

CHILDREN'S PAST LIFE MEMORIES AND HEALING

by Carol Bowman

ABSTRACT

Young children all over the world have spontaneous memories of previous lives, regardless of the religious beliefs of the parents. It's a natural phenomenon. Children usually begin speaking of "when they were big before" or "when they died" around the age of three, and may speak of their memories for a period of a few years. Many of the memories children recall are of traumatic deaths, which may continue to affect a child in their present life as phobias and other emotional problems. By combining what I've learned from collecting my own cases of children's past life memories for more than twenty years, and from the large body of research of spontaneous past life memories from Dr. Ian Stevenson, with the healing model of past life therapy with adults, I derive a method of healing traumatic past life memories as they emerge spontaneously in early childhood. By studying the cases of children who speak with conviction of their other lives, we also observe that many aspects of the child's present personality have carried forward *intact* from the past life: behaviors, emotions, phobias, talents, knowledge, the quality of relationships, and even physical symptoms. The fact that these personality traits carry forward suggests a new way of looking at personality formation and a theory of personality that spans lifetimes. The children's cases also add an important piece to the metaphysical discussion of the survival of consciousness after death, because it is clear from the cases that *some* form of personal consciousness continues from one life to another.

Keywords: children's past lives, reincarnation, past life memories, healing past lives, Carol Bowman, Dr. Ian Stevenson, James Leiningler, soul survivor, return from heaven

Young children have spontaneous memories of their previous lives. It is a natural phenomenon observed in children all over the world, regardless of their parents' beliefs. Some young children start talking about their other families, spouses, children, what they did before, and *how they died* soon after they begin talking. These matter-of-fact statements made by such young children can be quite shocking to an adult who knows the child. Even if a child doesn't speak directly about a previous life, the memories can manifest as behaviors, phobias, unlearned abilities, talents, wisdom – almost any aspect of a child's personality. The explicit memories and statements generally fade by the age of seven.

There are many advantages to be gained from studying these memories. As you read each of the cases here, I invite you to keep three ideas in mind and reflect on their implications. First, these memories offer us the purest evidence for the continuation of a personal consciousness after death. This is empirical evidence that can be validated and examined. Second, we can see that many types of personality traits carry over intact from one lifetime to another. This offers an expanded explanation for the origins of personality that stretches beyond the limits of heredity and environmental conditioning. And, when you see it, it's logical and makes sense.

Third – and this is where my work diverges from others in this small field – when children talk about traumatic past life memories, especially their deaths, it is a precious opportunity for healing past life wounds to the soul. It is the time early in life when patterns or issues brought forward from past lives can be healed, resolved, and corrected so they are not carried into adulthood – or into future lives.

DISCOVERING PAST LIVES

Until I experienced this phenomenon in my own children in 1988, I had no idea that children could remember their previous lives. I was a believer in reincarnation. My belief came from a direct experience of heightened awareness that I experienced as a college student in Boston in the late 1960's. I realized that we

don't die, that some part of our consciousness continues after death. I wasn't sure how this affected me in my present, personal, day-to-day existence, though. It wasn't until I became very ill that this question took on real and immediate significance.

I developed chronic lung problems – pneumonia, pleurisy, asthma – in my mid-thirties. During the height of my illness, I had a lucid waking vision: I saw myself as an adult male in his mid-thirties, lying in bed, coughing up blood. I knew it was “I” who was dying of consumption. In my vision I even saw a procession of mourners and a horse-drawn carriage from a vantage point above the treetops, and I knew I was witnessing my own funeral from above and out of that body. The vision was so real, and its message so meaningful, it scared me. I wondered if I were destined to again die young from the same lung ailments, leaving a husband and young children behind.

As fate would have it, soon after this vision I met past life therapist Norman Inge. My two-hour session with Norman changed my life. In the regression session I saw in more detail, with strong emotions, the nineteenth-century life in which I died of consumption, and a World War II life in which I was a young mother who died in a Nazi gas chamber. In both lives I died from trauma to the lungs. After “re-living” these traumatic deaths, and understanding the context of these lives and deaths, I started getting better. My illness went into remission. Also, I saw the seeds of my early personality and scenes from my childhood in a new light: childhood dreams, waking visions, phobias, an early interest in the piano, unusual childhood games, and certainly my lung problems all related directly to the lives I recalled in the regression session. I saw that I carried residues of the past life experiences throughout my life, which I had only glimpses of in childhood. Through the regression, I was able to finally let go of the grief, sadness, anger, and shock that I had been carrying in my body and soul from those two deaths.

A year after my regression session, my five-year-old son, Chase, (Figure 1) developed a phobia of loud booming



Figure 1. Chase at the age when his memories emerged

sounds. He was a lively, fearless child, and the phobia seemed to come out of nowhere. We became aware of it at a Fourth of July fireworks display in Asheville, North Carolina, where we lived at the time. On that particular evening, as we sat atop the sloping hills of the municipal golf course, we saw people sprawled on blankets on the hills below. Since we had taken Chase to other fireworks displays before, we were surprised when he became hysterical as the loud booming sounds began to reverberate around the hills of Asheville. He was so distraught that I had to take him home and leave my husband and daughter behind. It took me about an hour to calm him down by holding him and rocking him on our back porch.

I was puzzled by Chase's unusual behavior. I reasoned that he must have been overly stimulated from the day's activities with our friends and their children, or he had overdosed on sugar. Things like this happen with children, so I filed it away in my mind as a curious anomaly.

Three weeks later, we went to a municipal indoor swimming pool for the first time. When we entered the building we heard loud booming sounds as people jumped on the diving board and the sound reverberated off the walls. Again, Chase became hysterical and pulled me out of the building. At this point I realized it was the booming sounds that deeply frightened him. I asked him about it, but he really couldn't answer me through his sobs. I couldn't think of anything in Chase's short life, or even my pregnancy with him, that could cause such a pronounced fear of these sounds. Also, I was a little concerned because he was due to start kindergarten in a few weeks. I could imagine them calling me from school and saying, "Could you please take your son home. He's hysterical and we can't calm him down." I had no idea what to do.

A couple of weeks later, Norman Inge, the hypnotherapist who had regressed me a year before, was visiting us in Asheville to work with a number of my friends, including my medical doctor, who were all intrigued by my rapid and total recovery from my illness. They wanted to try past life regression.

One afternoon during Norman's visit, Chase, my nine-year-old daughter, Sarah, and I were sitting around the kitchen table having tea and cookies with Norman. It occurred to me that since Norman was a hypnotherapist, perhaps he could give Chase a post-hypnotic suggestion so the loud booming sounds wouldn't trigger such fear in him. I had absolutely no idea what we were getting into when Chase agreed to let Norman help him with his fear.

Norman simply said to Chase, "Sit on your Mom's lap, close your eyes and tell me what you see when you hear the loud sounds that scare you."

Immediately Chase said, "I am a man. I'm a soldier. I have a dirty uniform on. I'm holding a gun with a long sword at the end. I'm crouching behind a rock. I'm scared, confused. There's smoke everywhere. I don't even know who I'm shooting at."

I think I went into a mild state of shock at that

moment; we were in new territory. My little boy, who never played war games, and didn't even own a toy gun, was talking about a soldier. It didn't compute. My mind was quickly scanning everything Chase may have been exposed to on TV, in the movies, or from his playmates to explain what was happening. I was a stay-at-home mother and knew much of what Chase had been exposed to. The only television our kids were allowed to watch was *Sesame Street* and *Mr. Rogers*. I was trying to figure out where he could have gotten this – which *Sesame Street* episode was this? Which Disney movie?

