

Many Lives, Many Masters Study Guide

Many Lives, Many Masters by Brian L. Weiss

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Contents

Many Lives, Many Masters Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	4
Chapter One.....	6
Chapter Two.....	7
Chapter Three.....	9
Chapter Four.....	11
Chapter Five.....	12
Chapter Six.....	14
Chapter Seven.....	16
Chapter Eight.....	17
Chapter Nine.....	18
Chapter Ten.....	20
Chapter Eleven.....	22
Chapter Twelve.....	24
Chapter Thirteen.....	26
Chapter Fourteen.....	28
Chapter Fifteen.....	29
Chapter Sixteen.....	30
Characters.....	32
Objects/Places.....	35
Themes.....	37
Style.....	40
Quotes.....	41
Topics for Discussion.....	43



Plot Summary

Many Lives, Many Masters by Brian L. Weiss, M.D. relates the author's discovery of past life therapy in the course of treating a young psychiatric patient named Catherine. Weiss taps into Catherine's past lives through hypnosis. In first-person voice, Weiss recounts hypnotic sessions during which Catherine vividly details cultures, geography and centuries she has not experienced, learned or imagined in her waking state.

Catherine is a twenty-seven-year-old technician at a Miami University hospital where Weiss heads as chief of psychiatry. Mutual friends encourage her to make an appointment with Weiss. When she comes to his office, a range of phobias plague her and Weiss describes her as emotionally depressed.

At various stages Weiss provides details of his background. He is married with two children and has had academic and professional success since childhood. He precludes the remarkable events that compelled him to write this book citing accomplishments as a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Columbia University, a Medical Degree from Yale, faculty position at the University of Pittsburgh amongst diverse credentials. He calls to attention his years of disciplined training and experience. He is a traditional scientist who follows the rigid conservative methods of his profession. Greater personal content is revealed as his and Catherine's lives become spiritually connected.

This association is discovered when Weiss resorts to hypnosis. Their first hypnotic session reveals an alcoholic father who touched Catherine inappropriately. Unlike most patients who make such discoveries, her symptoms increase rather than decrease. Frustrated by lack of success, Weiss guides Catherine, still under hypnotic trance, to go to the source of her troubles. After 18 months of repressing childhood memories, Catherine describes an unfamiliar setting, in which her name is Aronda.

Her perplexing memories lead to sixteen chapters delineating hypnotic sessions of an extra-sensory nature. At each appointment, Weiss regresses Catherine back to what he begins to identify as past lives. Her accounts unearth scarring traumas of poverty, pain, hardship, and violent death that branch with repercussion into her present life. One incarnation involves a drowning. In another, she is a soldier whose throat is slashed. Under trance, Catherine reports being of the male gender and varies in race and nationality. She recognizes people in her present life playing other roles, including Weiss, as her teacher in an ancient time. After each regression, the doctor observes Catherine's outlook brightening. Each session dissipates a different phobia or fear. As she becomes confident and energetic, Weiss resolves to get to the bottom of every one of her anxieties via this method.

During Catherine's treatment, Weiss becomes an unexpected participant and beneficiary. The past life regressions lead to paranormal communications that support concepts of reincarnation as well as an afterlife. Not only are Catherine's hypnotic regressions curing her, but Weiss is forced to question his years of traditional training. The turning point occurs during an "in-between lives state." Catherine continues to



speak during trance, when a sophisticated voice, which differs from Catherine's usual whisper, conveys philosophical lessons. In this state, while her soul rests, other entities address Weiss. The state of being in-between lives fascinates Weiss. "The Masters" speak from what they define as a different plane. The Masters reflect a wisdom beyond Catherine's experience and nature. They tell Weiss that he can heal others by eradicating fear as he is doing for Catherine. The phenomena, which Catherine details after a past life has ended, compels Weiss to pursue the in-between lives state.

A noteworthy aspect of Catherine's conveyance is the consistency that occurs after each lifetime ends. Regardless of how violent or painless her death, she reports rising above her body and being drawn to "a white energizing light." The Masters explain that the soul enters a state of rest, before reincarnating again. Through Catherine, they reveal the purpose for incarnating, comparing it to a child progressing through grade school and how learning lessons of human kindness results in spiritual advancement. Failing to learn sends the soul back to the physical state until it learns its lessons. The Masters, of whom there are several, reveal to Weiss, that the ultimate purpose of these lessons is to heal others using past life therapy.

One of the Master tells him (through Catherine) that his father and son are there. The Master describes his son's fatal heart ailment and Weiss is stunned. What the Masters say verifies the authenticity of the revelations. His first baby died of a heart deformity. Weiss guarantees Catherine could not know his personal life details. Out of trance, Catherine has no memory of "after death" conversations. The idea of listening to the tapes of the "in-between" scares her. Weiss does not force the issue, realizing it may undo the good that has been done. The Masters advise that the material is for his ears, not Catherine's.

Catherine's psyche heals rapidly. She shows no trace of anxiety by the book's end. The Masters continue their lessons through revelatory dreams. Weiss alludes to using past life therapy on patients when symptoms warrant it. He concludes the book with the thought that "life is more than meets the eye." He emphasizes how science must pay heed to this phenomena. He calls out to the psychiatric community to keep an open mind. Lastly, he highlights how the messages received through Catherine exhort charity, faith, hope, love, and respect for self and others as well as nature. These virtues are the core of most religious teachings.



Chapter One

Chapter One Summary and Analysis

Many Lives, Many Masters by Brian L. Weiss, M.D. relates the author's discovery of past life therapy in the course of treating a young psychiatric patient named Catherine. Weiss taps into Catherine's past lives through hypnosis. In first-person voice, Weiss recounts these hypnotic sessions during which Catherine vividly details cultures, geography and centuries she has not experienced, learned of or imagined in her waking state.

In his first meeting with Catherine, Weiss observes her pacing outside his office, her anxiety palpable. She is the middle child of a conservative Catholic family, he learns. She fears water, airplanes, dark enclosed places, choking while swallowing pills, and is obsessed with death. Weiss believes he can help her. He claims to have helped thousands of patients. The high estimate may instill doubt in the reader, but it is the 1980s and he has practiced since the early '70s. It is viable that as head of a psychiatric department he has literally treated thousands.

Weiss probes into Catherine's childhood using standard treatment. His attempts to uproot significant events are unsuccessful because she represses much. She recalls being pushed off a diving board into a swimming pool and panicking. She tells Weiss that before that event, she was afraid of water. He considers hypnotherapy but first reveals further background on Catherine. Her father has a history of alcoholism, which causes much family conflict. She has friends, but finds it hard to trust new people. She is in her sixth year of dating a married doctor on the hospital staff named Stuart. He hurts her, but she cannot fight her attraction for him. She experiences recurring nightmares. In one, a bridge she drives on collapses. In another, she's trapped in a dark room.

Weiss' writing incorporates much repetition and amplifies that Catherine is a practicing Catholic who knows little about reincarnation. Repetition is this author's tool for driving home his theses on reincarnation. Weiss often sidetracks the flow of the account throughout. He thickens details presented in the preface in an effort to strengthen credibility, in this chapter, detailing how a mutual friend, Doctor Edward Poole on staff, advises Catherine to see "Weiss and Weiss only." Another doctor, Frank Acker, observes her behavior weeks later and also orders her to see Weiss. These endorsements imply spiritual forces and fate bringing Catherine and Weiss together.

The chapter ends with Weiss, asserting he never imagined his world would be changed so drastically after meeting Catherine, who is said to be a very attractive young woman.



Chapter Two

Chapter Two Summary and Analysis

After 18 months of conventional therapy, Catherine understands many of her behavior patterns. However, "patients almost always improve when they remember unpleasant influences from their past" Weiss asserts. Catherine is not improving. She suffers from anxiety attacks and nightmares torment her. She is still afraid of water, enclosed places, and the dark. She has heart palpitations and fears swallowing the medications he prescribes.

Catherine mentions to Weiss a trip she takes to Chicago with Stuart, a married boyfriend of hers who hurts her constantly. They attend an Egyptian exhibit. She tells Weiss that she found herself correcting the guide as he described various artifacts. The guide told her she was correct, but how was she so sure? Weiss explains that Catherine has an interest but has no in-depth scholarly knowledge of Egyptian history or artifacts.

