

[August Goforth, a psychotherapist in private practice in New York City, is also a medium. His partner, Timothy Gray, was a writer, editor, and photographer in New York City until he made his transition to his present Risen existence in the early 1990s. "Risen" is Tim's word for those who have transitioned or "died." As guided by two special teams of Risen known as "The Collective" and "The Assembly," August and Tim co-authored the book, *The Risen: Dialogues of Love, Grief, & Survival Beyond Death (21st Century Reports from the Afterlife Through Contemplative, Intuitive, & Physical Mediumship)*. The following material is taken from the chapter, "The Pastime of Reincarnation."]

Tim shared that his ideas about pre-lives, past lives, between-lives, and so on were part of a widespread belief system he had brought into his new Risen existence. "I kept expecting the subjects to crop up but they never did. When I asked about them I was met with varied responses. But some Risen folks, including a few I knew from my earth life, seemed to believe as I did and we spent a lot of energy discussing and debating, wondering and worrying. 'What should we be doing to get ready for our next life on the earth? Who are the teachers to help me with this? Where and when should we start?'" He was convinced that it was important to start planning for an eventual return to life on earth so he could start over and "do a better job."

After relentlessly bothering people there about where he could get information and training about returning to the earth, he was sent to "a special school for pests, where even know-it-alls can be educated." In turn, he shared with me, to the best of his self-professed limited understanding, some of the things brought to his attention about what he calls "the pastime of reincarnation."

Why *pastime*? "Because," Tim said, "It's all just a game, a pastime—literally, a *past time*." He acknowledges that many will consider this an outrageous and even heretical suggestion, and so encourages each one of us to investigate on our own, and not take what he or anyone else says as true. "Truth," Tim said, "Looks different from diverse perspectives."

In an attempt to encapsulate some of the more complex ideas, Tim offers three brief suggestions as summaries to keep in mind:

1. One's reality is defined by three I's: Individuality, Intensity, and Infinity.
2. Only one individual can claim that individual's life experience.
3. When Original Creator Source gifts us with individuality, It always gets it entirely right the first time.

Tim goes into great depth regarding various "Risen theories" about the continuance of life and living, and it seems clear that many on the Other Side have similar as well as conflicting ideas about the topic of rebirth. It seems to be a robust topic of research and debate there, stimulating more questions rather than resolving them.

Here are a few examples:

Theories of Race Evolution

"Classical" reincarnation – meaning, returning to the same Earth but in a different role -- may have actually once existed countless earthly eons ago, but was phased out or evolved to something entirely different, and so is no longer an active process of transition. Tim cites examples of certain older, indigenous cultures that may have vanished because of their transformative evolution.

Theories of Individual Evolution

Allegedly, some individuals return to earth in the "classical" model because they haven't yet evolved to a higher vibrating state of conscious awareness, enabling them to change their belief system and thus break free of the cycles of birth-death-rebirth, to then "de-planet" off and beyond the earth

into other dimensions. Such individuals differ from those who try to focus those same abilities to maintain beliefs of reincarnation, and where the goals are different.

Theories Discounting Pre-existence

Tim elaborates on this line of thought which branches from the theories of individual evolution:

“There appears to be some indication that the vast majority of Risen—perhaps all—did not exist as individuals prior to their human existence on the earth. Those who were born on the earth first came into existence there as individuals. We have to start somewhere, and that is what the earth is for. Humanity appears to have been custom-made to extend life through a particular process known as ‘reproduction’ which is tailored—or ‘designed,’ as some Risen theorists assert—specifically for life on a planet such as the earth. It has been observed on worlds in other dimensions that the life-extension process does not always follow this plan.

“The purpose of Earth, then, would be as the starting place for our birth as an individual. It provides us with an initial environment in which to begin to get a sense of the individuality that is ours forever, and nothing more than that. Even if we *could* be reborn back onto the planet, we would never be able to learn all there is to know, no matter how many times we return—which some seem to believe is the absolute requirement for eventual de-planeting. As our time on the earth is, by default, limited in an earthly fashion, so then are the experiences within that time.