Norman, who had many years of experience doing past life regression therapy with adults, immediately sensed Chase was accessing some past life material. Norman knew what to do. He encouraged the flow of Chase's memory by asking open-ended questions, saying to him, "Well, then what happens?"

Chase said, "I'm behind a rock, I'm scared and confused. All of a sudden I'm hit in the wrist." Chase clutched his right wrist.

"Then what happens?"

"I black out." Norman continued, "Then what happens?"

"They took me to a hospital, but it's not like a regular hospital. There are big poles in the ground with some material covering them. They put me on a bed, but it's not like a regular bed. It's a hard wooden bench. They bandage my wrist, and they tell me I have to go back to battle. I don't want to go. I don't want to be there shooting at other people. I don't want to kill anyone. I miss my wife and family."

At this point, the hair on my arms stood on end. It's quite startling hearing your five-year-old talk about his wife and family.

Norman quickly picked up on Chase's confusion and anguish. He intervened and in very simple language Norman said to Chase, "We live many different lives

on earth. We take turns playing different parts, like actors in a play. We learn what it means to be human by playing these different parts. Sometimes we are soldiers and kill others in a battle, and sometimes we are killed. We are simply playing our parts to learn." I wondered if Chase could understand these concepts. I was reassured as I felt his body relaxing as he sat on my lap. The distressed look on his face melted away. Norman's words seemed to be helping.

Norman said, "Then what happens?"

Chase continued, "They bandage my wrist and they made me go back into battle. I'm walking back to battle. There are chickens on the road. I see a cannon on a wagon. The cannon is tied down with ropes. The wagon has big wheels and is pulled by a horse." As Chase is describing what he is seeing, I'm trying to figure out what war this may have been, when they used horses and wagons.

He continued, "They make me go behind the cannon." And with that he opened his eyes, hopped off my lap, grabbed a cookie, and ran off to play with his Legos.

I was stunned. Norman reassured me that Chase was probably remembering a past life – a battle memory that had been triggered by the loud booming sounds of the fireworks. He said, "Let's just see what happens, if Chase's fear goes away."

My daughter, Sarah, who was sitting with us and closely following Chase's story piped in: "Mom, that place where Chase said he was shot in his wrist – that's where his eczema is!" I think I was so shocked by what I was hearing that I hadn't made the connection. But Sarah had. Since Chase was a baby, he'd had chronic and severe eczema on the inside of his right wrist, the same spot where he said he was shot in battle. He would scratch the eczema so relentlessly at night that it would bleed. I learned to bandage his wrist at night so I wouldn't have to wash the blood from his sheets every morning. I thought this was very interesting, indeed. Chase remembered how they had bandaged his wrist before he went back to battle – an interesting overlay of

events. Chase appeared to have a somatic memory of that battlefield injury, as well as a visual and emotional memory.

The upshot of this fifteen-minute or so episode in my kitchen was that within a few days his chronic eczema disappeared. I was surprised, because I had taken him to several doctors for the eczema, and we had tried homeopathy, food elimination diets, and antibiotic creams. Nothing had worked. The eczema had not responded to any medical treatment. But after the recollection, the eczema completely disappeared.

A few weeks later, Chase asked for his first drum set for his sixth birthday. From that point on, he made large booming sounds all of the time. Now, at age twenty-seven, he is a professional drummer, among other things. Looking back, it is ironic that the source of his greatest fear as a child is now the source of his greatest delight.

I was still reeling from Chase's extraordinary experience, when Sarah asked Norman if he could help her with her fear of fire. We first became aware of Sarah's phobia a year before when she spent the night at a friend's house and they watched a movie with a large explosion and fire scene in it. Sarah became hysterical. Her friend's mother brought her home late at night explaining that Sarah wouldn't calm down. We were very puzzled by her strong reaction. Sarah was an active, confident girl and this was out of character for her. When we asked her about it, she said that she had always been terrified of fire, and actually hid a little bag under her bed with her favorite dolls and some clothes, which she would grab in case our house caught on fire. That was also a surprise!

Norman used the same technique with Sarah. As she sat at the kitchen table, he instructed her to close her eyes and tell us what she saw when she felt the fear of fire. Immediately, nine-year-old Sarah described herself as an older girl, around twelve years old, who was in a simple wooden house along a dirt road. She said she didn't go to school because "they didn't believe that girls needed education." She said she had a brother who

was disabled in some way, who couldn't help around the farm.

Norman encouraged Sarah to "move ahead to the time when the fear of fire started."

Sarah's perspective immediately shifted. She spoke with great fear in her voice in the first-person, present tense. She told us that she woke up suddenly and smelled smoke. She knew the house was on fire and panicked. She ran out of the room looking for her parents and couldn't find them. Suddenly the bottom of her nightgown caught fire as flames came up through the floor. She was trapped. Sarah was completely engaged in the memory. She cried with deep anguish and asked, "Why don't they save me? Why don't they get me out?" She said she knew she was about to die.

Suddenly, she was calm. I could see her body relax. She reported that she felt herself floating above the treetops, feeling lighter, relieved that the life was over. She could see her house below and saw that her parents were crying and waving frantically at the house. In that moment, she began to cry again. She now understood that her parents had really loved her, and had tried to save her but couldn't. She said that she carried the false belief that they hadn't loved her into this life. With that realization, Sarah became peaceful.

A few days later, Sarah unpacked the bag with her dolls and clothes that she kept under her bed. Her "irrational" fear of fire went away.

That day changed my life, too. I became obsessed with understanding what happened to my children, and wondered if other children had these memories too. If so, had other children experienced healings by talking about them?

Within weeks after my children's amazing experiences, we became very busy and involved in a move from Asheville to suburban Philadelphia. Even though I was completely intrigued by their memories, I was too busy to think much about it as we adjusted to our new lives in our new home.

Six months after we moved, Chase and I were eating breakfast alone. As he was spooning his cereal he said, “Mom, remember when I was a soldier?”

He had my full attention. I said, “Yes.”

He said, “I talked funny.”

I said, “What do you mean you talked funny? Did you speak English?”

He said, “Yes. You know how some black people talk? Well, I was black.” That was it. He had an abstracted, faraway look on his face while he was remembering this, then he went back to eating his cereal.

I thought about this afterwards, and realized that Chase hadn't known any African-Americans in Asheville and had only recently been exposed to the cultural diversity of Philadelphia. I also thought it was oddly amusing that in this life Chase is a red-haired, very white-skinned person. He was the kid at the swimming pool who had to wear a t-shirt and be smeared with sun screen from head to toe.

He didn't say a word about his memory again for a while, until the first Iraq war started in 1991. He was then seven and in second grade. I picked him up from school one day and he seemed very upset. I asked him what was wrong. He said, “They're putting yellow ribbons all over the school because of the war. Mom, they have no idea what war is really like. They'll never make me fight again!” He told me that more of his memory of being a soldier was coming up again. I asked him if he wanted to talk about it when we got home. He agreed. By that time, I had begun my training in hypnotherapy and past life therapy. I felt I was ready for whatever might come up with Chase.

When we got home, I said, “Just close your eyes, Chase, and tell me what you see, what you're feeling.” This was more than two years after his first spontaneous recollection. I grabbed a pad so I could record what he was recalling verbatim. He went back to exactly the same scene had had described when he was five, as a

soldier crouching behind a rock with his rifle. He remembered the injury to his wrist, the field hospital, his gun, and the cannon being pulled by a horse on a dusty road. He even remembered the chickens walking on the road. I was curious and asked him, “What do you remember before the war?” He described himself as being a “free” (his word) black man who made pots in a town called something like “Colosso.” (We were never able to determine where that was.) He remembered his wife, who wore petticoats (a word I didn't think he knew), and who always wore a kerchief around her head. He remembered his children. When I asked him when this was, he said, “Eighteen-sixty-something.”

