

MEMORIES OF PREVIOUS LIVES UNDER HYPNOSIS

By Amarasiri Weeraratne

It is often asked, “Why do we not remember our previous life if it is a fact that we have lived before?” And often we reply that the loss of memory of a particular thing or event is no proof for its own existence. For instance, we do not remember the day of our birth. That does not prove that we did not live during the periods in question. I cannot now remember what I did, for instance, on 1st January, 1950, and where I was on that day. This only proves that our mind is constituted in such a way that we do not remember many past things and incidents. The further the time lapse the less are we likely to remember details. But, of course, we know from our parents (not from our memory) that we were born on a certain date and have been living since then.

The mind and its working are generally not understood by most of us. But those who have studied the mind tell us that man uses only one-fourth of it from the day of his birth to the day of his death. They compare the mind to an iceberg where only one-fourth is visible above the water while three-fourths lie submerged. The sub-conscious is a part of the mind which we do not usually utilise. In this part of the mind are latent the memories of all our past experiences including those of our previous lives.

Buddhists and Hindus generally are aware that yogis can gain psychic powers by practising concentration of mind in meditation. Their psychic powers include the ability to recall past lives. This power is gained by having access to the memories that are available to the sub-conscious mind. But most of us are not yogis and generally do not exert ourselves to achieve these psychic powers. How then can we obtain evidence for rebirth? How could we tap the memories that are latent in the sub-conscious mind? Herein hypnosis comes to our rescue.

When a person is hypnotized and attains the somnambulistic stage or the third stage of deep sleep his sub-conscious mind starts functioning. This mental state is sharp, and has the ability to recall memories that are not available to the normal mind. Psychologists and psychiatrists have long realized that a person’s memory can be remarkably long forgotten and trivial information can be clearly remembered, such memories being inaccessible to the subject during normal waking consciousness. Even experiences of early childhood can be vividly relived.

Depending in part on the hypnotist's technique, many subjects will assume childish speech and mannerisms appropriate to the age which they are regressed."

Reference Books

There are several books which deal with memories of previous lives obtained under hypnosis. Some of these details have been checked and verified. The best-known among these books is "The Search for Bridey Murphy" by Berenstin. His subject Ruth Simmons recalled details of a life in Ireland 90 years' ago as Bridey Murphy. These details were checked and verified by a firm of Irish lawyers. This book became a best seller in America in 1956. This caused a great controversy in America among the exponents of the "one-life theory" of Christianity and the believers in reincarnation. The opponents fought tooth and nail to discredit the author and the contents of the book, harping on certain unverified details and some facts which they assumed were impossible. They assumed without proof that Ruth Simmons could have got the information of a life in Ireland 90 years ago by normal means. They could not account for the verified details.

The under-mentioned books deal with memories of previous lives under hypnosis:-

- (1) "Adventures of a Hypnotist" by Dr. Johnathan Rodney.
- (2) "The three lives of Naomi-Henry" by Henry Blyth.
- (3) "Who was Anne Okenden?" by Arnoll Bloxham. (Herein are found details of seven lives of an English School-teacher, Anne Okendan).
- (4) "The Successive Lives" by Col. Albert de Rochas.
- (5) "The Power Within" by Dr. Alexander Canon.

Some of the memories have been verified and found to be correct. Some are not verifiable. For instance, if one speaks of a life in the Middle Ages, Roman Empire or some such remote past as an ordinary citizen such details are not verifiable. On the other hand, if one speaks of a historical person an objection can be raised that such information could have been available to the subject from history books.

"Do It Yourself" Method

Quite apart from the weighty evidence mentioned above there is a "do it yourself" method of obtaining evidence for rebirth. If you know how to hypnotize you may do so, if not get a friend or a relation who can do it. The hypnotist must not only know how to induce deep-trance hypnosis, but must also have a strong and clear moral character. Get your subject to recline or sit in a comfortable position,

preferably in an easy chair. Induce hypnotic sleep by verbal suggestion by getting him to fix his mind on a bright object. I prefer a candle. Soon his optic nerves will become tired on account of the strain due to concentration, and with your verbal suggestions of tiredness and sleep he will quietly drift to a pleasant hypnotic sleep. Deepen the sleep with suggestions and see to what stage of hypnosis the subject could be induced. The first stage of hypnosis is a light sleep known as the "lethargic stage." There is lack of facial expression and perfect passivity. Here when the suggestion is made that the subject cannot open his eyes, and is challenged to do so you will find that he is able to do so. In the next stage under the same challenge you will see him raising the eyebrows and moving his facial muscles but the eyes do not open. Even if he partially opens the eyes you will see that the eyeball is turned upwards. If this does not happen the subject has not been hypnotized. If this cannot be induced it is better to give him up. He may be a good subject for medical and curative purposes but for regression to previous life he is not good. If this is successfully achieved induce the cataleptic stage by suggesting rigidity of say the right hand. Then say he cannot bend it. Challenge him to do so. You will find that he is unable to bend the hand though you see him making an attempt. Catalepsy has been achieved. If this does not work after repeated suggestions it is better to give him up as a subject for regression to a previous life. If successful, induce the deep trance or somnambulist stage. Here you can regress him down the years and he will relive his past and give you vivid details. Give him a paper and ask him to write his name and you will find the handwriting changing with the years, as it was during this life-time.

Regress him to the ante-natal stage and ask, "Where are you, and what are you doing?" I have watched this momentous question answered many times by different kinds of people. It is a dramatic turning point. Sometimes the subject during his wakeful state is not a reincarnationist, or has never heard of such an idea, or else belongs to a creed which denies it emphatically.

"One very intelligent man, a Protestant, asked the hypnotist in a deep booming slow voice, "Why do you ask such a question". The question was repeated. "Were you or were you not born for the first time?" He still hesitated as if to conquer a strong inner opposition, and then began to describe his life a couple of centuries ago in a monastery somewhere in Spain.

When he awoke, slowly and by reversing the regression process, the tape was played back to him. He was amazed because he did not know about reincarnation, and never thought it possible. A bright beautiful mature woman talked freely

about reincarnation, and other related subjects. When she listened to the play back she said, “I must be crazy to say such things”. She is a Roman Catholic.”

Any text-book or encyclopedia on hypnotism will tell you that genuine forgotten memories of this life up to the embryonic stage can be unearthed under hypnosis. Therefore, it is logical and natural that this technique when stretched beyond the date of birth in this life should unearth memories of a previous life if we have lived before. It is most illogical and unreasonable to say that what one recalls up to the embryonic stage in this life are genuine memories and what one recalls beyond that are phantasies or hallucinations. If they are hallucinations or phantasies then both type of memories must be regarded as such. But, of course, memories of this life can be proved to be correct. So is it with details of previous lives which can be verified.

(Extracted from “Memories of Previous Lives under Hypnosis.”)