At first, Catherine resists the idea of hypnosis, which Weiss describes as a tool that brings suppressed memories to the surface. He explains how the body relaxes and how he has helped hundreds of patients using the technique. He elaborates that the patient talks and responds to questions, describing environment and feelings while hypnotized. He is certain hypnosis will help her.

Throughout this chapter and the 14 that follow, Weiss interrupts Catherine's hypnotic trance relay with personal commentary often denoting wonder at the proceedings. He shifts gears from Catherine's to his perspective and opinion making the storytelling choppy. Despite these shifts, the overall telling is riveting.

The first time Weiss regresses Catherine through hypnosis, she describes three childhood events. The first is a trauma at a dentist's office at age six. The second is a clearer account of a pool incident at age five. The third is a memory of waking up in her dark bedroom. Her father "reeked of alcohol." She smells it. She describes him touching her "down there." She sobs experiencing it all over again. Weiss is positive her symptoms will disappear. However, at the next appointment, her symptoms are worse. He decides to regress her back further to before age three.

Catherine speaks in a whisper. He takes her to the beginning of her life but no traumatic event surfaces. Not certain what course to take, Weiss tells her to go to the time when her trauma began. Catherine describes a white building and its surroundings. She says she has a long blond braid, she is 18 years old, and her name is Aronda. Weiss is perplexed as to how to proceed and tells her to go forward in time and tell him what she sees. She tells him she is twenty-five and has a daughter named Cleastra. Amongst numerous details, she explains to Weiss that Cleastra is Rachel. Weiss explains that Rachel is her niece's name in this life and they are very close.



Weiss doesn't know what to make of Catherine's first hypnosis. He has never before experienced this. Catherine provides names, dates and places. Weiss is baffled and unsure as to how to move forward. He emphasizes how Catherine's relayed details and thoughts under hypnosis differ from her current conscious state. All experience tells him she is not making it up. Catherine shows no clinical signs of schizophrenia, no history of hallucinations, psychosis, or delusions. Weiss isn't sure what he has come across. He considers the thought of a past life and playing it by ear, instructing her to go to the time of her death. She describes waves and falling trees. She makes choking sounds. A baby is torn from her arms. She becomes very still: her breathing is described as deep and even. She talks about clouds and that her baby is with her as are others from her village.

As the session advances, Catherine is in another life as a Spanish prostitute, named Louisa dancing with others at a festival in 1756. Weiss reasons that these details have the quality of actual memories. However, he has no idea where they originate. Out of curiosity, Weiss asks her if she recognizes him in any of her past lives. She responds that he was her teacher in the year 1568 B.C. The idea of past lives contradicts his religious base, as well as his clinical psychiatric training. The chapter concludes with Weiss considering that after this, Catherine's fearful nature may not want to undergo hypnosis again.



Chapter Three

Chapter Three Summary and Analysis

The very next week Catherine bounces into Weiss' office. He describes an already beautiful woman who now looks radiant. She reports that her fear of drowning is gone. Weiss does not explain when she went swimming to arrive at this conclusion. She also reports to be sleeping better.

Catherine's past life memories remain vivid but do not disturb her, although she does admit that reincarnation doesn't mesh with her Catholic upbringing. As he observes Catherine's improved psyche, Weiss begins to search for existing data on the topic. His old comparative religion textbook refers to reincarnation in both the Old and New Testaments. In A.D. 325, the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great removed references to reincarnation from the New Testament. The Second Council of Constantinople "confirmed this action and declared the concept of reincarnation as heresy."

Weiss sidelines us again into a wider description of his upbringing and inherent disbelief in reincarnation. He outlines his academic rise into the field of psychiatry, describes his Jewish conservative parents and brothers, and describes meeting his wife, Carole. The point of this information is to emphasize his strong methodical, scientific medical school, Yale education and conservative background.

Catherine is again hypnotized and revisits more scenery in Aronda's lifetime. Her livelihood is readying bodies for the after life. According to Weiss, she describes "an Egyptian concept of death and the afterlife." She leaves that life and reports another lifetime during which she recognizes Edward Poole, who referred her to see Weiss. Edward is her father in that life in 1536 B.C. In that life, Edward's name is Perseus. Perseus is a friend of Weiss. She tells Weiss that in that life Weiss is her teacher and a friend of her father's (Edward Poole), who tells her to listen to him because he is very smart. Weiss moves Catherine forward to the end of that life in which she dies peacefully as an old woman.

Weiss finds other documentation on reincarnation. Ian Stevenson, M.D, a psychiatry professor, wrote "extensively" and "collected over 2000 examples of children with reincarnation type memories." Weiss goes over ESP data from Duke University, the writings of Professor C.J. Cucasse of Brown University and Doctors Martin Ebon, Helen Wambach, Gertrude Schmeidler amongst others. The topic absorbs him. He asserts that there is a great deal of literature to be found on the topic of reincarnation. In spite of overwhelming data, he contends that he is not fully convinced.

Despite initial doubts, Weiss concedes that the hypnotic regressions are helping Catherine. At the next session, she describes herself as a boy whose name is Johan. His clothes are made of animal skins. He sees guards and describes them as dirty.



They are playing a game that resembles checkers. Weiss fishes for events in that life that may affect her current one and moves her to the last day of that life. She describes being afraid in a boat in the dark. Johan's people are fighting others. He does not want to kill although he has a knife. Weiss portrays her as "gasping for breath." She reports being from behind. Her throat is slit. Her attacker is Stuart, her current married boyfriend.

Weiss explains how the questioning he uses with Catherine differs from his process during conventional therapy. He guides her through time searching for significant events that may manifest as symptoms in her current life. He notes the sloth of conventional therapy in which every gesture and word is analyzed. Under hypnosis, "years could whiz by in minutes."

Between sessions, Catherine demonstrates a new psychic ability to her doubting father by picking the winner of every race at a racetrack. She is as stunned as her father, but gives her winnings to a street person. According to Weiss, she sensed that using her intuition for personal gain would be wrong.

At the next past life regression, Catherine describes the death experience with clarity. "I am aware of a bright light. It's wonderful; you get energy from this light." Something different happens after some silence this time. Her voice becomes husky and louder. It differs from her usual whisper. She tells Weiss that "Our task is to learn, to become God-like through knowledge." Weiss is left speechless wondering where that comes from. Catherine doesn't speak like that. She relays that the source belongs to the "Masters" who are "highly evolved souls not presently in body" as the source.

Weiss explains that Catherine remembers details of her past lives, but remembers nothing of the in between lives state that has come to light.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four Summary and Analysis

Weiss now impatiently awaits the post-death in-between stage, from which Catherine channels. Weiss regresses her to a life in Virginia. Her name is Abby and she describes churning butter. However, she skips the in-between lives state and enters another life in which garlic is hanging in a room. She smells it. Garlic is used to counter evil and cleanse the body. She explains that roots are used to cure the sick. There is a plague and many are dying. Fear of contracting the disease forces people to bypass embalming rituals. The disease results from polluted water during a flood. Her father dies and her brothers are sick. Weiss interrupts Catherine's relay to comment on how the death experience itself is always the same regardless of religious belief and culture.

Catherine reaches the in-between lives state and the spiritual Masters tell Weiss about his father and son, who have both passed on. The Masters tell Weiss that his father's name is Avrom and how his heart failed. They then describe the affliction from which his baby son died. "Your son's heart was also important, for it was backward, like a chicken's. His death satisfied his parent's debts." The Masters say that his son is an advanced soul who wants him to know that medicine has a very limited range.

Weiss explains that his infant son died in 1971 at twenty-three days old. He described his son's heart deformity as a rare medical condition "turned around, backward." His father died in 1979 from a heart attack. Avrom was his father's Hebrew name. The messages give him chills. Catherine could not know any of this personal life, he assures. Weiss does not allude to the mutual friends who referred Catherine to him in this section. He questions Catherine in her trance how she knows this. Catherine whispers that the Masters tell her and that she's lived 86 lives. Weiss realizes he will never be the same again. The chapter ends with Weiss pondering who is reporting this material. He feels he has a strange kind of evidence in front of him, yet a part of him feels this should be examined from a scientific standpoint.