He went through the story, and when he got to the point where he said, “They order me back into battle behind the cannon,” this time he continued with his recollection: “Suddenly I'm floating above the battlefield. I feel good that I'm done. I see the battle and smoke below. As I look down on the battlefield everything is still and smoky – nothing is moving down there. I feel happy that I'm done. I get to go to a happier life. I float over my house. I see my wife and kids. I say good-bye to my family. They don't see me because I'm in spirit [his word], but they know I'm dead.”

I asked Chase what he learned from his lifetime as a soldier. His answer amazed me: “Everyone has to be in a war. It balances everything out. Not necessarily die in a war, but experience it. It teaches you about feelings. It gives you a sense of how other people feel. It's a bad place. I skipped World War II. I was 'up.' I was waiting for my turn to go back to a more peaceful time. I had a short life in between.”

After that, Chase seemed at peace with his Civil War memory. He seemed to have closure after remembering his death and “saying good-bye” to his family. And the strong emotions around that event didn't surface again. About six months after his last recollection he came to me and said that his memories of the battle were beginning to fade, and that he wanted to draw what he recalled so he could remember

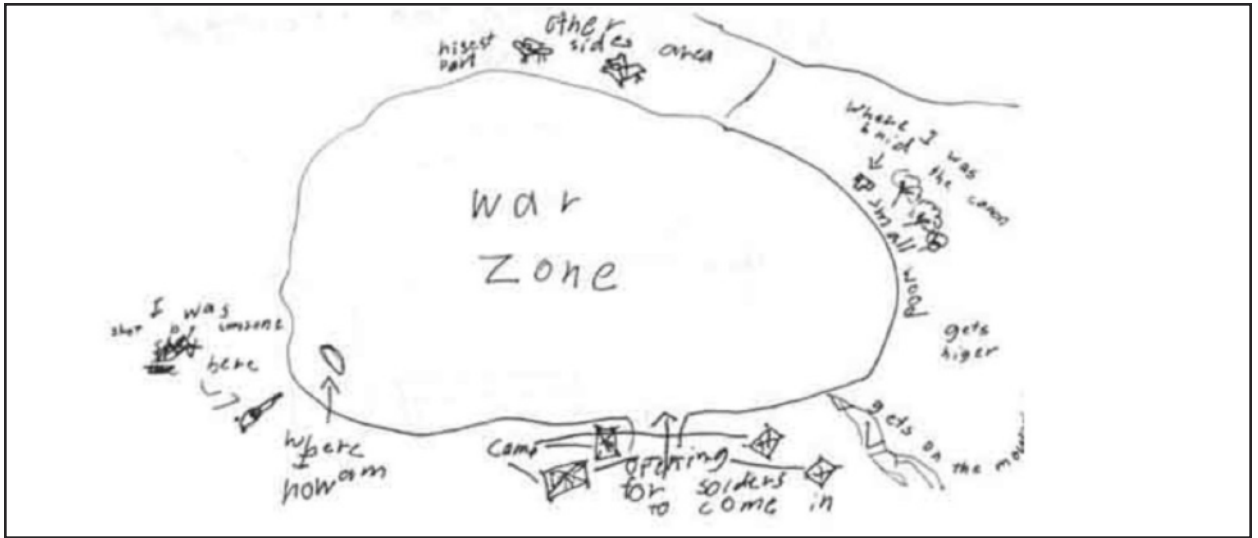
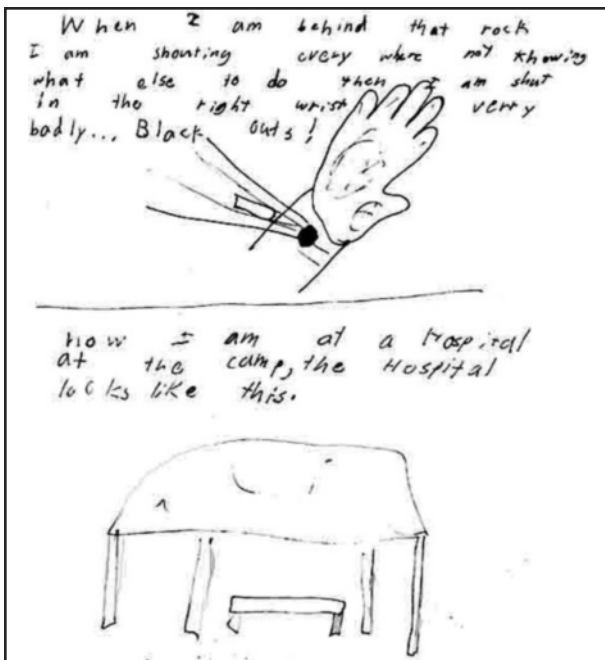


Figure 2. Chase's drawing of an aerial view of the battlefield where he died

it. To this day, he still has a visual memory of that battlefield. (Figures 2-6)

In 1994, when Oprah did a show on children's past lives, her staff hired a Civil War historian to see if they could establish Chase's identity in that life. Since Chase didn't remember his name, they couldn't. But

Figure 3. Chase's drawings of his wounded wrist and the hospital where he was taken when wounded in battle



one historian contacted me and told me that based on Chase's aerial diagram of the battlefield, he thought the battle had been near Richmond, possibly. He said that there were black regiments fighting in that area, too.

PAST LIFE PATTERNS

I began my research on children's past life memories after Chase and Sarah's experiences. This was in 1988, pre-Internet days. I began by asking parents in our Asheville community, at my kids' schools. I got a few stories from mothers I knew. They said their children's remarks were so unusual, that they had never forgotten them. They suspected they might be past life

Figure 4. Archival photo of a Civil War field hospital



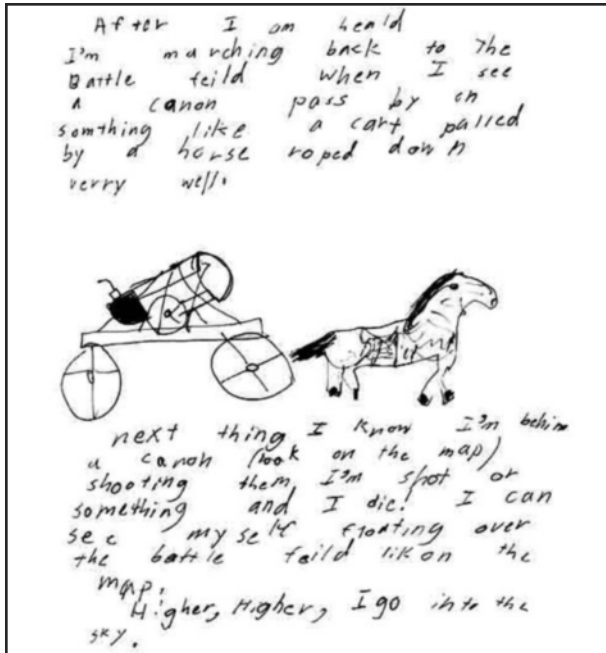


Figure 5. Chase's drawing of a cannon being pulled on a horse-drawn wagon

memories, but had never heard of this phenomenon before. I needed more cases. I placed reader ads asking for cases in the A.R.E. magazine (The Edgar Cayce Institute) and in *Mothering* magazine. I wrote an article for the A.R.E. magazine and one for *The Journal of Regression Therapy*.

