission or existential program (Vieira, 1997); the more this mission becomes conscious, the faster and more efficiently we can move towards it.

The idea that life moves towards an organised future goes back to the mathematical theories of Luigi Fantrappiè and his concept of syntropy. Most of us know about entropy: the law of physics which states that within any given system, energy always moves towards greater levels of disorder and matter towards greater chaos. Life, however, is the famous exception: life moves towards greater organisation and coherence. Fantrappiè and other scientists therefore postulated that there must be a symmetric law which allows living systems to reverse entropy – Schrödinger (1944) called it negative entropy, Brillouin (1953) shortened the term to negentropy and Szent-Györgyi (1977) replaced it with syntropy. Fantrappiè showed mathematically that while forward-in-time solutions (e.g. heat radiating from a radiator and spreading out into the environment) are governed by entropy, life is a back-ward-in-time solution, which is governed by syntropy. He suggested that we live ‘in a supercausal universe, governed by both causality and retrocausality,’ and that *life is caused by the future* (DiCorpo/Vannini, 2015: 10).

While this conclusion might sound like an idea coming from a science-fiction novel, psychologically it is unsurprising. Consider, for instance, a talented athlete, say a swimmer, who trains six hours a day, six days a week. If you go and ask why she trains so much, she might say because she wants to qualify for the Olympics. The particular Olympic Games she wants to qualify for are in the future. Therefore, the cause (the Olympic Games) for her present action (intensive training) lies in the future (retrocausality).

The future gives our consciousness a *pull factor* (instead of a push factor, as the past). Future events (or possibilities of events) which pull us ahead can be conscious or unconscious: we are not always conscious of the future (or future possibilities) as we are not always conscious of the past. Current studies (c.f. DiCorpo/Vannini, 2015: 36ff) indicate that unconscious future events (e.g. an ignored goal which would be part of the individual's life mission) can influence the present in the same way as unconscious past events (e.g. suppressed trauma) do. For instance, if an individual's existential program involves achieving a certain goal, but the person is not currently working towards it, that can cause depression in the present.

The therapeutic technique which can be used to ascertain to which extent an individual is fulfilling the existential program is called *future life progression* (Jirsch, 2011). It is possibly the most dramatic of all visualisation techniques, yet it can be used with clients who are less conscious or even multidimensionally unaware. The aim is not so much to ‘gaze into the crystal ball,’ and attempt to foretell the future, rather to

find out the subconscious direction into which one's life is heading, *if nothing in one's present behaviour is changed*. If the future thus seen is unsatisfactory, measures can be taken to change the present in order to change the future.

Taking the future thus into consideration will help to unlock talents, correct unfortunate courses of actions, and warn if the individual is on a life path which will not lead to fulfilling the existential program (incompletism).

### *Unlocking Talents*

Talents, which have previously been blocked by limiting beliefs, can be unlocked and actualised once those beliefs are therapeutically changed. Anna, who had a life-long fear of being ridiculed, never pursued her ambitions as a visual artist. However, after reframing her past life in which she was sold as a clown, she could set her fears aside and visualise her own works in the future. As result of her therapy, she began to paint.

### *Correcting the Course of Action*

The technique of future life progression can be used very well with clients who are on a course of action which is likely to cause their downfall. Future life progression allows them to see the future they can expect if they stay on the present course of action, and make amendments until a satisfying future is envisioned.

Martin, a fortunate and ambitious young man came into therapy with the presenting symptom of a persistent gambling addiction. He remained irresponsive to cognitive-behavioural approaches, until in a future life progression he saw himself as a 'homeless wreck' in 10 years time. This vision had a deterrent effect strong enough for him to change his present course of action and channel his entrepreneurial spirit into healthy business ventures. Months later he remains free of his addiction, and check-up future life progressions show that he is now set on a course towards business success and a satisfying family life.

Doug, another business-man, middle-aged, coping with poor business progress and a demanding family situation, saw himself as unemployed in ten years time. Analysing his present course of action, he saw his fault in failing to delegate tasks to his employees. Changing his behaviour in business with the help of cognitive techniques and visualisation, produced a different alternative future, in which his business is thriving and he has the opportunity to venture off into pursuing new interests.

This application of future life cognitions can be used with a wide range of people, as it requires no multidimensional awareness. Most subjects can easily work with the concept of a future life vision, which they can understand as the projection of their subconscious mind based on present attitudes and habits.

### *Preventing Existential Incompletism*

For those individuals, who have multidimensional awareness, the same technique can help to complete the existential program by giving feedback regarding the degree of their completism.

With Sebastian – who learned from retrocognitions that his task was to chose tolerance over arrogance and promote critical thinking – we have undertaken his future life cognitions in two steps. First, we visualised a *resource life*: this was not in search for a past or future life, but an excursion into katathym-imaginative psychotherapy, which allows patients to come up with an internal imagery in order to find their own internal resources (positive thosenes, solutions for problems), (Leuner, 1989; Kretschmar/Tzschaschel, 2014: 89ff). After that we have undertaken a future life cognition. Both turned out to be warnings.