Chapter Five

Chapter Five Summary and Analysis

Catherine's past lives therapy works wonders but strikes Weiss as anticlimactic compared to the in-between lives state. However, she never enters that state directly. She recounts another life, passes on, and then the Masters speak. She reports that a "Robert Jared" needs his help. Weiss has no idea of who this is or how to help him. Although Catherine has no recollection of her in-between lives channeling, she agrees to allow Doctor Weiss's wife, Carole, to observe the sessions. Carole is a psychiatric social worker. Weiss needs an objective opinion as well as a witness to these happenings. Normally, he jots down what Catherine says. He begins to tape the sittings because the Masters speak faster than Catherine's slow whisper.

Before her next past life session, Catherine reports a dream about the fin of a fish embedded in her hand. Weiss takes her back and she finds herself as a man named Christian from Wales. He smells something burning. They're loading "something with gunpowder" on a ship. In the midst of describing a green and yellow flag with a crown, Catherine grimaces from a sharp pain in her hand. Weiss remembered her dream and blocked the pain so she can continue describing. The ship is destroyed. Moved up in time, Christian's hand heals. He dies from pain in his chest as an old man. In his office, Catherine gasps for breath. Weiss worries if experiencing a heart attack in a previous life poses danger to this current one, but Catherine is soon peaceful. He asks what her thoughts are of that lifetime. She responds, "I should have been more forgiving."

Her voice is hoarse. When her usual whisper changes, a higher intellect comes through. Sometimes Weiss identifies this intellect as Catherine's higher consciousness and different from the voice of the Masters. She conveys that "there are many souls in this dimension" and that there are many dimensions. She tells him she's been to different planes and that each level is of a higher consciousness. Catherine's higher self explains that the plane the soul moves on to is dependent upon how far the soul has progressed. She relates that we all have abilities and some discover them faster than others. Vices not resolved in one life are carried over into the next life. Only we can get rid of our own bad habits. "Only when you decide that you are strong enough to master the external problems, then you will no longer have them in your next life."

In this higher self mode, she explains that mixing with those in different vibrations helps them. This implies mixing with those of different races, religions and cultures is important to spiritual evolution. She says powers of intuition should not be ignored. She specifies that we do not reincarnate from these planes with equal powers and that it depends on lessons learned and accrued. "Thus people are not all created equal. But eventually we will reach a point where we will all be equal."

Weiss points out that these thoughts cannot be Catherine's. She is unfamiliar with planes, dimensions and vibrations, and has no background in physics or metaphysics.



She goes on to talk about people in comas and how they're not ready to cross over. Her trance appears to be on various levels. She is conveying messages from the Masters, but then she also says she "must come back." Weiss interrupts to ask who Robert Jared is. She tells him he must be in another plane. She doesn't know, but he will send a message when he needs Weiss' help. Weiss does not understand, but the topic of Robert Jared never surfaces again in the book. Catherine relays that "you are the one to be taught, not I." The voice switches to Catherine's insisting on going to the light.

Missing the light, Catherine suddenly falls into her present life at age five. Her father is mistreating her and hitting her. She wonders why he's so mean. Weiss orders her to observe from a higher perspective to take her out of pain. Weiss describes that she relays in a manner that demonstrates "wisdom and a perspective about her life that had previously been restricted to the in between state." The conscious Catherine strikes simple and superficial. While in trance, Catherine and Weiss have philosophical "dialogues." When awake, she uses mundane uncomplicated speech. At a higher conscious level, she explains that her father has many lessons to learn. Weiss asks what those lessons are. She responds that it is not her business, that her concerns are only what is important for the advancement of her own soul. She explains that each individual must concern with his own advancement to wholeness.

She explains that her father hates her because of his sexual attack on her as a child, and asserts that she must have done something to provoke the assault. Weiss tells her she was only a child and tries to regress her to a previous life attempting to get to the bottom of her current father/daughter dysfunction but is unable to do so. Catherine exclaims that she doesn't see him, but that she does see people being killed. She explains it is wrong to end a person's life. "They suffer greater retribution if we let them live," she says.

Weiss ends the chapter expressing how tired yet peaceful Catherine is. He is too is exhausted. Carole, his wife, is exhausted as well as astounded by the shared experience.



Chapter Six

Chapter Six Summary and Analysis

Catherine is serene and has privately forgiven her father. Weiss expresses amazement over the speed of Catherine's recovery.

She drops into an easy hypnotic trance and begins to detail another life. Her name is Aaron. She is in pain because a horse kicked her. She serves in a "big house" and apparently lives in a small house on the property where she milks cows. Her family is poor. She was brought to work there as a child. She tells Weiss that she lives out her sad and difficult life there, eventually dying in great pain. Weiss denotes how thus far none of past life her roles reach the social status of a Cleopatra or a Napoleon. Many who claim past incarnation boast of associations with the famous. Again she describes leaving her body and seeing a "wonderful light." She speaks of other spirits assisting her.

Weiss asks her if we choose the time and the manner of our birth. Do we choose our circumstances? Do we choose our time of death? The response is that we choose when we are reborn into a physical body as well as when to leave.

In this extensive chapter, Weiss relays in-depth questions and respective responses from the Masters via Catherine regarding life and death and the purpose of life. She describes the peaceful rest the soul experiences and the brightness of the light. He asks if the light has color and she responds that it has "many colors." A cryptic moment occurs when Catherine expresses from the in between state that, "I have no faith in these people." Weiss asks whom she means. She responds that it is The Masters. This perplexes Weiss, and she expands that lacking faith has made her last life very difficult. Weiss asks what she learned in that 18th Century life. "I learned about anger and resentment, about harboring your feelings toward people."

Catherine explains that she has no control and must have faith in the Masters because they guide. She morosely states that she was doomed from the start in that life, because she had no faith. She chose doubt over belief. Not having faith made her unpleasant.

He asks Catherine how we can become better people. One of the Masters responds, saying all must learn certain attitudes while in the physical state. Some are faster at accepting charity, hope, faith and love than others. He emphasizes that "the reward unselfishness giving and doing without expecting anything in return."

Here Catherine's whisper interjects. Weiss notes her higher self as able to analyze and evaluate her circumstance. Catherine explains one has to avoid overindulgence and reiterates the thought with the value of not taking the enjoyable to excess. Weiss asks the Masters what is the best way for him to help Catherine. He is told that he is doing



the correct thing, and once again state that these messages are for him, not for Catherine. He is told that he will be guided, and that his life will end after he accomplishes what he was meant to accomplish. To his "relief" they did not specify when that would be, except that it was a long way off.

This Chapter concludes with Weiss pondering how this overall experience is having an effect on how he views his life. He observes his wife and kids wondering if they've lived together before. He becomes aware of the importance of love. He finds himself more considerate and patient. He is grateful for his wife, Carole, who plays devil's advocate in ways that assist Weiss in looking at these matters objectively.



Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven Summary and Analysis

Weiss again hammers in how very fast Catherine is improving and wonders how much longer these sessions will continue. She still fears enclosed places and her affair with Stuart continues. Traditional therapy has not been used in months because there was no need.

He considers Catherine cured. Most conventional study considers that irrational anxieties stem from chemical deficiencies. He ponders how psychotherapists treat Catherine's kind of symptoms with tranquilizers and antidepressants in addition to years of individual and or group therapy. He has cut to the root of Catherine's problems in a short period.

He regresses Catherine and she finds herself in a domed building. "The ceiling is blue and gold. There are other people with me." She describes them wearing dirty robes. She says that the people she is with have to stay away from their village. She says that they are all sick, but she doesn't know what she has. She describes the skin as dying and how it turns black. She says she feels cold. Weiss assumes she speaks of leprosy, and notes again how not one glamorous life has emerged thus far. She explains that no villagers visit them. They must hunt for food and when they can no longer walk, they move them into a cave to die. This is her fate. After much pain she dies and again describes, "Floating. It's very bright here. Its wonderful!" He asks if she's in pain. "No! I'm going back to a body!" Weiss says she sounds as surprised as him.

In this other incarnation, she sees olive trees and buildings with round columns. She sees masks. Some festival is taking place. He asks if she knows the date but she does not. He asks if she sees her father there. She does not see him, but she knows Weiss is there. She tells him he is a teacher whose name is Diogenes. She tells him she's married and pregnant. She's afraid to die giving birth, because it is a common occurrence. She gives birth and recovers. She is in a place called "Cathenia." He asks if it is Greek. She turns it around and tells Weiss he should know because he travels often. She tells Weiss he is old and very wise and that young people follow him because he understands the charts. She identifies Edward as her father in that life. He dies and she expresses sadness. Her words and state sound confused. Weiss explains that she appears to have passed on.