I started getting letters from parents all over the country who believed their young children were currently talking about previous lives, or had done so in the past. I followed up on the phone with the parents who contacted me. Most of them had never believed in reincarnation before, but were left wondering if reincarnation was the explanation for what they were witnessing after their children talked about "when I was big before," or "when I died." They were relieved to talk to me and find out that their children's experiences were not a sign of mental illness, that other parents were experiencing this with their children, too. They felt reassured that they were not alone. And they were most grateful for any guidance in how to respond to these memories and help their children.



Figure 6. Archival photo of a Civil War artillery transport

As I collected more and more of these stories, I found some common patterns to these memories, which I distilled into The Four Signs in my first book, *Children's Past Lives*.

They are:

1. Matter-of-fact tone
2. Consistency of story over time
3. Knowledge beyond experience
4. Corresponding behavior and traits

When children talk about these memories – these are mostly two-, three-, and four-year-olds, some still in diapers – they have a very matter-of-fact tone of voice. They are unusually serious and may even sound more grown up. They are insistent that what they are relating actually happened to them. When a puzzled adult questions them and asks, "Did this happen on TV?" They will say, "No, to me." The most noticeable statements are about those things that such a young child couldn't possibly know from their own limited experience. Or, most telling, a child will make direct statements about "when I died."

Some children may make only one statement about a previous life. Or, they will talk about it repeatedly over days, months, or even a few years. I found it fascinating that the details of Chase's story remained consistent over a period of about two and a half years.

The core of the story never changed. I have found this with many other cases as well. As children develop more vocabulary, they elaborate on the story, reflecting their increased vocabulary and language skills, but the core of the story remains the same.

Children also have personality traits, behaviors, skills, phobias relating to their past life story. In Chase's case, he had a phobia relating to his battlefield experience, and he was never interested in playing war games or with toy guns. Sarah had a phobia of house fires and took the precaution of preparing a bag with essentials in case she had to escape quickly.

Sometimes children will actually have a physical correspondence, or a body memory, that corresponds to the past life story, as with Chase's eczema on the site of his battle wound. You will see more examples in the following cases.

In the more striking cases of children's memories, there are usually more than one sign present. For example, along with the statements, the child will exhibit behaviors or have emotions relating to the memory they speak of. And, it can work in reverse: a child may have a phobia of water, will not go near it, or will have breathing difficulties, but will not make any statements about a previous life. In these cases, some gentle probing may elicit a past life story.

PAST LIFE HEALING

Because I had my own physical and emotional healing as the result of a past life regression before my children's memories emerged, I recognized the healing potential of past life memories for children. But I wondered, why were none of the professionals in the field of past life therapy writing about this? I read all of the best books on regression therapy with *adults*. In many published case studies, psychiatrists and psychologists demonstrated how current emotional and physical problems could be resolved by accessing past life memories and processing them with the patient. Some of these memories emerged spontaneously, some through hypnosis during the course of therapy.

Here is how past life healing works. As my teacher and friend Roger Woolger writes, "We come into each life with *unfinished business of the soul*." Most often, the unfinished business relates to past life trauma, when the impressions of feelings, thoughts, and even physical injury get locked into place in our souls, our energy bodies, and are carried forward into our current lives. The beauty is that once the past life story becomes conscious, and the circumstances of that life understood, the energy frozen in the trauma is released, changing us and healing us in the present.

The most debilitating issues in the present stem from past life trauma and tragedy. But there is also great benefit in remembering more benign and ordinary past lives in which we honed talents or gained wisdom and compassion. Bringing positive memories to the surface can re-energize these talents and wisdom.

The same principles worked with my own children. After accessing and processing their past life traumas, their phobias went away. And, in Chase's case, his eczema, which related to his battlefield injury, healed.

DR. IAN STEVENSON

While I was pondering how children's past life memories could heal, I discovered the work of Dr. Ian Stevenson. I felt I had struck gold.

Dr. Stevenson was the former Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia Medical School. In the early 1960s he gave up his prestigious position to investigate cases of children's *spontaneous* past life memories and other paranormal phenomena. For more than 40 years Dr. Stevenson traveled around the world *rigorously* documenting between 2,500 and 3,000 cases of young children who had spontaneous recall of other lives. I emphasize *rigorously* because he was a brilliant man who was preparing these cases to present to his scientific peers. He knew his work would be carefully scrutinized, so he was careful to cover all bases with his methodologies and explore all possible alternative explanations for what he was finding.

Most of the cases Dr. Stevenson investigated were from Asia, in cultures that believed in reincarnation. Because there was a cultural belief that this could happen, these cases were more likely to be noticed, discussed, or reported. They are also his strongest cases, because Asian children remember more specific detail: their former names, where they had lived, and they recognized people they had formerly known. Because their memories were so detailed and specific, the child's former identity could be verified in more than seven hundred cases.

From this sample of cases, Dr. Stevenson found recurring patterns. The most obvious was the young age at which children talked about past lives. Generally, these memories are most vivid between the ages of two and five. Cross-culturally, regardless of the parents' beliefs, these memories tend to fade around the age of seven. (I have found this to be true in American children, too.)

Since Dr. Stevenson could verify the child's former identity in some cases, the surviving relatives confirmed that the present child had behaviors corresponding to the person whose life they remembered. It wasn't just statements about that life – it was also behaviors, some of which were specific and quirky. Some children would implore their parents to go back to their “other home” because they missed their families. In some cases, Dr. Stevenson or the families would accompany the child. The child would lead them to a particular house. The child would then comment on changes to the house that occurred after their death, correctly identify former relatives, even using their pet names or nicknames not known outside the family. They would ask for their former belongings – a pair of blue jeans purchased before their death, or a prized Rolex watch. (If this sounds familiar, each new incarnation of the Dalai Lama is determined by testing several young candidates' past life memories. They see if the young child can correctly identify people and possessions known to the former Dalai Lama.)

One striking pattern in Dr. Stevenson's research is that 75% of the children talked about their past life deaths.

Of those, 51% remembered dying traumatically, and 35% had phobias relating to the way they died. This not only confirmed what I found with my own children, it also conformed with what past life therapists were finding: a traumatic death leaves deep emotional, mental, and physical impressions on the reincarnating soul, deep enough to manifest in a future life.

Most astounding, though, was that Dr. Stevenson found a *physical* correspondence between lifetimes. In 1997, he published a weighty, two-volume, 2,200-page tome called *Reincarnation and Biology*. In this work, Dr. Stevenson documents 225 cases of birthmarks and birth defects on children that corresponded to fatal wounds, injuries, or illnesses of the person the children remembered being in their former life. These children gave enough specific detail about their former lives (proper names, locations, descriptions of their deaths) that their former identities could be verified. When Dr. Stevenson checked police or autopsy reports of the deceased, he found a direct correspondence between the site of fatal wounds and injuries to present physical symptoms or birthmarks. Some of these birthmarks were multiple, corresponding to gunshot or stab wounds from the previous life. In 19 of these cases, when a child remembered dying of a gunshot wound, the present child would have two birthmarks (round, pigmented areas) corresponding to the entry and exit wounds of the bullets.

Through this monumental work, Dr. Stevenson has provided *physical evidence* for the validity of these memories. Dr. Stevenson summarized his findings in a very readable, shorter volume: *Where Reincarnation and Biology Intersect*, which was also published in 1997. I encourage anyone with a serious interest in reincarnation to read this extraordinary work.

