

michael newton

To: TNI Archives
Subject: RELIGION AND SPIRITUAL REGRESSION

The yearning to worship a higher power beyond ourselves has been with humankind since our earliest history as homo sapiens. Some of the burial finds by Paleolithic Archeologists prove this statement. I remember in particular working with three sisters for just past life regression. All were in the same Paleolithic tribe about 40,000 years ago in Europe. They did not discuss their sessions with each other until I had finished with all three. Each spoke of going to a special cairn of stones resembling an altar located outside their cave in order to pray to their gods for protection and food. This was a special place because they were always fearful of their precarious lives in these times.

Our civilization had thousands of years of pagan nature worshipers by hunter-gatherers, farmers and finally urban life dwellers. There was this great need to make peace with the gods, who when angry could cause much suffering and devastation. Finally, some five thousand years ago, more organized religions began to take hold of our spiritual thinking which evolved from primitive temples into modern churches. Unfortunately, from the time of shamans and medicine men to priests and ministers there was always evidence of power and authority over others demonstrated by a priestly class of men and religious institutions. Under the trappings of religion the motivation of these institutions was always to control others and build their own dominance.

It would seem that human beings have always demonstrated a need to venerate some sort of spiritual power and this may be less a product of culture than a cause of it in our lives. The need for ritual apparently has always existed within the human psyche and it has evolved over thousands of years into the superstitious dogma evidenced by modern religious institutions. I would suggest that beginning with the 20th century this aspect of religious doctrine has become a huge turn off for modern people in society. I noticed a great change of spiritual thinking during the revolutionary decade of the 1960s, especially with the younger generation. By the 21st century it was estimated that about 25% of the U.S. population were atheists or agnostics. I suspect that with my exposure to the popularity of my first two books, Journey of Souls (1994) and Destiny of Souls (2000) that this figure might be even higher. During my years on the road with lectures, I found so many people were in the process of developing their own belief system out of what has gone before along with new ideas about spirituality and the soul.

While the rebellion against organized religion may have been quite evident in the 1960s, I believe that our spiritual regression movement with life between lives that began at the start of the 21st century was no accident of timing. During the founding of this movement with SSR

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in 2002 and expansion with TNI in 2005 we have tried to explain to the public that the answers to the mystery of life lie not within religious doctrine and church intermediaries but rather within our own minds. It has not always been easy to have spiritual conversations with groups of people. We live in difficult times concerning intolerance toward belief systems other than our own around the world. There is an “us vs. them” mentality here. My books are actually not anti-religious. My clients have seen a higher power in their lives and come to know the spirit world—or afterlife—as a sphere of forgiveness, compassion and love which, to me, is the essence of what faith should be all about. People seeking alternatives to religious thinking indicates to me a spiritual awakening in the minds of large numbers of ordinary people around the world. I remember during my years of LBL research that some people who came to me were deeply religious while others had no faith at all, with many philosophical persuasions in between. Once they were in deep hypnosis they all said the same things concerning life after death. There is a common denominator of reports about the afterlife regardless of prior religious convictions, or the lack of them.

I do not say religious institutions have outlived their usefulness to those who feel comforted by their messages. This is a tough school on earth and our population does need spiritual support of some sort for happiness in life. Yet, I am heartened by the fact that so many are seeking alternatives to what has existed in the past. The well known past life regressionist, Helen Wambach, wrote in 1978 the following powerful thought: “The nature of messages channeled through intermediaries (starting with prophets such as, Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed, etc.) tends to bring an accumulation of superstitions that accompany every divine revelation and (with time) they take on more prominence than the essential message of love and oneness with the universe.” This is what is so frustrating to many seekers of enlightenment. In our movement we show that “revelations” are personal within the mind of each person that they themselves recover on a transpersonal spiritual level in deep hypnosis. After all, the science of metaphysics strives to understand the fundamental nature of reality without religious dogma.

I have always been troubled by the need of any spiritual practitioner to create fear in someone seeking spiritual truth and this can be traced all the way back to pagan worship practices. Spirit attachments is an example. This corruption of spiritual practice—even by supposedly metaphysical people-- often seize upon demonic temptation and retribution. We see a satanic force exists not only in the Christian bible and Muslim Koran but also in the eastern religions such as Hinduism. Another example is Buddhist scripture where the devil appears as the arch-tempter Mara. Mara was the evil one who challenged Gautama’s (the Buddha) attempts to search for truth. Notice, the tempter is always a malign, dark and belligerent form that must be appeased when someone fails a prescribed abstinence of earthly joy and pleasure. This is evidence of original sin and the Buddhists believe life’s purpose is suffering. It is our hope that as people read about our cases promoting happiness on earth

and describing the joy of afterlife between lives they will provide some comfort to readers who are troubled about themselves as being less than worthy in the society around them.