He asks if the Masters are there. She speaks that she has not arrived at that plane, and that she cannot speak until she reaches it. The chapter ends with Weiss bringing her out of trance.



Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight Summary and Analysis

Weiss goes on a three-week vacation and takes the opportunity to think about his sessions with Catherine. He reiterates his vast experience treating thousands of patients, directing in and out patient units at four major medical schools and years spent in psychiatric emergency rooms amongst other settings. He points out again how Catherine has no psychotic condition and how the material she relays under hypnosis is unlike her personal style and capability when awake.

He brings up Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious and cultural symbolism. However, he considers Catherine's descriptions specific and not centered around common symbols, and how what she reports cannot be found in any book. As to the messages from the Masters being spoken through Catherine, they do not logically originate from her. He concludes this is real and true, and he feels it in his bones.

After the three-week vacation break, Catherine eases into hypnotic trance. She is in another life where she reports seeing pots, oils, and men in a cave stacking jars and pots. It is her job to seal the jars. She explains that the jars are for a ritual. When Weiss probes, she sees nothing to identify the year or country she is in. He moves her ahead in time. She clarifies that she prepares ointments for priests. She is sixteen and is part of a family.

Weiss suggests she attend an event relevant to her current symptoms. She reports seeing people dying. Weiss recognizes that he has returned her to a life already visited but at a different age. He fast forwards to her death and asks what lessons she has learned. Her head turns from left to right as if listening to someone speaking and her voice changes.

Weiss recognizes the tone of one he describes as the poet Master, who begins to speak of the importance of having patience. The poet Master expounds that everything comes in its own time in reference to patience. "A life cannot be rushed, cannot be worked on a schedule as so many people want it to be." He further explains to Weiss that life is "endless, so we never die; we were never really born. We just pass through different planes. There is no end. Humans have many dimensions." He states that the concept of time is not what we think it is. Weiss asks what it is he should learn, but Catherine comes out of the trance and the chapter ends.



Chapter Nine

Chapter Nine Summary and Analysis

This lengthy chapter opens with Weiss again marveling at Catherine's improvement. Ideas already presented are amplified in this chapter. Weiss notes how Catherine's regressions span thousands of years and how he never knows "where the threads of her lives would emerge."

Her next regression surfaces in the twentieth century. She is a thirty-five-year-old fighter pilot named Von Marks. He has a family, but can't be home. He follows orders and watches his friends die. English and American Armed Forces are the enemy. Weiss takes him to a better time. Von Marks describes his wife, Margot, and recognizes her as "Judy," who is Catherine's best friend in her present life. He has a blond child named Eric. He speaks of political unrest, and refers to the German government and contends "it is wrong to kill... but I must do my duty."

Weiss exchanges thought-provoking questions and responses concerning the immorality of war. Von Marks says they die for the ideas of a few. He comments on the madness of the leadership and how they are driven to follow orders to kill and die without good reason. Weiss returns him to combat. Von Mark's plane is destroyed, but he survives that attack. He explains he is a pilot by profession. His job keeps him away from his family and this makes him sad. Catherine's breath becomes agitated describing fire. She writhes as if in pain in the doctor's office. No one survives this mission. After minutes, her expression calms. Weiss is familiar with the transition. Again, she reports floating and being in spirit again. Weiss questions what she learned from that life, and she responds that she learned about "misdirected hate." She says people hate though they don't know why. She says hate is driven by evil in the physical state.

The Masters' voices take over to relay to Weiss that eradicating fear is the proper treatment for other patients like Catherine. They convey that fear results in wasted energy. Energy, they say, should be expended fulfilling what we are meant to fulfill. The Masters explain that anxiety must be removed from the depth of the soul, and not at surface level. "Everything is energy" and much is wasted. The Masters compare the soul to the quiet core of a mountain, "on the outside is where the trouble lies." They explain that the spirit state is natural. "To be in physical state is abnormal."

The Masters refer to the spiritual state as one of renewal and refer to it as a separate dimension. They tell Weiss that he has almost succeeded in reaching that state. The statement leaves Weiss shocked, wondering what it means. He is told to be patient with those who do not understand what he does. He is told that he knows "more than the others." The idea of spiritual Masters focusing on Weiss may strike self-aggrandizing. However, the tone of experience makes the journey credible.



Weiss ponders and awaits further word from the Masters; Catherine is silent and still in hypnotic trance. These messages regarding past life regression as a form of therapy suggest a universal impact for Weiss. Catherine stirs. Catherine's whisper speaks, according to Weiss, from the perspective of her super conscious mind. He asks why we come back to learn. Why can't we learn as spirits? Her super conscious explains that there are spiritual and physical levels of learning. Some lessons have to be learned in a physical state.

Catherine momentarily drops into a life in which she is a child. Stuart, her current married boyfriend plays the role of her father in that life. Her sister (in that life) is a current friend named Becky, who intrudes in her life although she is not family. These past life soul connections may explain current unexplained life attitudes/behaviors as well as good/bad chemistry in relationships such as comfort with one person and trepidation with another.

The chapter ends with Weiss expressing his fading reluctance in regards to telling others about Catherine. After initial concern with his professional and private reputation, he longer doubts. He realizes he has to gather more data. The process is also making him a placid person. His personal relationships contain deeper honesty. He feels he can open up about his sessions and discovers that associates are interested and receptive. Others admit to their own paranormal experiences. He realizes that reluctance in telling others is what makes the experiences seem rare. He goes on to mention highly respected professionals who have experienced spiritual contact. He does not provide names respecting concerns over their own reputations.



Chapter Ten

Chapter Ten Summary and Analysis

A week later, Weiss listens to the tapes and wonders how he can be approaching the state of renewal alluded to therein by the Masters. He does not regard himself as enlightened. He thinks about what the Masters convey regarding patience and timing. This chapter hops from what Weiss is thinking to Catherine in trance, interruptions by the Masters as well as Catherine's super-consciousness. In his effort to follow the sequence of events as they occurred, this sidetracks Weiss' intent to pursue particular points.

For example, Catherine tells him her latest dream about her father. She describes a house fire, and she gets everyone out of the house while her father shows no urgency to leave. Weiss hypnotizes her and she regresses to a life in which she describes a white prison-like building. She sees soldiers and identifies the place as the Ukraine in 1758. The soldiers have swords. Weiss describes her responses as short and childlike. It becomes clear that in that life she is a boy who is visiting his father in prison. Catherine's voice is upset and sad and she doesn't provide easy detail, reflecting, as per Weiss, the innocence unworldly dialogue of a child. This can be said to contradict the objectivity of the super conscious state from which, Weiss alleges, she speaks sophisticatedly. Taken ahead in time, the boy's father is executed for something he did not do. After she leaves that life, Weiss asks what she learned. She responds, "Many lives were ruined by being hasty in our judgments."

Keeping her in a trance, Weiss now pursues the dream about her father. She recalls going back into the burning house to get his collection of stamps and coins. Weiss interrupts to note the contrast the detail provided under hypnosis compared to her vague original version. He interrupts to praise hypnosis as a "powerful tool" that provides "access to the most remote, hidden areas of the mind but also allowing a much more detailed memory."

Catherine explains that the coins were important to her father. He didn't think he was risking her life. She contradicts Weiss' condemning interpretation of her father's actions. He sent her because he considers her faster, she says. She contends her father didn't understand the risk. Weiss interprets the fire as a symbol of time running out. She sees danger; he doesn't face reality. Weiss suggests that she tries to teach, but her father doesn't want to learn and Catherine agrees. In the middle of this analysis, Catherine's voice is interrupted, and Weiss recognizes one of the Masters.

The Master imparts that we go through many stages. "We shed a baby body, go into a child's, from child to an adult, adult into old age. Why shouldn't we go one stage beyond and shed the adult body?" It is explained that in the spiritual plane we continue growing as well. We make a decision as to why and where to return. The Master provides in-depth detail concerning the need for physical and spiritual learning. Although he does



say one learns faster in the spiritual state, we return often in order to work through relationships. During this channeling, Weiss differentiates Catherine's voice as contributing intermittently. She explains how spirits attempt to make contact. Weiss asks her why the wisdom she has in the hypnotic state is not accessible to her when she is awake. Her response is she doesn't have the capacity to understand it.