Someone at the 2010 ISSSEEM Conference suggested to me that there could be a “super-psi” explanation for these memories. Perhaps children are tapping into an existing energy field coded with this information, the personal imprint of the life of a deceased person. This might be an explanation if a child made only statements

about the life of a deceased person, providing factual information. But when a child makes verifiable statements about the life of a particular deceased person, and has corresponding behaviors *and* has a birthmark relating to the way they died in the past, I believe reincarnation is the best explanation. There must be some mechanism – an encoded energy field, an auric body, or an etheric body – that maintains the impressions from one life to another. The mechanism is mysterious. But we don't have to prove the mechanism in order to recognize the fact that there is a constellation of characteristics relating to the deceased which suggests that an intact consciousness carries forward from one life to another. What should we call it? I call it "reincarnation," an old and useful term.

With all of the stunning evidence Dr. Stevenson found, he never publicly stated that all of these cases were *proof* of reincarnation. Instead, he would say they were *evidence* for or *suggestive* of reincarnation.

Through a series of synchronicities, I met Dr. Stevenson in Charlottesville in 1998 after my first book was published. His research associate, Dr. Jim Tucker, (who has since taken over Dr. Stevenson's research after his death), married an old friend of mine, Chris, from Asheville. It was Chris who told Jim about my book, and gave a copy to Dr. Stevenson. When they invited me to visit them in Charlottesville, I was absolutely thrilled. There I was, without any scientific qualifications, finally meeting the man whose work I most admired. I had been reading and studying his cases for years.

In my first meeting with Dr. Stevenson, in the first few minutes, I asked him a question that had puzzled me, and I had been burning to ask: "Dr. Stevenson, in all of your research, you never mention anything about healing." He looked at me sternly and directly and said, "There is no evidence for it. You can never prove that there is a direct cause and effect."

I said, "Well, actually there is evidence for it." I proceeded to tell him about some of my cases that were not in my book. I proposed that spontaneous

past life memories can be opportunities for healing past life trauma, if the memories are acknowledged and processed. Past life trauma manifests in very much the same way as post traumatic stress disorder from a present-life trauma. So, in a real sense, young children may suffer from post traumatic stress disorder – but from a previous life. If that's the case, why not treat it so?

In the following few years, I had the opportunity to accompany Dr. Stevenson and Jim Tucker on field investigations of some of my best cases that I shared with them. In my conversations with Dr. Stevenson, he would never acknowledge a correlation between healing and past life awareness. He dismissed the validity of past life regression with adults, although I assured him I was walking proof of it.

I found it puzzling that he was immersed in evidence that children could have spontaneous memories, but concluded that adults couldn't access these memories through hypnosis, meditation, or a focused state of awareness. I saw that some children seemed to go into a light trance state – an altered state of awareness – when they remembered. Why couldn't adults?

I have seen many cases in my twenty-two years as a past life therapist with adults in which the past life memories that first emerged spontaneously in childhood, *that were not resolved in childhood*, continued to affect the person throughout their adult life. These unresolved issues from previous lives created patterns that persisted from childhood into adulthood.

I came to realize that Dr. Stevenson didn't need to cloud his research by introducing the question as to whether or not these memories could heal. He applied his expertise and brilliant mind to the sole objective of gathering empirical evidence of children's past life memories that could be verified through his investigative techniques. He established a correspondence between personality traits and even physical imprints that carried over from one life to another. He has left us a mighty legacy. I have the utmost respect for him, and what he did. Without his work, I wouldn't have a foundation for my work.

BLAKE'S TRAUMATIC DEATH

As I delved more deeply into the cases, I merged my observations of how past lives of adults and children can heal with Dr. Stevenson's findings of the patterns in children's *spontaneous* memories, especially the preponderance of memories of traumatic death. I realized that it might be possible to heal children's spontaneous memories of traumatic past life deaths. But in the first few years of my research, I had no way to test my ideas.

Then in 1992 I got a call from a mother in Chicago, Colleen Hocken, whose son was having what she believed were past life memories that were deeply troubling him. Colleen, a mother of three, saw my classified ad in *Mothering Magazine* and hoped that I could give her the help she needed. She told me her story.

When her middle son, Blake, had just turned three, (Figure 7) he told her he had been hit by a truck, after seeing a garbage truck passing their house. Colleen assumed he was confused and meant a child had hit him with a toy truck in pre-school. When she questioned him, he said, "No, a real truck. The truck hurt me." Then he started holding his left ear.

It just so happened that the previous day Colleen had seen Dr. Brian Weiss on *Oprah*, and Brian made one statement saying that sometimes children remember previous lives. *This was just the day before*. Recalling this remark, Colleen opened her mind, listened carefully, and asked Blake questions. She asked him what had happened.

He told her he went under the wheels of the truck, indicating with a wave of his hand down the *left side* of his body, that's where he had been struck. She asked, "Then what happened?" He said, "They took me to this big building." When she asked again, "What happened?" He said, "I died."

Colleen asked, "Where were mommy and daddy when this happened?" He said, "Gone bye-bye at the store." Colleen didn't know what to make of this, and hoped that Blake would forget it. But a week or so later when a garbage truck passed by he told her the story again.



Figure 7. Blake Hocken around the age his memory emerged

Colleen said that she noticed Blake's behavior changed radically after he talked about being hit by the truck, but she didn't attribute this change to what he had told her. He had become depressed, lost interest in playing, and complained about aches and pains on the *left side* of his body. When Colleen tried to comfort Blake, he would push her away and say, "I love you. I hate you." She took Blake to the doctor, but there was nothing physiologically wrong with him. Colleen tried to give Blake extra attention, thinking he felt neglected as the middle child. She felt guilty and considered taking him to therapy.

It wasn't until some months later, when the family took a trip to London, that Colleen started piecing things together. While in London, they were stopped at a busy intersection. Blake was in a stroller. Suddenly, he jumped up out of the stroller and walked into the path of an oncoming truck. Fortunately, the driver was able to stop in time, and Blake's father grabbed him by his collar and pulled him off the street.

At that moment something clicked in Colleen. She wondered if Blake's statements about being hit by a truck had anything to do with this event. She wondered if this was some type of repetition from a previous life. And, if so, what could she do about it?

When she returned from London she saw my ad in *Mothering* and immediately called me.

Here was the opportunity I had been waiting for. I was going to put everything I had been learning to the test. I told Colleen what I had learned from my experiences with my own children, and the other mothers I had talked to. I explained that children carry beliefs and feelings with them from their previous lives into the present. Children experience a continuum of consciousness from death through rebirth. To a very young child, a past life memory feels and appears to be the same as something that happened days or weeks ago. They can't distinguish past from present. Part of their consciousness is still stuck in the past life trauma; *they don't know they have made a transition into another body.*

I asked her to tell me more about what Blake was feeling. She said, "I try to comfort him, but he pushes me away." I thought back to my daughter Sarah's past life memory. At the time of her death in a burning house, she had falsely believed that her parents hadn't loved her because they hadn't saved her from the fire. She carried that anguish into this life. I explained Sarah's experience to Colleen and suggested that Blake might be confusing Colleen with the mother who had left him to go to the store when he was hit by the truck. He needed to know it wasn't Colleen who had left him.

I told Colleen to wait until she was alone with Blake and he was relaxed, before bedtime, or at bath time. I told her to *acknowledge* Blake's memory. Join his reality and let him know that she knew he was hit by the truck. Then let him know that he is now safe in a *new body*. Blake needed to know that he had made the transition into a new life and that he was now protected by her. I imagined this may have sounded strange to Colleen. But I assured her that by knowing this, she should use her motherly instincts to find the right words to reassure him. I prayed this would work, because I didn't know what else Colleen could do. I couldn't imagine her taking this to a traditional therapist.