There is also the factor of what I call modern revisionism to ancient religious practices that make them more palatable to modern people. Some churches encourage this change but it is not nearly enough because many of the old trappings of fear, evil and unworthiness still exist. I feel that this "renaissance" does not really appeal either to religious traditionalists or new-age ritual practice seeking old religious connections to the past. What I see in both cases are people seeking a relationship with God that is not tethered absolutely to Christianity or other established religions. Even so, if a hybrid works for them, so be it.

The underlying basic problem with belief systems of the past is that of alienation. There is not the individual closeness to God, nor even the fostering of feelings that we really belong on earth. In fact, I would go further in stating that, with young people in particular, there is the idea that the world is all an illusion and just something to get through without any real purpose involved. To me, the escaping from our reality is what chemical substance abuse is all about. Any sort of religious doctrine is an impediment to self-revelation and a connection to a personal God. Frankly, the deepest longings of the human spirit are not fully satisfied by the natural world. The average client comes to an LBL hypnotherapist searching for answers about their life and purpose-- so in a sense spiritual regression offers a third path between atheism and religious fundamentalism. I believe the best form of spirituality is connecting and identifying with our own immortal soul to discover who we really are and learn about the spirit guides assigned to us and how they help us with many incarnations along with larger divine spiritual forces. This provides a sense of order in our life. As Heidegger suggests, people who cling to physical objects and a materialistic life remain unsatisfied internally. Only in helping and loving others can we break out of this self-serving mold. If our movement assists people in learning that their lives are by design and has karmic purpose with an intelligent Source, or Sources, watching over them then our LBL work is justified.

RELIGION

Dear Philosophers (and other interested members):

A subject came up on e-group some weeks ago that I wanted to answer in more detail but other things got in the way at the time. I would like to wrap up some thoughts on this discussion before the end of the year. When the "vision" document that I wrote for the Danville training about the future of TNI was posted by Angie, one of our resident philosophers, Lauren, asked if she could use what I said for advertising in her practice. Angie wrote back that it might be best to edit out the anti-religious parts for the general public as my paper was designed for TNI consumption. So, this is what she did for Lauren.

Angie was just being protective of me and not wanting to offend anyone in the public sector. This is her job as our public relations specialist for TNI. Yet, it has bothered me because when I was on the road years ago giving lectures I tried to explain to audiences that spiritual regression work was not anti-religious but rather a new form of spiritual thought. I have always said that whatever belief system gives substance and comfort to people to make it through their life happily is good as long as their institutional doctrine is not forced upon others. Naturally, religious fundamentalism in any form that produces fear and harm is not to be tolerated. People have the choice of many philosophies in their search for meaning in life and these positions can overlap despite the apparent need for human beings to have rival certainties about their belief systems. I have mine like everyone else.

When I was practicing, potential clients often asked in advance what an LBL session primarily would give to them. After explaining there were no guarantees in our work, I felt that acquiring an understanding of their immortal identity and purpose were two major factors I wanted us to discover in their session. I would mention that an absence of dread about the afterlife was another huge benefit. The Greek philosopher, Epicurus once said: "Against other things it is possible to obtain security, but when it comes to death we human beings all live in an unwall'd city." What the average person on the street fears most about death is not so much the act of death itself but a loss of personhood. Personal identity with various belief systems is the subject I want to focus on here. The secular philosopher, George Levine, stated that: "Both Christianity and Islam harshly challenge the human self by demands of submission that include sacrifice of self to doctrine." The Greek word, "kenosis", means in part an emptying out of self from the body. Levine uses this term to show a religious institutional desire for insistence on the removal of self in exchange for being totally submissive to religious doctrine to appease God.

I feel that while secularism has been called anti-religious, it is not a denial of the spirit of religion but rather an affirmation of free will and open mindedness as positive forces. Yet, I have had secularists tell me that our form of LBL spiritualism promotes a belief of a creator and therefore we are promoting religious/spiritual doctrine as well. I have argued that spiritual regression promotes the existence of a power greater than ourselves and that, He, She or It can have multiple aspects in the nature of cosmic purpose for humans on earth. Many secularists/humanists have no use for theological institutions and ministerial intermediaries that preach superstitious dogma and exclusivity. Here we agree but some secularists feel our work promotes too much spiritual structure in the afterlife and that we elevate guides to the status of Gods. During my debates in the past in many forums the subject of self is often mentioned in this context.