In his *resource life* vision, Sebastian found himself in an abandoned town:

*C: There's a town here. Not much is happening.*

*T: A town, yes. Why is not much happening?*

*C: There are lots of houses, but only a few people.*

*T: Where are all the people?*

*C: They have fled.*

*T: Fled from what?*

It slowly turned out the people fled because the media spread news of an epidemic. That turned out to be misinformation, however: there were no signs of an illness, the fear has risen only from gullibility and ignorance. Sebastian felt a calling to go after the people and tell them there was nothing to be afraid of. He found hundreds of people in the mountains, but they were too busy quarrelling and failed to listen to him altogether. As he was trying to convince them, he came to the realisation that they must make their own experiences. This conclusion, however, left open how Sebastian could then practice tolerance and promote critical thinking.

To find out, the archetypal image of a *wise old man* was used. This technique – in conservative psychotherapy interpreted as the dissociative manifestation of a person's unconscious – can bring to light semi-lucid memories of the tasks set during the intermissive period.

As Sebastian found his metaphoric wise old man in a cave, he gave him some advice:

*C: He still says it is my task to help people – through clarification and critical thinking. But he says that I must start small.*

*T: What does small mean? What sort of size of group?*

*C: Not size, the size doesn't matter. But I must find people who are already searching. I must present what I know to those who are already searching for information. Those are the ones I can assist.*

Then Sebastian went off and opened up an information library, where he began to offer talks and workshops. Some young people started to attend...

In this visionary session, the wise old man gave Sebastian – in addition to the advice – a *light blue marble* as a token and reminder of his teachings. The next day, a remarkable event of synchronicity happened: walking down the street, Sebastian

found the physical counterpart of the light blue marble on the ground, in physical reality. He picked it up. *I was happy, in awe, he said. It was the same marble I had to take with myself from the old man. Today I actually found it!*

The little blue marble came as a powerful synchronistic reminder to take the old man's message seriously. Indeed, his future life progression – despite the fact that Sebastian's life seemed to go outwardly very well at this stage – pointed towards the danger of incompletism.

In his future life progression, Sebastian woke up in a spacious, two-storey house, which he owned and had furnished himself. When asked to go to work and see what he is normally doing, he said:

*C: I'm teaching. At uni ... I think ... I don't know which one.*

*T: Listen to yourself speaking, until you get a feeling for what is it that you are teaching.*

*C: Research methods. Something really abstract.*

*T: Who are your students? Try to get a feeling for them: what is their background?*

*C: (surprised) This is not a university, this is a school!*

*T: Interesting. How come pupils in a school learn about research methods? That's not common, is it?*

*C: (whispers) No, it is not.*

*T: Go back in time, when the situation arose that gave you the chance to teach research methods in a school. What can you see?*

*C: Bad students ... they disappointed me ... made me sad ... one must start to teach them earlier ... when they still can have fun with it...*

*T: Who offered you this job in a school? How did this become part of the school curriculum?*

*C: Acquaintances ... I have the feeling this is not my main job though.*

It appeared that his main job was in IT, something to do with data management. The job was respectable and well-paid, but not particularly challenging or satisfying.

*T: In a moments time when I say the word NOW, a number between 0 and 10 will appear in front of you, indicating how much you are fulfilling your existential program: 0 – not at all, 10 – completely. Look at that number NOW. What is the number?*

*C: 3.*

During Sebastian's follow-up sessions we used more conventional, cognitive therapy techniques to work with this information. It has crystallised that the more he works in teaching (even more in schools, where he can find fresher minds, than at university), the closer he gets to completism. The danger of incompletism lies in giving in to temptations of jobs with great financial and reputational benefits, but offering him no opportunity to pursue his permissive style of education. Past life, combined with future life, cognitions can help individuals considerably to avoid wasting one's precious physical life: it allows for the unfolding of artistic talents (Anna), pursuing personal power instead of being consumed by guilt (Ilse), putting one's knowledge to the service of others (Sebastian), allowing one's strengths to overcome one's



weaknesses (Martin), but above all it allows for meaning to unfold in an overly cynical social climate.

Those, who have engaged in exploring their own multidimensional past, discover that the pattern which arises from the seriality of life, is intelligent. They can see our human existence as part of a greater scheme. Everything we do – every thought we think and every reaction we give to life's challenges – matters, as it changes the course of future evolution. In Christopher Bache's (1994: 214) words, the individual who pursues the spiritual journey to this level comes to 'live in a supercharged world filled with opportunities and significances.'

Both the intellectual and the personal engagement with reincarnation are psychologically empowering. It provides an effective antidote to our contemporarily cynical cultural myths, which portrays human life merely as a random epiphenomenon of matter. Retrocognitions give back to our lives what reductionist materialism has taken away from it: the ultimate meaning.

## CONCLUSION

The therapeutic benefits and evolutionary implications of retrocognitions depend on the maturity of the individual, who undertakes them. Three distinct levels can be reached: At the level of simple causality phobias and physical symptoms can be healed, simple life lessons can be learned. At the level of synchronicities, which occur at the intersection of physical and non-physical events, deeper cognitions about relationships and existential tasks can be gained. Finally, at the level of syntropy the greater evolutionary pattern connecting past and future can be observed, to ensure that one avoids the dangers of incompleteness and sets life on a course on which the existential program is fulfilled.

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