A week later, Colleen called and said, "You won't believe what happened. I did what you said. I waited until

Blake was relaxed, right before bedtime. I said to him, "Blake, you were hit by a truck, right?" He said, "Yes."

She continued, "That was a different life. You were in a different body and you had a different mommy." As she said this, Colleen reported that for the first time in months Blake's face lit up. He said, "I had a different body? A different mommy?" He seemed genuinely surprised.

She assured him, "Yes, and now you're safe." Then she named all the people in his present life: his brothers, his relatives. She said his comprehension was immediate. She felt something lift from Blake. The next day Blake was back to his old smiley self as he had been before he started remembering the accident. All the aches and pains that he had been complaining about on the left side of his body went away.

Colleen said, "We got our Blake back."

Blake's case showed me that my model worked. When a child's past life memory emerges spontaneously, adults can help the child in the following ways:

1. **ACKNOWLEDGE** what the child is saying. Even if you're not sure if this is a memory or fantasy, don't dismiss any statements, or shut down the conversation. Listen calmly. Ask open-ended questions. This keeps the memory flowing.
2. **DISCERN** what the child may be trying to express. Is this a benign memory, or a troubling one? Listen carefully to see how this memory might be affecting the child's current life.
3. If a traumatic memory comes up, allow the child to **EXPRESS** the emotions with it, even if it's disturbing or intense. Be a calm and safe presence so they can release feelings, if they need to. Most often, though, children are very matter-of-fact in talking about the past.
4. **CLARIFY** the difference between past and present. As in Blake's case, an adult's reassurance that the life is over and that the child is now safe can work wonders in helping a child let go of the past.

When parents ask if it's safe to engage in such a conversation when a memory is emerging, I explain

that it's more damaging *not* to acknowledge the memory, which can confuse the child and denies the child a chance to process it and let it go.

I gathered many other cases, and in 1994 I started writing the book I couldn't find when I was trying to understand what happened with my own kids. *Children's Past Lives* was published in 1997. It is now translated into about 16 foreign languages. And, because of the Internet, I've been getting hundreds of cases from all over the world. Each case is unique, but I see the same patterns over and over. The general model I wrote about still holds up.

I wasn't planning on writing another book. But shortly after *Children's Past Lives* was published, I got a poignant case from a Chicago mother that convinced me that there was another dimension to this phenomenon that needed to be explored, and another amazing story that needed to be told.

REINCARNATION IN THE SAME FAMILY

Kathy Luke was a teenage, single mother when her first son, James, was born in March of 1978. Kathy was estranged from James's father. When James was 16 months old, he was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, and rapidly became very ill. By April of 1980, he had 17 tumors in his left leg, a large tumor behind his left eye which caused opaqueness and blindness in that eye and distortion on the left side of his face, and a tumor behind his right ear. When he was in the hospital, doctors inserted an IV on the right side of his neck which left a linear surgical scar.

After treating him in the hospital, the doctors told Kathy to take him home. There was nothing more they could do for him. Kathy was devastated. She lovingly cared for her son. One day when two-year-old James saw her crying he said to her, "Momma, don't cry for me." And then he died. Kathy honored her dying son's wish and kept her grief bottled up inside.

After James died, Kathy married Don (not James's father) and had a daughter, Katie. That marriage ended after four years. She then married Billy. Finally, she was in a good, stable relationship. They had a son, Josh.

Then Kathy became pregnant again in 1992. Twelve years after James died, Kathy gave birth to a son, Chad, by C-section. As she was waking up from the anesthesia, the doctors walked into her room telling her that they had some troubling news. After having lost a child, Kathy assumed the worst. They informed her that her son appeared to be blind in his left eye; there was no color in it. When they brought the baby in for Kathy to see, she immediately noticed what looked like a linear, surgical scar on the right side of his neck, in the same spot where James had an IV inserted while undergoing treatment. The pediatrician assured her that it was just a birthmark. But Kathy thought it looked like a scar. She also noticed what appeared to be a tumor behind his right ear, on the same spot where doctors had performed a biopsy on James. The doctor assured her that it was just a functional cyst that should go away in a few weeks. Rhetorically, she said to the doctors, "How can this be?" realizing that the blind left eye, the birthmark on the right side of his neck, and the cyst behind his right ear looked like the same abnormalities that had been apparent on James's body right before he died.

When Kathy held Chad for the first time, she felt an ocean of relief wash over her. She said, "It was as if a great weight lifted from my soul." She felt a strong bond with Chad, as if they had been connected before. She could sense it and *feel* it. She hadn't felt that way when her two other children had been born after James's death. But she said when she held Chad for the first time she had a feeling that "went straight to her heart."

"I knew he was James. It gave me so much comfort to know that he had come back to me." These realizations were coming from a woman who was raised in a strict, religious, Baptist home in America's Bible Belt, who had never read any books about reincarnation. In fact, the very concept of reincarnation was heretical to her faith. She cautiously shared what she was seeing with her husband Billy; he didn't know what to think. When she shared this with her ex-husband, he told her she had lost her mind. Kathy decided to keep this to herself. She couldn't discuss it with her family because of their strong religious beliefs. They would think she was mad.

But when Chad was four years old, he shocked Kathy by telling her he wanted to go back to his “other” house. He described the apartment she had lived in with James. Chad also asked for specific toys that had belonged to James, which they didn’t have in their house. When Kathy asked Chad why he wanted to go back to his other house, he said, “*Because I left you there.*” This was the first indication that Chad knew about James’s life.

During the next couple of years, Chad occasionally talked about the life of James. Kathy didn’t question him. She waited for him to bring it up. She didn’t want to influence him in any way. Besides, she had no idea what to say to him. Once, when she brought out a photo of James, one she had never shared with her family, Chad got a shocked look on his face and said to her, “I’ve been wishing for this picture. I want it because it’s *me.*”

Another time, Chad went up to his ten-year-old brother and said, “When I was two years old I got so sick I couldn’t keep 7Up down. Then I died and came back. When I die again, I’ll be back again.” This sent his brother running from the room! Kathy said no one else knew about the 7Up. Chad’s statement was as direct as it could be.

At about this time, Kathy found my book in a bookstore and had a friend who owned a computer contact me. When I first read her story, I was deeply moved – and excited. Here was a mother who was convinced her dead son was back. Her feelings were bolstered by evidence – multiple physical symptoms relating to her first child’s death. I was eager to talk to Kathy.

We talked on the phone frequently for the next year and a half. Kathy reported each new statement Chad made about James’s life. I also asked her if she would be willing to meet with Dr. Stevenson. I knew he would relish the opportunity to investigate such an intriguing multiple birthmarks case in the U.S. He and Jim Tucker met with Kathy and her family and documented the case.

Kathy and I discussed why James may have come back to be with her again. Did he feel unfinished with his life when he told Kathy he wanted to go back to her former apartment because he left her there? We agreed that souls sometimes return to be with the same family because of strong bonds of love. Sometimes the soul feels that they’re needed, they can help the family, or they need to make amends. There could be many reasons why the soul returns to be with the same people – especially if they die young. We also discussed the possibility that the blindness in Chad’s eye, which had no physiological basis, might be healed if Kathy talked to Chad and explained to him that she knew he was back, and that he was now in a new body. It had worked in other cases. It was certainly worth a try, and couldn’t do any harm.

