

LESSON TWO

This is a good moment to make some clear definitions. From your reading of Lesson 1 you are now aware of the many possibilities as to what may be happening during a client's recall of a "past life". You will note that I put the words past life in quotation marks. The reason that I do this is because the client may or may not be recalling an actual past life. They might be constructing a confabulation based upon cryptomnesia, or a reconstruction of archetypal images representing an actual historical event in the client's life. Notwithstanding the different possibilities, throughout this course of study I will use the term **past life** to describe the recalled memories.

Past Life Regression (PLR) dates back to the 4th century BCE (before common era) when [Patanjali](#), the ancient Indian philosopher who codified yoga, instructed how past lives can be recalled through meditation. The foundation of all later Schools of Yoga go back to Patanjali. He was a great philosopher and grammarian. He was also a physician and a medical work was attributed to him. However this work is now lost in the pages of time.

In the early part of the 20th century PLR made a comeback with Albert de Rochas, a military officer and civilian superintendent of the École Polytechnique in Paris. Albert de Rochas became one of the best known psychic researchers in late nineteenth century France. His interests centred on uncovering the laws behind psychic forces, somnambulism, magnetism and mesmerism, hypnotism, perception, and reincarnation. A prolific writer, he studied a number of Spiritualist and Spiritist mediums, including Maria Mayo (Lina), Eusapia Paladino, and D. D. Home.

The therapeutic use of PLR however was popularised in the 1960's by [Dick Sutphen](#), an American past life therapist. Further public interest developed when [Raymond Moody](#) published his book "[Life After Life](#)" which detailed near-death experiences, followed by another book entitled "[Coming Back](#)"—a report of nine of his past lives.

Past life therapists claim that PLT can easily cure obesity or overeating. For example, a neurotic overeating habit may have been caused by deprivation in a past life. In a similar way diseases such as allergies, headaches (especially migraines), back problems, chronic pain, arthritis, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, hyperactivity and insomnia can also be traced to past life experiences. In the view of some past life therapists, even depression, suicidal tendencies, addictions, child abuse, multiple personalities and schizophrenia can have their roots in a past life.

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Such traumatic causes may be brought out to consciousness, abreacted, and thus relieved, in a manner similar to the way in which a present life repressed trauma is treated.

Most, but not all past life therapists use hypnosis. The American, [Dr. Morris Netherton](#), introduced the non-hypnotic method of regression which is now named after him. Dr. Morris Netherton has over thirty years of clinical practice in Alternative Treatment Modalities. His book "[Past-Lives Therapy](#)" was published in 1978 and was the first in the field of regression therapy. He has since written two other books and numerous articles for college textbooks, magazines, and newspapers.

Netherton made his patients talk and listened for 'specific recurring or out-of-place phrases'. Whenever he came across one, the patient was asked to repeat the phrase until a mental picture appeared. This technique allowed the subject to recall a past life incident to which the phrase was related. The Netherton method is practiced by some past life therapists. More information may be found by visiting the website of the Association for the [Alignment of Past Life Experience \(AAPLE\)](#).

In the Netherton method there is no formal hypnotic induction as carried out by therapists using hypnosis. Netherton's process accesses hypnotic states that exist from prior traumatic experiences and remain unresolved in today's life patterns. An essential part of this therapy entails eliciting memories from the past life prior to birth into this life. This also includes consideration of the time spent in the womb. It is considered that the mother's moods and experiences during pregnancy, coupled with the birth trauma, have an influence on a person throughout his or her life by creating both negative and positive survival patterns. A belief in reincarnation is not necessary for the therapy to be successful.

Transpersonal psychology, a branch of psychology which recognises the spiritual aspect of the mind, explains the therapeutic basis of PLT with the help of parapsychology, altered states of consciousness and the anatomy of the brain. It is important to note that even though the theory of reincarnation forms the underlying basis of this alternative therapy, there are a lot of PLT practitioners who focus on treating the behavioural problems of their clients rather than dwelling upon spiritual aspects of life.

However, it is true to say that nearly all schools of thought affiliated with PLT invest in the basic belief of karma and cycles of rebirth. Some PLT practitioners, like Dick Sutphen, the past life therapist responsible for popularising PLT in the West, also believe in the non-linearity of time and the multilevel existence of souls.

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Most of these differing views are underpinned by Patanjali's theory of the *chitta* (soul) being burdened by *samskaras* (impressions) from past existence and weighing down on our present lives. From this there is the need to cleanse the soul of all of its excess burden by identifying the source of all suffering and uprooting it right from its origin.

[Madame H.P. Blavatsky](#), the cofounder of the [Theosophical Society](#), and her particular brand of “theosophy” was responsible for reintroducing the idea of reincarnation to the Western world. (It had been popular in the west in pre-Christian times). However, although well known for her interests in reincarnation, she was not the first modern Westerner to develop interests in this subject.