Catherine's insight when in super conscious state impresses the doctor. In this state, she pinpoints major character flaws in herself and in Stuart and in Becky. Weiss points out somewhat in gest, that in this state, she would "make an excellent psychiatrist." His conversations with Catherine ignite a multitude of questions about the future. He asks if she can see the future. She responds that it is possible but not allowed, presumably, by the Masters.

This section becomes a bit eerie when Catherine says that the Masters monitor her and put thoughts in her mind. The Masters use many ways of communication in order to prove their existence, she explains. Weiss asks Catherine if there is a "purpose in this explanation of lifetimes." She responds affirmatively, and he asks why she is chosen. She does not know but expands, "When I'm told something, I must learn to trust what I am told... when the person is knowledgeable." Weiss attempts to pursue the issue of trust in connection with her father, but she suddenly shifts to talk about being able to hear under anesthesia.

She had surgery on her vocal cords before meeting Weiss and was terrified in the recovery room. She reveals she could hear the doctor's conversation about her possibly choking. Weiss recalls his surgeon days when joking, cursing and arguments broke out during operations. He wonders if any patients die from fears arising from commentary heard under anesthesia. Catherine restates, "They should be very careful of what they say. I remember it... They put a tube in my throat... I couldn't talk afterward to tell them" Weiss asks if someone told her to relay that information to him, because it had that quality. He asks if the message about anesthesia was important as the source of her choking. She relays that it was more important for Weiss, because he is undoing the harm.

The chapter ends with a minuscule vignette of Weiss reading deeply into his little daughter, who hugs him and tells him she's loved him for forty-thousand years.



Chapter Eleven

Chapter Eleven Summary and Analysis

Weiss opens this chapter alleging that he and Catherine are both becoming psychic. At 3:36 a.m., Weiss is jolted awake by an enlarged image of Catherine's alarmed face. Catherine reports waking at around 3:30 from a nightmare. She reports meditating and visualizes Weiss hypnotizing her in his office and she fell back asleep.

At the next regression, Catherine indicates confusion. This past life description is choppy. There is an explosion of some sort. She fears going near a nuclear bomb or volcano. She does not detail or finish the scene and leaves it. She falls into another lifetime and sees a lady wearing a necklace. Catherine, thirteen years old, is her servant. Her family is poor and they live close by. She says she is treated well. Weiss probes for pertinent events, but she also leaves that life without noting the death experience.

The Masters interrupt the regression but it is Catherine's voice. She sounds confused, and claims there are thoughts and words flying around about harmony and coexistence and matters of balance. Weiss urges her to tell him about this. She now responds in the voice of the poet Master, who tells Weiss, "Everything must be balanced. Nature is balanced. The beasts live in harmony. Humans have not learned to do that. They will eventually destroy themselves. "

Weiss asks when this will happen. He is told, "sooner than they think." The Master says plants and nature will survive. Weiss asks if anything can prevent that. The answer is negative, followed by a cryptic comment regarding balance. It is explained that there will be peace, but not in the earthly dimension. He is told that eventually "we will see that we are all the same. One is no greater than the next... this is just lessons... and punishment." Catherine is momentarily silent, and Weiss notes how profound this is.

She then whispers of seeing a spirit and identifies Edward. Weiss reveals that Edward died that year. Catherine reports she knows it is him though he has no face, she sees him as lights. She explains that Edward is checking if she is all right. Pondering Edward, who shows up in many of Catherine's lives, Weiss ponders the myth of guardian angels. He wonders about if there is a "hierarchy" and who is deemed a guardian angel and who is deemed a Master." He observes Catherine at peace. He expresses awe at her talent to view life and death and to share the wisdom of "gods." He likens the experience to "eating from the Tree of Knowledge."

In Weiss' personal life, other drama was taking place. His mother-in-law, Minette, is dying from cancer. Chemotherapy is no longer helping. He shares his Catherine experience with Minette, once a businesswoman, was very open minded and curious about the events in his office. Weiss, his wife Carole, and Minette take a course in kabbalah, which is described as old mystical Jewish writings. "Reincarnation and in-



between planes are basic tenets of kabbalistic literature, yet most modern-day Jews are unaware of this." This and Catherine's life regressions strengthen Minette spiritually in facing death. She believes in her eternal soul and looks forward to reuniting with her husband. Weiss describes the death of his mother-in-law as his "first" time assisting someone through the death experience, implying that he gained future experience. He discovered his abilities had expanded to grief counseling.

Weiss concludes this chapter with the impassioned belief that more open-mindedness in these matters is essential in the psychiatric field. He contends that other therapists need to consider integrating spiritual concepts into their practices, not necessarily using hypnosis. His mother-in-law's strengthened spirituality enabled her to endure her last days of physical pain. He contends the realization that we are immortal. He reiterates that the need for awareness makes it evident that "more therapists" have to report on "more Catherine's."



Chapter Twelve

Chapter Twelve Summary and Analysis

Three and a half months of therapy have passed. Weiss describes Catherine as "radiant with a peaceful energy." He observes people in the hospital cafeteria joining her at breakfast. She ate alone for years in that cafeteria, he explains. She sinks into instant trance, and begins reporting a life in 1483. She is an old man who has lost a son in a war. She describes constant war and poverty. Weiss moves her forward to find out what she has learned from that life. She only reports "floating" without further amplification.

Weiss describes her as seeming to be listening to someone telling her what to say. She begins to talk about seven planes and that each plane has many levels. She calls one plane the plane of recollection, where you remember only the life that just passed. She explains that only those in higher levels are permitted to view history. She relays that souls have debts to pay and that they progress by paying debts—some faster than others.

Another plane is the plane of transition. Here "it is determined what you will take back with you." It is explained that each of us has dominant vices, such as greed and lust. One returns to overcome greed or lust. If one does not learn, the burden is carried over, and added on to other burdens not learned in a new incarnation. The bright side is that you will have "an easy life" if you overcome a vice. It is further explained, that in these other planes, we in spirit form select what life we will live and why.

Weiss notes that this is not a Master speaking because the speaker refers to "we of the lower levels." Weiss wonders about the other levels. He notes that despite the level of the speaker, the content is rational. He notes how this knowledge speaks of "love and hope, faith and charity" and the examination of vices, virtues and debts owed and calls the advice "practical."

Catherine's trance is sidetracked when Edward appears in Catherine's psychic view with a message involving her sister. Apparently, a baby her sister had out of wedlock put up for adoption. The child will try to find its parents and Edward says he will assist in the reconnection. Her sister and the father are now married. Although the adoption process left no tracing information, their child will find them.

Catherine slips into another life and the intricacy of detail identifies her current grandfather in a prior life in the role of her father. He is a kind generous person. She compares him to the soul of her current father who has not paid debts owed. She explains her grandfather's kindness results from having paid debts he owed. "My father has not paid his debt. He has come back... without understanding... He will have to do it again." Weiss asks if her father has to learn that children are not property, but "people to love."



Catherine affirms and equates the stages we go through in the physical state such as infancy, babyhood, childhood, adulthood to the stages of the soul in the spiritual planes. She says it is a long way to our goal. Weiss asks her about the planes. She responds seven, as she has before. He asks her to name them all since only two have been explained so far. She says she has only been told of the transition and recollection levels. Weiss comments that Catherine is learning at the same time as he is. She reminds him that this is all more important to Weiss than to her, who will not remember it upon waking. She reiterates, "You are my teacher."



Chapter Thirteen

Chapter Thirteen Summary and Analysis

Weiss again describes Catherine as healthy and "beyond normal." Lifetimes are repeating. He does not realize that five months would pass before this and their next or last session.

She describes clay pottery and gold carvings and being in a brown building. She wears a long gown and "funny shoes, like sandals. I have brown hair. I'm working on a man. He has some kind of ... rod in his hand." She sees others making metals. She says the statue she is working on will be sold. She explains that the nobles will receive the finer products. Weiss asks if she deals with the nobles. She says no, this is her job. She is not good at it, but she is learning. She describes the statues being made as religious. Weiss asks her which religion. She responds that "there are many protectors... many gods." She says it is hot and dusty. Weiss notes that this lifetime sounds familiar. She alludes to superstition. There is sickness and people are afraid. They appease the gods by wearing things around the neck to ward off evil. She does not die of the plague although family members do.