It took months for Kathy to muster the courage to talk to Chad directly about his memories. She reported, “One evening I sat Chad down on my lap and said, ‘I don’t know everything, but I know you were here before and you were a very sick little boy. Then you had to go away so you could come back in a healthy body.’ Chad just sat and listened to me as I spoke. Then his eyebrows lifted, his face lit up, and he chirped, ‘I know.’ Then he ran off to play. That’s all there was to it.”

Two days later, an excited Chad ran to Kathy and told her that he could see out of his left eye. She tested him by having him hold his hand over his right eye and holding up her fingers. He correctly told her how many fingers she was holding up. She tested him again later that day. To her amazement, he could now see something with his left eye. This was the first time he had any vision in that eye. Kathy took Chad to the ophthalmologist to have his eye tested. The doctor noted a slight improvement. To Kathy, any improvement was cause for celebration.

The change in Chad’s vision gave Kathy encouragement that her words had penetrated Chad’s soul. She told me, “I pray that both of our souls continue healing. My ultimate desire is for Chad’s soul to be at peace. In order for that to happen, there has

to be closure on the past for both of us. If he felt guilty about leaving me or needed to know how sad I was when he died, he now knows I'm okay and he's loved. It seems that healing the soul is like reading a book slowly: You finish one chapter at a time."

Kathy noticed that she began feeling lighter. She told me that she no longer carried that heavy load of guilt about James's death. She was finally at peace. These new feelings surprised her. She said that over the years she had prayed to have James back as a healthy child, to be given another chance to do it over. But now that she knew that this was real, and that James's soul was back, she felt her prayers had been answered, but not in a way that she could have thought possible. This was a true miracle.

RETURN FROM HEAVEN

After my experience with Kathy, I knew it was time to write another book. I wondered how many other families would be comforted to know that reincarnation in the same family was possible. As soon as I made the decision to write the book, the cases began pouring in.

Return from Heaven was published in 2001. The book is full of cases of families who recognize a young child born into the family as a former relative who died before the child was born. The child is identified through direct statements he makes about the deceased's life, quirky behaviors (that can't be attributed to heredity), and through birthmarks and physical abnormalities that correspond to bodily trauma *at the time of death* of their loved one (again, something that cannot be attributed to heredity). For many members of the family, it was a shock to realize this. This often ran counter to their religious beliefs. Some family members refused to believe it, even after a child made startling statements about the deceased's life that no one had ever mentioned to the child.

In the last decade, since the publication of *Return From Heaven*, I have collected more amazing cases of reincarnation in the same family. Some are posted on my website, www.reincarnationforum.com. When I

give lectures on the topic, invariably someone in the audience gasps as they realize they may have a case in their own family. It is confirming for them to hear that they aren't imagining things, that this is really possible.

It is most surprising (even to me) that reincarnation can occur in less than nine months. The cases I've gotten have shown me that reincarnation can occur quite soon (even the same day!) after death. This observation challenges widely held assumptions that there is a long or set interval between lives. It also suggests that there is flexibility as to when the soul, spirit, or consciousness joins the body.

ANOTHER JAMES

In 2000 I joined Drs. Stevenson and Tucker for a follow-up visit to see Chad and his family in Chicago. During our time in Chicago we discussed the mystery as to why, based on the cases that were available, Asian children remembered more specific details of their previous lives than American children. We all agreed on the importance of finding detailed American cases that could be verified. We believed they existed, and because of the rapid growth of the Internet, obtaining them might become easier.

In 2002, I got a call from Shalini Sharma, a producer at ABC News. Shalini, whose parents are from India and who grew up in a Hindu household in the U.S., wanted to introduce Americans to reincarnation. She was familiar with children's cases, and thought that a verifiable one would offer compelling evidence of reincarnation to an American audience. She asked if I had any cases of a child who remembered specific details of dying in war. I scanned hundreds of cases from my emails, and I found one from a year earlier that looked promising.

The email from Andrea Leininger, a mother from Louisiana, began like so many other emails I received: "I hope you don't think I'm a kook, but . . ." Andrea told me that her mother had just sent her *Children's Past Lives* because they believed her two-year-old son, James, was having memories of a previous life. (Figure 8) One of James's first words was "airplane." Soon after that,

anytime he would see a plane he would say, “airplane crash.” The only toys he wanted were airplanes, and he seemed to have an uncanny knowledge about flying and World War II airplanes.

When James was two and a half, he started waking up screaming and thrashing from nightmares about “his plane” crashing. He was having horrific nightmares about three times a week. This had been going on for months. When they asked him what kind of plane, he always said, “A Corsair.” They didn’t know what a Corsair was, but when they looked it up they found it was a plane used in World War II.

I replied to Andrea’s email and told her to read my book, and suggested she engage James in conversation about his plane crashing. I gave her my standard advice about assuring him that he was now safe and that that life was over. Since hers was like many other emails I received, I didn’t follow up. I assumed she would write back if she had any success with James or had any further questions.

When I eventually followed up with Andrea in 2002, after Shalini contacted me, I learned that indeed a lot had happened! Andrea reported that after she talked to James about his nightmares, they diminished in frequency from three times a week to one every two weeks. But that wasn’t the end of it. James talked more and more about his life as a pilot. Bruce, James’s father, was skeptical. His strong religious faith wouldn’t allow him to believe that reincarnation was the explanation for James’s knowledge about World War II, or for his nightmares. Andrea, on the other hand, felt that the most logical explanation was that he was remembering something painful that had happened to him in a previous life. So, for the most part, it was Andrea who talked to James about his memory.

She asked him if he remembered where his plane took off. He said it took off of a boat. She asked if he remembered the name of the boat. He told her it was “Natoma.” Bruce, who was determined not to accept a reincarnation as the explanation, started doing research online. He found that there had been an



Figure 8. James Leininger, age 3

aircraft carrier in the Pacific during World War II, the Natoma Bay. When they asked James if he remembered his name, he would always say it was James. When they asked if he remembered the names of any of his friends, he said Jack Larsen. Bruce found that there had been a Jack Larsen on the Natoma Bay.

This went on for a couple of years, and the case progressed. James was remembering more and more details about his life as a pilot. One day, Bruce had just gotten a book about battles in World War II and opened to an aerial shot of Iwo Jima. James, who was sitting next to him, matter-of-factly said, “Daddy, that’s where my plane went down.” This was the moment when Bruce became a believer. Something in him just clicked. He got it on a visceral level.

James made many drawings of planes being shot down by boats. In these chaotic, frenetic drawings there was fire and enemy flak in the sky. He would sign his drawings “James 3.” When his parents asked why he signed his drawings in that way, he said, “Because I’m the third James.” (Figure 9)

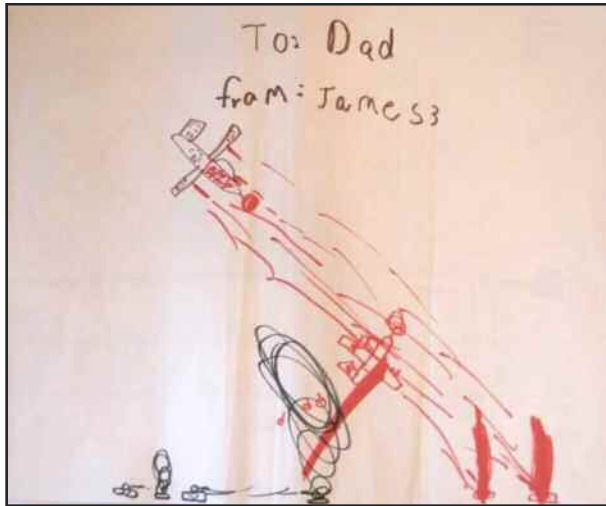


Figure 9. This drawing of a plane being shot down is typical of the many drawings James made when he was young. Note his "James 3" signature, which he included in most of his drawings at that time.