Theorie of Mega-Individuality

This theory involves the notion of a group soul, where many individuals are sparked from a “mega-being.” Perhaps they will eventually all reunite into yet another mega-being. Tim explains: “These sparks would be seeded possibly on just one world, such as earth, or on several—perhaps even other dimensions would be utilized. Not all would necessarily be seeded at the same time in the same era, but scattered across many time periods to gain a multi-experience as extensive and abundant as possible for the sake of the group mind. They would all have varying awareness of one another as well as individual feelings of pre-existence. This might explain the feelings of having lived other lives in other times. Individuals would be interconnected through their own evolving group underconscious. Their rate of return to Mega-Being Mind would be greatly different amongst them, spanning perhaps what an earth-mind might experience as trillions of millennia, or longer. There would be an intuitive connection between those who have transitioned into the astral dimensions. The configurations would be creatively endless in order to achieve the maximal amount of experience, information gathering, and communication. Those who have strong intuitive connections with the sparked individuals in other dimensions might struggle with confusion about where their real natal home is.”

Tim summarizes:

“So it appears to me thus far that we *are* reborn upon our transition, but this rebirth is always into a *new* world and a unique state of existence, not back into the old one. The old one no longer exists—life is experienced in the continual *now*. We develop and carry forward the template for our new life. *We* are the template, and a new world will simultaneously arise from us as we arise from it, as a direct result of how we lived our lives on earth or from wherever we are continuously transitioning, as we transmute ever onward.

He goes on to clarify:

“It’s sometimes inferred that our spirits will take on new bodies again. Actually, our spirit will be our actual body, and then at some point it becomes the cocoon for the next transition. A higher

vibrating form of spiritual being will then evolve from that event, eventually moving on to yet another new geography. The spirit then becomes a newer form of body that is appropriate to the higher vibration. It cannot return to earth to be reborn once again because its new and higher state of vibration would no longer be appropriate there. Upon transition one is no longer spiritually human because of the higher vibration, and so cannot return to being earthly human in the equivalent way.

This brief article barely does justice to the rich extensive material Tim was able to bring forth, going into great and detailed depth regarding the more elusive psychospiritual issues. "The underlying factor consistently supporting the generally unchallenged belief in reincarnation is that old nemesis, the fear of mortality—and even fear of immortality. The thought that one is immortal and will have to move beyond the earth, never to return, can be extremely threatening, especially if one has not taken the time to become informed of the facts about the process."

Virtual Reincarnation

He expounds on a novel but brilliant hypothesis, which is that while we cannot literally reincarnate, we can *virtually* reincarnate:

"If one wants to reincarnate, it's not possible in the ultimate way of creating another original life for oneself. However, if you want to have the *experience* of a pre-existence to the primal birth on the home planet, or the *experience* of reincarnation, you can have it, including that of being a co-creative manifestor. As we make our own self-experiences we also make our own 'rules' or 'laws' about our experiences."

I commented that it all sounded like some fantastic, enormous game.

"So why can't it be? If you want to step into the part and play it to the hilt, who says you can't? If you want to make up a game about reincarnation and make it seem so real that it appears real, why not? No reason whatsoever. And isn't it interesting that the word 'game' is synonymous with pastime?"

Hesitantly, I dared to ask, "So, how is this done?"

"It appears that any manifestation of reincarnation is not enacted upon the original version of earth. But there's no reason why a person can't manifest yet another experience on another version of earth that is completely like the one they left. *Mind is that powerful*. Everyone can manifest their very own earth to return to, exactly like the one they left. Of course there would have to be a built-in restriction of self-imposed amnesia to make it suit one's beliefs and needs, and this amnesia can be tailored in any way. And if they want, souls can co-creatively manifest the experience of being together or finding one another as their own desires for drama dictate. Sometimes there are 'leaks' that get past the amnesia—hence, feelings of déjà vu, past lives, and all kinds of 'evidence' that would manifest to help sustain the illusion. Since the illusion is built directly upon a foundation of Reality it has an apparent feeling of reality all its own and will respond to its manifestor's mind as directed."