Again, Catherine is quiet as if listening to someone. Weiss recognizes that she is listening to a Master. The master conveys more about the planes. "It is on this plane that some souls are allowed to manifest themselves to the people who are still in physical form..." This refers ghostly apparitions and the like. If some task has not been fulfilled, the departed attempts to communicate telepathically or some other way. It is explained that not all souls communicate because it is frightening. Catherine becomes quiet and again describes the famous light. Weiss asks if there is a way to "tap" this light in physical form. The response is that it can be done with the mind. Weiss asks how and Catherine explains that in a very relaxed state in which no energy is being expended, you can renew energy. Sleep is one way to re-energize.

Weiss asks how many lives she's lived and if they've all been on earth. She responds 86 to the former and no to the latter, but does not elaborate. She explains she has not fulfilled all debts and has to experience "all of life." She says progress is always made. Asked if she remembers all 86 lives lived, she says she will "when it is important for me to remember..." She brings up the use of drugs without being prodded. "Some people touch the astral plan by using drugs, but they do not understand what they have experienced...." and describes them as being "allowed to cross over."

Weiss asks about the psychic ability she seems to be developing. She describes it as an important part of evolution for everyone in other planes. She amplifies, development occurs through relationships. She explains that "higher powers ... have come back with more knowledge. They... seek out those who need the development and help them."

The chapter ends with Catherine again dropping in on another part of her life as "Christian" who died of a heart attack in Chapter Five. Weiss brings her out of trance.



Chapter Fourteen

Chapter Fourteen Summary and Analysis

Weiss explains that three weeks lapsed because of a brief illness he had and a vacation Catherine took. Catherine proclaims she is feeling better and thinks hypnosis has done its job. Weiss confesses to having extended the hypnotic regressions longer to fix "minor problems persisting in Catherine's present day life... But what if the Masters had more to tell me?" He wonders how communication can take place without Catherine. He feels sad but knows it is wrong to insist on more sessions.

After five months, Catherine scheduled an appointment with him because she has a recurring nightmare involving snakes. She and others are in the pit. She tends to awaken just as she is trying to dig her hands into walls of the pit.

In spite of the hiatus from hypnosis, she falls easily into a deep state. She describes a hot place. Some one is giving orders. She describes walls sealed with tar to keep air out and grain fresh. She wears blue beads in her black braids and says she's "part of the royal house-hold." There is a feast and she sees blood from animal sacrifices running into a white basin. In the middle of explaining that they own slaves from foreign places. Catherine becomes silent and behaves as if she is listening to someone.

The Master conveying is making it complicated for her to relay clearly. The thoughts are coming too fast, she says². She says they tell her about change and growth and different planes. She adds that there's a plane of awareness and one of transition which was mentioned before. She emphasizes about moving on when lessons are learned or repeating when not learned. "We must experience from all sides." This can be interpreted as needing to experience every race, culture, religion, illness, health, wealth and poverty.

The poet Master takes over to tell Weiss that from now on he has to learn through his own intuition. Catherine's own voice interjects saying she sees one of Weiss' tombstones. "The name is 'Noble': 1668—1724. It is in France or Russia..." Weiss interprets the Master's message to mean there would be no more revelations through Catherine. She is cured; he will from now on have to trust his intuition.



Chapter Fifteen

Chapter Fifteen Summary and Analysis

Two months later, Catherine schedules another appointment. She has something to tell Weiss regarding a psychic astrologer named Iris Saltzman. Her specialty is past life readings. Weiss understands Catherine's need to seek confirmation from another source.

Catherine does not mention her hypnotic regressions to the psychic. Weiss recounts Iris Saltzman's procedure of asking Catherine's date, time and place of birth. Using her intuitive gifts, Iris claims the ability to discover details from people's past lives. To Catherine's surprise, Iris "validated most of what Catherine had discovered under hypnosis."

Weiss describes Iris Saltzman's processes. She enters a trance of her own and her eyes become glazed describing snippets and fragments of Catherine's past lives. Many of the ones detailed in previous chapters filter through including her life as a Spanish woman named Louisa. The ancient Egyptian, who worked on the rites of that culture. The German soldier, who died in the Second World War. Christian's hand injury. Iris also brings to light other lives Catherine never touched on through Weiss.

This use of a psychic to reinforce the author's premise of supernatural experience reported in the previous chapters is an unconventional form of evidence. However, he contends that few so-called psychics can do what Iris Saltzman can do. He warns against fraudulent hacks who are not psychic and use what may be limited talent to "capitalize on people's fears as well as their curiosity about the unknown."

The chapter concludes with Weiss contending that advances and greater understanding of these matters can only take place through "scientific methodology." Serious scientists are needed in this realm of work. He concedes that repeated testing is necessary before theories can be formed. He sites the names of several doctors who "prove this can be done."



Chapter Sixteen

Chapter Sixteen Summary and Analysis

Now, four years after her recovery, Catherine still drops into his office. She has had no need for hypnotic regressions. She is happy and content in ways she never thought possible. Her life as well as Weiss' are changed for the better.

Weiss describes drastic changes in his own life. He considers himself intuitive. He knows very much about patients, colleagues, and friends even before they provide details. He is more concerned with human needs than with gaining notoriety. The messages and experience of the Masters are part of his life. He now meditates regularly. He is more patient, empathetic, and loving, and realizes that "what goes around truly does come around." His wife Carole's personality has been affected similarly. She now focuses on support groups and assist patients dying AIDS.

He still writes scientific papers, and runs the Department of Psychiatry, but he feels his awareness is split between two worlds—the one with five senses, and the none physical with "souls and spirits." His goal is to connect both worlds through research and documentation.

He has recurring dreams in which he is at a lecture asking questions of the person lecturing. He says the teacher's name is Philo. He writes down what he remembers from the dreams as soon as he awakens. Upon rereading the after-dream material, he realizes what he has jotted down touches upon matters of Wisdom and Balance and Harmony. The remaining pages excerpt his writings upon awakening after a dream lecture. The writings are in the same super intelligent vein and tone spoken by the Masters through Catherine in trance. The thoughts incorporate the philosophic doctrine of most religions, which advocate charity, hope, faith, and love, in short, kindness to one another.

In one particular dream, Weiss asks about equality and how obvious it is that we are all so different. Some of us are poor, others rich, some healthy, others sickly, temperaments vary, as do talents and intelligence with math, music and even success varies. The response uses a diamond as a metaphor for the soul, comparing its thousand facets as covered with dirt that must be wiped clean. The soul's objective is to wipe each facet until it reflects brilliance. Once every vice is polished off each one of our thousand facets, the diamond or soul is perfect and flawless.

The dream lectures also cover the damaging effects of man acting negatively and thoughtlessly on self and environment. One dream addresses the psychiatric community directly, warning against moving toward chemical solutions and away from the benefits of personal one on one patient/doctor contact.

Weiss concludes that on occasion he has revelatory dreams. He contends that when he pays heed to dreams and intuitions, "things seem to fall into place. When I do not, something invariably goes awry."



Characters

Catherine

Catherine, whose last name is never given, is a fictitious name for the patient Weiss actually treats. She is a young woman who suffers from many fears and anxieties for which perhaps most people often let go untreated. The quantity and quality of her anxieties are enormous enough to warrant therapy. In spite of numerous phobias, Catherine is not considered psychotic. She does not suffer from delusions, schizophrenia or split personality. She is not a very intellectual or philosophical person by nature. Her progression from anxiety ridden insecurity to self-assurance is traced through the book. Her fears literally strip away as past life traumas are revealed.

Under hypnosis, when she is connected to her "super consciousness," she speaks with consistent wisdom. In that state, Weiss describes her as having enough insight to be a therapist herself. In the course of the hypnotic regression therapy, she gains happiness and awareness not just about herself, but life in general. Her newfound energy attracts people to her. Catherine's importance is not only as a pivotal patient, but also as a vehicle through which spiritual guardians and masters convey messages to Weiss. Readers must take the author's respected credentials and experience seriously if they are to take his main patient's role in this book seriously. Catherine's psychic talent comes to light as her psyche improves. It is, after all, her submerged psychic gift that facilitates the communications that take place. In the Epilogue Weiss describes only one other patient after Catherine as channeling from the in between state.