Bruce was so intent on figuring out this mystery that he went to a reunion of Natoma Bay veterans in the guise of doing research for a book about the Natoma Bay. In talking to one of the veterans, he found out that there was one pilot who was shot down in the way James described it near Iwo Jima. His name was James Huston, Jr. (James said he was the third James!), whose plane took a hit in the front and went down in the ocean. James Huston died in 1945 at the age of 21. James Huston also flew a Corsair. (Figure 10)

The pieces of the puzzle were rapidly falling into place. The Leiningers found that James Huston had a sister, Anne Barron, who was still alive and living in California. They contacted her and were able to corroborate specific details young James recalled of James Huston's family life – details only Anne Barron knew. Anne sent the Leiningers photos of her brother. There is a striking resemblance between the two boys. (Figures 11 and 12)

ABC "Prime Time" aired the Leiningers' story in 2003 and did a fabulous job of telling the story. In 2006, a Japanese film crew saw the story and offered to fly the Leiningers to Japan and have a memorial service where James Huston's plane was shot down. The family and a film crew took a boat to the site of the crash. When they arrived at the place



Figure 10. James M. Huston, Jr., standing in front of a Corsair. This photo was sent to the Leiningers by James Huston's sister, Anne Barron.



Figure 11. James Huston and James Leininger

where James Huston's plane went down, eight-year-old James burst into tears. He recovered enough to throw a bouquet of flowers in the water. He said, "Goodbye, James M. Huston. I'll never forget you." Andrea told me that by that point everyone on the boat was crying.



Figure 12. James Leininger and James Huston around the same age. Note the similarities in facial structure.

After the trip to Japan, James' memories started to fade, and his drawings changed. Instead of boats firing at airplanes, he drew happy scenes of dolphins jumping and an intact airplane flying over the boat, without hostile gunfire. (Figure 13) James seemed to finally have closure on his former life after visiting the site of his former death and honoring the person he was in the past. He was finally able to let go. In the last drawing Andrea sent me, James drew an intact airplane flying over a field of flowers. (Figure 14) He signed these drawings "James," no longer "James 3." I think the drawings say it all.

The complete story of James Leininger, in much more detail that I can present here, was published in 2009 in their book, *Soul Survivor*. It's the best American reincarnation case I've seen. It's not only a rare, verifiable American case – it's also the story of James's soul healing from his traumatic death of a young pilot whose life was cut short by war.

IMPLICATIONS

I hope that as you read the cases of Chase, Sarah, Chad Luke, Blake Hocken, and James Leininger, you saw examples of the three ideas I mentioned at the beginning of the article:

1. Evidence for the continuation of a personal consciousness after death
2. Evidence of personality traits carried over from one lifetime to another
3. Opportunities for healing the soul



Figure 13. A drawing of the "happy" boat James made after visiting Japan.

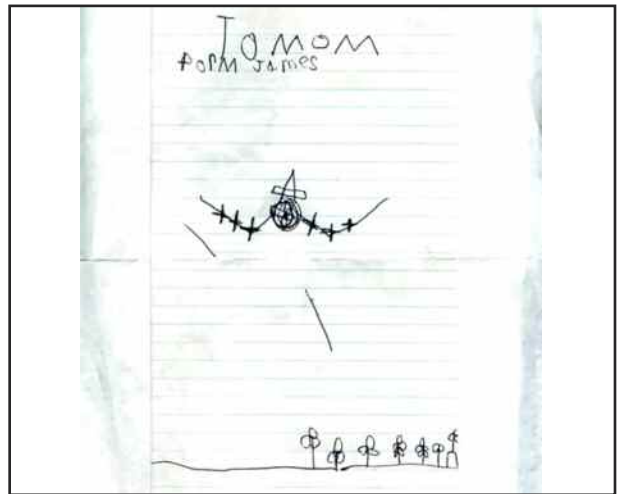


Figure 14. An intact airplane flying over a field of flowers

The implications from cases such as these are profound. They point to a theory of personality that doesn't begin and end within the bounds of one life, but spans many lifetimes. Traditional theory relies on some combination of hereditary and environmental influences – nature and nurture – to explain why we are the way we are. But the body of cases of children's spontaneous past life memories suggests there is a third influence. Along with nature and nurture, we need to consider patterns and traits from previous lives that inform our present personalities.

This new theory is not mere speculation. The continuity of personality traits from lifetime to lifetime is *observable* from these cases. Behaviors, phobias, knowledge, talents, attitudes, and even the quality of relationships can persist from one lifetime to another.

Taking it a step further, by applying what we have learned from fifty years of past life therapy with adults, we have a model for healing traumatic memories that emerge spontaneously in young children. From adult therapy we know that *some* of our emotional and physical problems have origins in traumatic past life deaths, and they can be resolved by accessing the original past life trauma. We can apply the same principles to help children heal when memories of past life trauma and death emerge spontaneously, so these issues don't follow the child into adulthood. As you saw in the case of my children and with Blake, the healing can be relatively simple and quick.

Think about it: *A continuum of personality that spans lifetimes*. If true, it offers a logical, commonsense framework for understanding why we have certain personality traits and how we can heal ourselves at the deepest levels of our being.

• • •

This paper is based on Carol Bowman's address presented at the Twentieth Annual ISSSEEM Conference, Evidence-Based Spirituality for the 21st Century (June 25 - 31, 2010).

BIO: Carol Bowman, MS, is an internationally known author, lecturer, past life regression therapist, and pioneer in reincarnation studies. Her two books, *Children's Past Lives* (Bantam, 1997) and *Return from Heaven* (HarperCollins, 2001) are now classics in the reincarnation field, and have been published and read around the world in 16 foreign editions. She has appeared frequently on TV and on the radio including *Oprah*, *ABC Primetime*, *Good Morning America*, *Unsolved Mysteries*, *The Art Bell Show*, and in several documentaries on A&E and Discovery. Carol has a past life therapy practice in Media, PA. For more information: www.carolbowman.com

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

I encourage you to read about the phenomenon of children's past lives in more depth. Please check the bibliography below. The latest cases and discussions are on the Reincarnation Forum, www.reincarnationforum.com, which I started thirteen years ago and continue to sponsor. It is the most complete forum about

reincarnation on the Internet. Hundreds of cases are archived on the Forum, and comments and new cases are posted almost daily. One case, in particular, is most exciting. Go to the "children's past lives" section and read the post entitled "9/11 Baby, Baby RN." It appears that a young California boy is the reincarnation of a 9/11 firefighter who remembers specific details of his death in one of the Twin Towers. It is quite a moving story. We welcome your input.

I recommend reading any publication by Dr. Ian Stevenson. I have included two of his books that I feel are the best summaries of his work.

Bowman, Carol. *Children's Past Lives*. New York: Bantam Books, 1997.

Bowman, Carol. *Return From Heaven*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.

Leininger, Bruce and Andrea. *Soul Survivor*. New York: Grand Central Publishing (Hachette Book Group), 2009.

Stevenson, Ian, M.D. *Where Reincarnation and Biology Intersect*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997.

Stevenson, Ian, M.D. *Children Who Remember Previous Lives*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2001.

Woolger, Roger. *Other Lives, Other Selves*. New York: Doubleday, 1987.

Woolger, Roger. *Healing Your Past Lives*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True, Inc., 2004.

∞ ∞ ∞