We teach that LBL assists our clients in discovering their immortal and human identity through a process we call spiritual integration. This does not represent submission by limiting the choices of the person involved during a process of self-discovery. Spiritual integration is a recognition of the melding process between the soul and human brain in one lifetime to produce one personality. I have tried to explain that in this way our work recognizes karma that can be viewed as a recognition of the purpose of our creation. Thus, perhaps our form of spirituality is providing a bridge between secularism and institutional religion.

There is no question but what religionists and secularists must each define what they mean by "goodness and morality" in life because there is value in serving a higher divine purpose of helping others and bringing joy and fulfillment into human life. Any philosophy that does not do this falls short, in my opinion. For example, as beautiful as the Buddhist religion is in many ways, its doctrine undermines the idea of a sovereign united self. I have had many debates with Buddhists who do not believe in the soul. To them the individual ego is a human corruption involving self that must be cleansed before death in order to achieve enlightenment. Their doctrine is clear about this belief. This is a major problem for me because it represents a big loss in personhood. Before the existence of Judaism, Christianity or Islam, Socrates asked his fellow Greeks: "If goodness can only be defined by the will of Gods there is no way mankind can assess that judgment. In discussing morality or goodness as God's plaything, you deprive yourself of the capacity to judge that morality."

Maybe this stems from my own background as a child in boarding schools, but I have always thought that there is a fundamental human loneliness that includes feelings of isolation that neither religion nor secularism can remove. What I wanted our work to accomplish is to address these feeling by facilitating with our clients a direct personal

experience of discovery with one's real identity within the context of a loving and compassionate immortal environment.

Happy holidays.....Michael

Michael Newton

From: "Michael Newton" <michaelnewton@ncws.com>
To: <spiritualregression@yahogroups.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 22, 2007 7:53 PM
Subject: [spiritualregression] Intelligent Design

Dear Group:

I thought it was about time for a brief discussion about a new wrinkle in religious fundamentalism euphemisms that we must deal with here in the U.S. As many of you know, even after my retirement from the road circuit, I still receive many questions by various means from people challenging my findings in LBL about the spirit world. Often these involve religious issues. One that is now cropping up more and more is the old argument of evolution vs. creationism but with the words "intelligent design" substituted for creationism to describe why and how we arrived here. It is a not so subtle new approach to acquire legitimacy, I suppose. People are now asking me that since my books clearly indicate intelligent design on our planet, doesn't that make me a proponent of organized religion?

I felt that some of you might like to view a sample of my responses to this question in case it happens to you (not that I don't think you can handle yourselves in a worthy manner). People come to us from many philosophical positions because they basically have deep longings of the human spirit. Many seek satisfaction by a personal experience. While you all know that I don't tread lightly about my anti-religious feelings on e-group discussions (a la spiritual attachments), in the past I was always very careful with my clients to protect their religious sensibilities and to respect their faith. So, in somewhat the same vein, I now try to follow a non-abusive path with the public in the way I argue with them about the issue of evolution and my aversion to creationism in religious dogma. For example, about a 6,000 year old earth and Adam and Eve. Ah, but since the playing field has changed with the words "intelligent design" currently, I argue from the position that our work as souls in the spirit world is nothing if not by design--but it is not religious creationism.

For instance, when someone with a religious agenda challenges me to explain passages in Destiny of Souls about the Masters of Design and the manipulation of energy to alter the molecular chemistry of an organism to circumvent natural selection (Page 342) on an experimental planetary basis--does this mean I support

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intelligent design? Well, of course I do in that context but this does not make me a believer in religious creationism. Evolution and natural selection on earth is alive and well as a still evolving process regardless of belief systems that state in all happened in seven days and that we are dealing with an angry, jealous and often cruel God who looks like us and doesn't deal kindly with blasphemy. While I believe in natural selection and the on-going forces behind it I know it does not happen by blind chance (an atheist position) nor is it instantaneous (a religious position) on earth--regardless of the accelerated experimentation in spirit world laboratories. Advanced souls--who are not Gods-- work through trial and error in a rapid way with molecular manipulation. Simply because we here on earth experience the evolution of possibilities and probabilities over millions of years does not mean spiritual designers are subject to such constraints.

Creationists now using intelligent design to support their case that humans were instantly created by God "in His image", do not like science or humanism nor the fact that the human brain is still a work in progress. Some people have told me that my descriptions of the afterlife scare them because it seems to support Chaos Theory, which it does not. I think we must just accept that many troubled people out there are searching for answers and some of them get angry when we rattle their cages a bit. We are directed by higher spiritual powers toward a unity of purpose that does not include ancient theological superstitions that center around fear. Yes, education progresses slowly down here but we will get there in the end and I just hope that after I'm gone some of you resident philosophers will take over for me to defend the faith.

Michael

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