Brian L. Weiss, M. D

Weiss is a psychiatrist and author of what he asserts in the Preface as a true account of events that took place while treating Catherine. He has written other books on this topic since this one. He describes himself as being a traditionalist as well as a scientist. Weiss does not describe himself as overly religious although his upbringing was conservative Jewish. Before his experience with Catherine, he was skeptical regarding occult matters. As he often reiterates, he has been schooled to do things by the book. The other worldly nature of the subjects forces him to frequently allude to his many credentials and professional accomplishments. This is meant to fortify his thesis for past life regression therapy. His objective is to open up minds of readers and fellow professionals to other therapeutic approaches often not considered conventional. By the end of the book he is no longer worried about his professional reputation. His courage in writing this book exemplifies his strong convictions on the matter. His daring to publish his account makes it credible. He is living the teachings learned from the Masters through Catherine. The Masters and Catherine allude to Weiss in the position of teacher. Through this book, takes steps in the journey of spreading their words to anyone who will listen. After Catherine's cure, his intuition is enhanced by dreams which



contain the same caliber of wisdom imparted to him by the Masters. By the book's end, he continues to use past life therapy successfully with other patients.

Edward Pool

Edward is a doctor on staff as well as a mutual friend of Weiss and Catherine. Edward, whom Catherine trusts enough to discuss her fears, tells Catherine to see Weiss. Under hypnosis, Catherine recognizes Edward playing a variety of roles in her past lives. He shows up as her father in a few other lives. He is usually playing the part of Catherine's guard. At one point Weiss suggests, Edward as her guardian angel. He apparently died during Catherine's period of therapy. It is not disclosed of what he dies from and we only learn of his death when he appears to Catherine in her "in between lives state" as a spirit to give her a message of guidance.

The Masters

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly how many Masters there are. There appear to be two. Occasionally, others described as "guardians" speak. The Masters are entities who channel through Catherine when she is in the in-between lives state. Catherine's voice is said to become huskier when they speak through her. It is by these sound variations that Weiss recognizes who is speaking or conveying. The Masters convey knowledge and wisdom regarding the seven planes the soul must evolve through in order to achieve "wholeness." They compare physical state to school where lessons are learned. The Masters primary message is that as long as lessons of charity, kindness, faith, and love are not learned. the soul is doomed to return to physical form until it learns to be good toward its fellow man. One of the Masters is described as The Poet Master. He conveys much philosophy and wisdom. The other is the Master Spirit. These messages are meant for Weiss, who is destined to eradicate a variety of fears from his patients in the same way his is doing for Catherine. Freeing fears of death from the psyche and proving the soul never dies is the proper way to cure the soul and to evolve faster to achieve its rightful place with God.

Catherine's Father

Catherine's father appears in several of her past lives. He is never a pleasant character. In this life, he molests her while drunk when she is only three. Past lives and dreams reveal that Catherine's soul reincarnates often with her current father's soul. According to the premise of the book, their souls owe debts to one another and have lessons to learn together or from each other. Weiss' extrapolates that Catherine is meant to teach her father, who just doesn't want to learn. He is an alcoholic, who has little belief and treats people like objects.



Carole

Carole is Weiss' wife. She is psychiatric social worker. Weiss brings her in to listen in on Catherine's hypnotic regressions. The message about their infant son dying of a rare heart ailment convinces her there's something to this, however Weiss brings her in for her objective approach to everything.

Minette

Minette is Carole's mother or Weiss' mother-in-law. She is a spiritual open-minded woman by nature. She, Carole and Weiss attend a class on the kabbalah, which incorporates reincarnation into Jewish based writings. She has been suffering from cancer for four years and is about to die. She is receptive to the past life descriptions Weiss has shared with her in connection with Catherine's therapy. Minette's death, and his participation in assisting her passing into the spiritual state, amplify his belief in the occult.

Iris Saltzman

Iris Saltzman is a reputable psychic astrologer who constructs an "astrological wheel" based on Catherine's date, time, and place of birth. She uses this data as well as her intuition to transmit details of past lives. Catherine goes to her in an effort to get a second opinion of all that took place during her treatment under Weiss. According to Weiss, Iris confirmed Catherine's as a Spanish woman, whose name began with the letter L, amongst the many other lifetimes brought forth by Weiss. She also saw snippets of lives Weiss did not touch up during Catherine's hypnotic state.

Von Marks

This is one of Catherine's past life roles. She described being Von Marks, a German fighter pilot, who died fighting the English and the American's fought under Hitler's command in World War II.

Becky

Becky is a current friend of Catherine. She is deemed judgmental and intrusive regarding Catherine's life. In a past life, Catherine recognizes Becky in the role of an older sister, which may explain Becky's tendency to want to intrude although she is not now family.



Objects/Places

Egyptian artifacts appears in non-fiction

Catherine corrects a museum guide while visiting an exhibit but cannot explain why she's so positive of her knowledge. A past life regression points to her working with such artifacts.

Spain appears in non-fiction

Catherine lived a life as a Spanish prostitute named Louisa.

Germany appears in non-fiction

As Von Mark, she was a fighter pilot forced to follow Hitler's orders.

The Physical State of Being appears in non-fiction

Life as a human being on earth.

Spiritual State of Being appears in non-fiction

The soul out of the physical after death.

Spiritual Planes appears in non-fiction

There are said to be seven planes. Only three are illustrated: Transition, Recollection, Awareness. Catherine is cured before the Masters divulge the other four to Weiss.

Levels appears in non-fiction

There are said to be many levels within each spiritual plane. They are not described.

The In-between Lives State appears in non-fiction

Weiss takes Catherine to the end of each lifetime to find trauma that may be affecting her current life. She always reports floating to a white light. From the peaceful in-between state, the Masters channel their messages through her to Weiss. In this state the soul recaps and ponders how and where to reincarnate and which debt to pay..



Debts appears in non-fiction

Debts are the apparent reason for reincarnation. Sins committed in one life are meant to be paid off in the next. If one does not learn in the new life, then that debt, plus others, are carried into the next life..

Lessons appears in non-fiction

Each life is supposed to teach the soul various lessons. Paying off debts, which means overcoming vices and learning virtue, is the learning of lessons meant to advance the evolution of the soul.



Themes

Teaching and Learning.

The idea that the soul returns to the physical state in order to learn lessons is carried throughout in various contexts. Supposedly, lessons learned in each life advances the soul. Life itself is the teacher. Advanced souls are said to return as part of humankind in order to teach and help slower learning souls to advance. It is proposed that some learn faster than others. Weiss himself plays the role of Catherine's teacher in her past lives and in a sense, in this one. Now, ironically, Catherine is also a tool for teaching him as he cures her of her fears using the past life regression process. Because many readers may be skeptical of this topic, Weiss repeats many things very often in different ways for the reader much like a teacher does. Repetition is a way to drive home the ideas the Masters want to pass along. Weiss hammers every element of Catherine's in-between state by repeating and reiterating it. This is the exact thing Catherine and the Masters do when she is under hypnotic trance. When her super-conscious speaks she is in teaching mode. Catherine's teaching role is exemplified in her dealings with her father. Both in past lives and in dreams, he puts her in danger. As Weiss points out, her father does not want to learn. The Masters repeat in several sessions the importance paying debts and learning lessons. Catherine is said to have lived 86 lives thus far. There is a part that alludes to needing to experience every aspect of life from every angle. Each experience is meant to teach.

Trusting

Trust is essential for Catherine to relax and allow herself to be hypnotized in the first place. At the start of the book, she only trusts those with whom she is close. At the book's end, she not only trusts others, but her confidence is such that other people are attracted to her. Weiss describes her as radiant. As a few of her past lives reveal, the issue of trust is crucial for Catherine's spiritual learning. She must learn to trust others and have more faith and not be so cynical, she explains to Weiss after she exits one of her past loves. Her current life is plagued with distrust of those closest to her. Her boyfriend, Stuart, is stringing her along. Her father who abused her as a child is also a tough character to trust. The past life therapy results in her forgiving him. The importance of faith, which incorporates trust, is big in the Masters' lessons. Weiss comes to trust his senses during the paranormal encounters that present themselves while treating Catherine. The Masters gain his trust in telling him details of his son's death. This leads to his trusting the authenticity of their messages. His wife, Carole, and his mother-in-law, Minette have complete trust in Weiss' contentions regarding Catherine's past lives and the in-between state as well. Minette's faith in the spiritual here after contributes to what Weiss describes as a peaceful death after a long bout with cancer. After Catherine is cured, and he is no longer regressing her, Weiss follows the Master's advice to trust his intuition. He begins to have dreams and finds that jotting down the lectures he dreams of, he is continuing that sense of trust. Trust seems to be



the brace that assists in accomplishing the other virtues of charity, faith, hope, and love to name a few. Trusting the author is crucial for belief in the concepts this book presents.