Some time before the popularisation of the theosophical school, Spiritism, the French practice of spiritualism in the 19th century, under the leadership of [Allan Kardec](#), had some interest in past lives. In his book, “[The Book of the Spirits](#)” published in 1857, Kardec writes about “spirits” who spoke through mesmerised patients about reincarnation and karma.

However, there is little doubt that the first person to use regression as a therapy was probably [Dr. Denys Kelsey](#), the co-author with Joan Grant, of “[Many Lifetimes](#)” published in 1967. This is the first book on PLT as we know it today. It focuses more on the therapeutic aspect of the technique than on anecdotal stories of relived experiences. In some ways the book triggered off tussles between the predominantly spiritual and the developing scientific/clinical attitude towards the system of PLT.

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Before we study the nature of the hypnotic trance, and how to induce it and manage it, you may like to conduct an experiment in PLR without hypnosis. I say without hypnosis, but perhaps I should say “without formal hypnosis”. The aim of this exercise is to allow you to explore your own past lives while alone, yet in a safe and pleasant manner.

First you need to prepare. Most people undertaking this exercise need to perform it daily for at least a month before they begin to get anything that is meaningful about their past lives. I cannot stress this enough. Do not be discouraged by what appears to be failure, you will need to have some patience with the process because it is a question of tuning the mind to an acceptance of the methodology.

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If you are patient and have a real desire to do past life journeying and recall, then you will be successful. Let me now set out some bullet points that you need to follow in order to prepare:

- Remember to carry out this process slowly. Do not try to rush anything. In the first instance you must focus on completely relaxing your body and your mind so that images of your past lives can be brought gently into your conscious awareness. This is where the value of repetition comes in. Each time you perform this exercise you will go ever more deeply into yourself. The deeper you go into yourself, the more answers you will get.
- Ask for your [Higher Self](#). The [Higher Self](#) is that part of you that connects you directly to the spiritual realms. It is thought to be eternal, infinitely wise and transcends your everyday consciousness. It is in touch with the Divine because it is part of it. Attaining knowledge of the Higher Self, and its depths of inner wisdom, is the goal of the Spiritual Quest in all its many guises throughout the world's many religions, and throughout history.
- Being comfortable is the key. It is preferable if you lie down as relaxation comes more easily, but, if you prefer, you can sit up. If you decide to sit up, use an easy chair and ensure that you are well supported. You need to feel fully relaxed and comfortable. Be sure to loosen or remove any restrictive clothing. Do this exercise in a peaceful place where you will be completely quiet and undisturbed for the entire session when you are fairly well rested. Do not attempt the exercise if you are feeling tired because you will only fall asleep. This entire exercise should last for NO longer than 45 minutes. It is a good idea to set an alarm or timer to bring you out of it should the session continue longer than 45 minutes. Or better still, train your mind to be your alarm clock. You will be surprised how easy this can be. Equip yourself with a notebook and pen or tape recorder to record your experience after the exercise has been completed.
- In order to focus you need to pick a special intention for your past life journey. The theme of your intention could be "*what I most need to see*", or "*what I most need to heal*", or "*the explanation for my life's purpose*", or "*a special need*".

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Now that you have prepared yourself, this how to conduct this exercise:

- Take some deep, refreshing breaths until you are totally comfortable and relaxed in whatever position you have chosen. On average it should take you no more than 3 minutes to get comfortable.
- Close your eyes and imagine a golden white ball of healing light. Mentally send that ball of healing light to each part of your body in turn. Start with your feet, go up your calves, over your knees, along your thighs, through you hips and stomach, along your torso, though your chest and heart, along your shoulders, along your arms, to your hands, back up to your neck, and up through your head until you are feeling relaxed. Carefully assess your whole body and if you feel that part of it is not properly relaxed then send the ball of light to that part of the body and instruct it to relax. Continue doing this until you feel completely peaceful and at rest.
- Mentally go inside yourself and connect with your inner vision. On the screen of your mind, like a movie screen in front of and above the level of your eyes, imagine that you stand at the top of a flight of stairs. There is a closed door at the bottom of these stairs. Now envision yourself slowly walking down the stairs. When you get to the bottom of the stairs, you will see two things.
 - a) To your **left** there is a very comfortable couch. You will rest on it for a moment while you gather your thoughts about what you want to get from your journey through time.
 - b) To your **right** there is a door with large imposing letters on it which read "**MY PAST LIVES**". The door is closed. You know that behind the door is the gateway to your past lives.
- While you are sitting or lying on the comfortable couch, let your feeling of oneness with the universe completely surround you. You know that at all times you are completely safe and protected by your higher self. You may if you wish call upon other powers, deities or entities, with whom you might feel a special relationship, to protect you.
 - a) You may feel that you do not want to open and go through the door, that is just fine. It does not matter why. Give yourself permission to relax and just enjoy being on the comfortable couch.
 - b) If you feel a desire to go through the door, rise from the couch and move to stand in front of the door. Prepare to open it.

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□ Before starting your journey through your lifetimes, you need to make the following declaration to the universe at large. This is absolutely necessary because you wish to make sure that your past life journey is both a safe and pleasant one.

a) *"Throughout this journey through my past lives, I am always completely safe and protected."*

b) *"I will see, hear, and experience everything about my past lives as if I was watching a movie. Just as a movie cannot harm me, my journey through my past lives cannot harm me."*

c) *"I am clear on my intention for my past life journey which is.... (the statement that you prepared during your preparation)."*

[You may make these affirmations aloud or mentally. Greater focus may be achieved if you say them out loud.]

□ Open the door. If the door does NOT open, then the universe or your higher self is telling you to go back to the couch. If you chose to continue, it is your choice. Please consider that it may be for your own good to stop. When you are ready, open the door and go inside the "Past Life Room". Inside this room, you will see two things.

a) On the wall of the "Past Life Room", you will see a white screen with a curtain covering it so that you cannot actually see the screen.

b) On either side of the white screen are two large buttons: one is green and one is red.

c) On the left, the green button opens the curtains and shows you your past lives on the screen.

d) On the right, the red button closes the curtains thus enabling you to go back through the door to the safe, comfy couch. Always remember to close the door behind you.

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□ When the curtains part you will see an image of yourself in a past life. This will be the past life that you most need to see or the past life that most closely matches the special intention that you decided upon during your preparation period.

a) Look at yourself on the screen. Once you have a clear view of the individual who was you in a past life say "Action". The movie of you in this past life will not start rolling until you do so.

b) If you are having difficulty seeing yourself on the Past Life Screen, ask to see the feet of your past life personality. Try to see what it is that you are wearing on your feet. Are they shoes, sandals, boots, or are your feet bare?

c) Once you see your feet, slowly look up to see the rest of you. Once you are in focus, look at yourself on the screen. Take a moment to steady the image, then say "Action!".

□ The first time that you conduct the exercise keep your journey to around 20 or 30 minutes. You may continue for longer once you have had more practice. Remember, to get the best out of this exercise requires repetition.

□ Whenever you feel your journey has ended or if the alarm goes off, it is time to come back. Reach to your right and press the red button. This will close the curtains and allow you to leave the room and return to the comfortable couch. Remember to close the door behind you. Rest there for a few minutes. Then get up from the couch and walk back up the staircase to where you began your journey. Going back up the stairs is important. You need to properly close out the experience by reversing the procedure. This going back up the stairs helps you to return to normal conscious awareness. You have been to a deep place within yourself and you must come back and readjust to your normal waking state.

□ Rest for a few minutes and then record your experiences in the notebook that you thoughtfully provided yourself with during your preparation.

The whole point of doing this exercise is to delve into your past lives. You will find this to be an intensely personal journey that will speak to you on many levels. No two people can ever experience the same things during this exercise because we are each unique.

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Now I said to you that this exercise did not involve hypnosis. This is not strictly true. What you undergo in this exercise is a light form of self-hypnosis. Once you have studied the next lesson you will realise that the exercise contains the basic elements of a hypnotic session as conducted by a therapist. You will see that it contains psychological preparation, simple induction, trance deepening, therapeutic action, and release from the hypnotic condition. Which part is the deepening?

It is important to realise that there are no short cuts to achieving results. You must conduct the experiment as given. Imagine that your subconscious mind is like a nuclear reactor. In order to heat the reactor up to provide the heat to generate steam for the turbines we slowly withdraw the boron rods, which soak up, the neutrons emitted from the fuel rods. The net result is that the reactor heats up. To close the reaction down we reinsert the boron rods to soak up the neutrons again. The operation was safe because it was reversible.

Your mind is no different. You commenced “opening your nuclear reaction” by descending the stairs and opening the door. You “generated heat” in the room. You then “closed down your nuclear reaction” by leaving the room, closing the door behind you and ascending the stairs. It is very important in your future work that you keep this analogy firmly in mind. You must always open and close the process of a therapy session correctly. Think of it as a ritual process that must be carried out in order to ensure success.

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QUESTIONS ON LESSON TWO

Please answer the following questions using no more than 75 words for each, unless stated otherwise. Incorporate the questions within your answers (e.g. the number of days in the year is 365)

- 1) Carry out the exercise given in the lesson and write a brief essay on the results. (approximately 500 words)
- 2) Write a short essay on the history of PLT. (approximately 500 words)

Return your answers to either
selfstudy@naturalhealthcourses.com

or

tutored@naturalhealthcourses.com

whichever applies.

Do not send any attachments, just type your answers into the body of the email. Please complete the subject line of every email thus:

Full Name – Past Life Therapy (Tutored or Self Study) - Lesson 2

Leave at least one blank line between each answer.

Don't forget to keep a copy for your own records

Recommended Reading:

http://www.naturalhealthcourses.com/Recommended_Reading.htm