.Equality and Inequality

The Masters touch upon the idea that some souls learn faster than others. They say we are not equal, but strive to be equal. This is touched upon directly only once, but it is a most fascinating theme that actually runs through Weiss' entire reincarnation thesis. Every life Catherine lives is different from every other life. She often plays the role of a servant. None of her lives is luxurious. Most of her lifetimes convey suffering, poverty and pain. Only one or two lifetimes are comfortable. The thought that all are not created equal in physical form but are striving for equality strikes more realistic to our current human condition. Working towards the wholeness of equality is more viable than the belief that we are already equal. If we all recognized each other as truly equal, we would not be struggling or having war. There would be no prejudice or hatred. This opens up questions about the point of it all. If the soul gets dirty from vice, this implies that it was once clean. What is the point of diving into a human body to get it dirty so that it has to ultimately realize the need for cleanliness? Why enter a system that blinds and generates feelings of inequality and misunderstanding? Inequality is reflected in the very lives we all live. It is obvious in caste systems, and class systems, poor, rich, famous, beggar, Catholic, Hindu, Jewish, white, yellow, black. The unequal manner with which the physical state makes us view each other breeds misconception and inequality. The physical hides the true facets of the soul. It does make sense that life on earth contributes to learning necessary lessons toward becoming perfect. If we all do it at different rates, then it makes sense to believe we will all one day cross the finish line of equality. According to one of the Masters' lessons, living life from every perspective is what will make the soul achieve equality.

Fear

Catherine starts off full of anxiety. Getting to the causes of her fears while reliving past life excerpts, shows her that everything is going to be ultimately alright. Although she never listens to the tapes of the masters speaking through herself, she is never frightened by the past life memories she recalls in the waking state. It's as if the release of fear has freed her. This in itself appears miraculous. If Catherine were to drown again would she not be afraid? Weiss' upbringing and background reflect a sturdy and secure psyche. His role in past lives and his self confidence in this one imply an advanced soul who has long conquered fear at the spiritual level. He is perhaps one of the advanced souls who returns to help others. Although he is skeptical at first, his calm manner studies Catherine's past lives objectively. He does not show fear although he is perplexed and often astonished by Catherine's channeling, her voices changes, and messages that come through her. Fear is what he eradicates from Catherine. By the time all anxiety has dissolved from her psyche, Catherine can be said to be on the par with Weiss. The eradication of fear in other patients is what the Masters tell Weiss he is



meant to do. At one point, the Masters explain that fear is energy wasted. Catherine is no longer expending energy in fear, instead she is enjoying life and becoming more intuitive.



Style

Perspective

The subject matter of this book is told in the first person, denoting the author's internal feelings and thoughts. He often expresses surprise at events. This is not overdone because four years have elapsed since he unearthed past life form of therapy with Catherine. Clearly he has digested the matter and when he conveys surprise, it is perhaps because this is how he expects readers to react. Weiss punctuates the narrative with what his thinking was before meeting Catherine by listing his conservative upbringing, family life and his respected career. In each chapter his viewpoint becomes gradually more accepting and more open-minded. His task in writing this book is to only to relate of his experiences but to open other minds to the existence of the paranormal.

Tone

The tone varies depending upon who is doing the speaking. Although the circumstances can be interpreted as somewhat surreal throughout, the author's tone is down to earth. There is a logical calmness in the way he recounts. It can't be said that the dead speak to him, but the reader is coaxed to believe that disembodied entities speak through Catherine. The context, which is full of quotes from these disembodied entities, known as the Masters, often carry a prophetic aspect that does not over-preach but simply states what has to be stated. One feels one is listening to Weiss turn his tape recorder on and off as he adds comment in between quoting Catherine and the Masters.

Structure

It appears and is implied in the Prologue (which summarizes what is to come) that Weiss used notes taken and tapes of sessions with Catherine as an outline closely followed for this writing. The effect often results in repetitiveness. However, each time he repeats something either about himself, Catherine or the masters, more information is revealed. Weiss' thesis could have been written in less chapters. At times there are utterances made by Catherine from her in-between lives state that did not have to be included. Weiss uses constant quotations to delineate what was said by which entity. Quoting captures the essence of what his experience was and is needed for credibility. The quotes also denote a prophetic aspect.. At one point under trance she refers to a "Robert Jarrod" as needing Weiss' help. Weiss asks who he is and how he can help. This is never resolved or explained in depth. It leaves the impression that it was used to thicken the book. Also, once Weiss drives home the idea that Catherine is healing, it is not really necessary to reiterate it at the beginning of almost every chapter. Also, in following his written and taped outline, he recounts Catherine dropping in on lives already visited .



Quotes

"I see white steps leading up to a building, a big white building with pillars, open in front. There are no doorways. I'm wearing a long dress. . . a sack made of rough material. My hair is braided, long blond hair."

"My father knows you [meaning me]. You and he talk about crops, law, and government. He says you are very smart and I should listen to you."

"If something interrupts your ability... to pay that debt, you must return to the plane of recollection, and there you must wait until the soul you owe the debt to has come to see you. And when you both can be reunited in physical form at the same time, then you are allowed to return."

"Our task is to learn, to become God-like through knowledge. We know so little. You are here to be my teacher. I have so much to learn. By knowledge we approach God, and then we can rest. Then we come back to teach and help others."

"They tell me there are many gods, for God is in each of us."

"There are many souls in this dimension. I am not the only one. We must be patient. That is something I never learned either. . . There are many dimensions. . ."

"We also must learn not to just go to those people whose vibrations are the same as ours. It is normal to feel drawn to somebody who is on the same level that you are. But this is wrong. You must also go to those people whose vibrations are wrong. . . with yours. This is the importance. . . in helping ... these people."

"I thought about how people tended to congregate in homogenous groups, avoiding and often fearing outsiders. This was the root of prejudice and group hatreds."

"For now, I just feel the peace. It's a time of comfort. The party must be comforted. The soul... finds peace here. You leave all the bodily pains behind you. Your soul is peaceful and serene. It's a wonderful feeling... wonderful, like the sun is always shining on you. Energy comes from this light. Our soul immediately goes there. It's a magnetic force that we're attracted to. It's wonderful. It's like a power source. It knows how to heal."

"It is as if a large diamond were to be inside each person. Picture a diamond a foot long. The diamond has a thousand facets, but the facets are covered with dirt and tar. It is the job of the soul to clean each facet until the surface is brilliant and can reflect a rainbow of colors."

"Balance and harmony are neglected today, yet they are the foundations of wisdom. Everything is done to excess. People are overweight because they eat excessively."



"Humankind has not learned about balance, let alone practice it. It is guided by greed and ambition, steered by fear. In this way it will eventually destroy itself. But nature will survive; at least the plants will."

"We have not right to abruptly halt peoples' lives before they have lived out their karma. And we are doing it. We have no right. They will suffer greater retribution if we let them live. "



Topics for Discussion

Reincarnation: What are your opinions of Catherine's past lives? Do you think there is another explanation? Do Weiss' contentions make you wonder if you've lived before?

Catherine's accelerated recovery and improved self image are noteworthy. To what would you ascribe Catherine's fast improvement if she was not tapping into past lives? What else could have been eradicating her fears?

Whether or not you subscribe to Weiss' "past lives" explanations, what do you make of the lessons and messages the Masters impart?

In regards to the in-between lives stage, does this in any way match your expectations, if you have any, regarding what happens after death? Reports of seeing a light, floating, and being at peace have been documented elsewhere throughout history. Do you think some part of Weiss' own subconscious brought this about?

What are your feelings regarding hypnosis? Would you like to be regressed to a past life in this manner if it is indeed possible?

Discuss the concept of karma or paying back debts. Does it make sense that the good you do makes you better and that your vices or selfish doings are detrimental?

There is a point in the book during which the Masters say that when debts are paid, the spirit returns to an "easy" life. Would you say this means that those who are well off—many in this country—have learned some spiritual lesson that deems them worthy? Why then do they sit back while others suffer from poverty, ignorance, and illness?

Do you see parallels between the Masters' messages and several of the Ten Commandments? How could Catherine, who is described as not very intellectual or philosophical, tap into such depth of wisdom?