

# Could you

Do you have a fascination with a particular country or culture or perhaps a phobia that seems to defy logic? The explanation, according to Sarah Payne, might lie in a previous life. **Sheena Grant** reports

**T**he idea that we could have lived before, perhaps many thousands of times, is fascinating to most of us, even if only because it gives us an opportunity to pour scorn on the notion.

But past life regression therapist Sarah Payne isn't worried by the sceptics.

"I'd love those people to visit me," she laughs. "I'd say to them, 'give it a go and see what happens'."

What might happen, it would appear, could be anything.

The 50 or so clients Sarah has seen since 2013, when she became a registered practitioner with the Past Life Therapists Association, have discovered 'lives' of huge diversity, from being a German Second World War fighter pilot to a 12th Century Romanian mercenary and a woman living in a mud and straw house with smoke rising through the roof in 1486.

"You have no idea what you are going to find," says

Sarah. "It's always fascinating and there are good therapeutic reasons for considering regression and how it can impact on your present life. It is not just for satisfying curiosity. The chances are your subconscious will take you to see a particular scene for a reason, something that relates to your present life that you need to learn from so it can get resolved and discharged."

Sarah herself believes she has lived more than 9,500 lives, each with a 'soul group' of individuals she encounters over and over again as they travel through time together, learning important lessons as they go. She first got interested in past life therapy when she was looking for something to complement the feng shui and dowsing (clearing people's homes of negative energies) she already did.

"It was at a time when I had started to get a pain in my jaw and neck on the right side," she says. "I was always into alternative health and started reading a book about regression. I thought it sounded interesting and went to see a woman in Lowestoft (who no longer practises). The first thing I went into was a life where I was a young lady walking along a cliff top in Sussex and I saw a man who I had a strong attraction to. He throttled me and I saw myself black out and then lying on the ground.

"The man who had throttled me was a man I had just started a relationship with in this life. I went back to see the therapist and discovered more about it.

Immediately, after I had gone back and understood why it happened, my neck pain went. This man and I were soul partners. We had nine lives together, playing out a different dynamic each time. The soul is learning. You play out different dynamics in different lives."

While this may all sound a little outlandish, Sarah believes

# have lived life after life?

it makes perfect sense and goes a long way to explaining why some people feel they are soulmates, like they have known each other forever even though they've only just met, or conversely why they might take an instant dislike to someone. And then there's that feeling of *deja vu* we've all had. "All these things, including interests in other cultures and people who have innate abilities or are musical prodigies or artists, especially if there is none of that in their family, have to come from somewhere," she says.

During her own regression Sarah also saw herself on a Mongolian battlefield with her 'present' son and on a galleon which sank. "I was so blown away," she says. "I thought it was incredible, the images were so vivid. It changed my whole perspective about life. I know I'm going to come again now. I used to run here and there, feeling I didn't have time to do all I wanted to do. I've stopped that and become much calmer."

A past life session with Sarah, who lives in Elmsett, takes around two hours. Regression, which she describes as like doing a Google search of all the memories in your past, is a form of gentle hypnosis that starts with visualisation and relaxation techniques. Clients are not 'asleep' and are still fully in control but are taken, in their imagination, through a garden, down some steps and to a chair with a meadow on one side and a wall with a series of doors with dates above them on the other.

"I ask their subconscious mind to take them to a door that is relevant to them at this point in their life," she says. "I ask them to open the door and close it behind them so none of the memories can escape into this life. It's a perfectly safe means of accessing other areas of the brain and soul memories. In fact you drift in and out of hypnotic states naturally every day without realising it. Whenever you get engrossed in something, lose track of time, or drive to a destination on autopilot, you are in a state of hypnosis. You could think of it as being 'in the zone' but in this case with specific intent to view past lives."

Sarah always follows a set script, asking the questions in a certain way to avoid creating false memories and leading someone in their answers. And, she says, although people can see traumatic things, perhaps even their own death in a previous life, it is viewed as a dispassionate observer and doesn't cause distress.

"Perhaps you realise that was then, not now," she says. "The first life you see when

you go into hypnosis is the one that is the most important for you now. You might see one life or perhaps as many as 20."

After a session, Sarah will spend time chatting with clients to help them order their thoughts and also provides them with a transcription and recording of their regression. "During the regression I ask them for an affirmation, some words they can bring back with them that are important for this life," she says. "You have to take it seriously and not just let someone go into a scene. There is a skill in questioning people. You've got to ask open questions and focus for any clues. You've got to get them going up to people and ask them to look them in the eyes."

In this way, says Sarah, people can be identified who may look different to how they look in the now. People can, she says, change gender from life to life as well as the sort of relationship they share. On average, she reckons, there are 13 years between one life ending and another beginning. Some souls are relatively young while others are old souls, those who have lived many times before and can, in their present life, appear wise beyond their years. "If you meet someone who is quite reflective and takes a broad approach to life you could guess that they are an older soul, older than someone, who, say, takes a simpler approach to life," says Sarah.

When the soul's education is complete, she believes, there will be no more rebirth. "Eventually you get to a point where you don't come back again," she says. "I think our essence always stays somewhere. I suppose you might call it heaven."

Sarah says regression therapy can be useful for pains and phobias, such as being scared of dogs, loud noises or confined spaces. But how, I wonder, does she know the things people 'see' aren't just the product of their imaginations.

"Because people don't come up with the things you would expect if that was the case," she says. "Hardly any of them have been important people. Many of them are very ordinary and the detail of what they tell you is extraordinary, the sounds and even smells they experience. There was a woman who saw herself in Austria or Germany many years ago. She was talking about her wifely duties. She said: 'It's a good life. My husband doesn't beat me too much.' You just wouldn't make that stuff up or imagine it. The

chap who saw himself as a German pilot on bombing raids over London was fascinated by German culture and BMW engines in this life. He got shot down but seeing their own death doesn't seem to traumatise people. They might go above their body and go towards 'the light'.

"You can see relatives and think, 'that is my granddad', even though they might not look like your granddad. That's why you have to go and look into a person's eyes. You have to see the soul. You could even see a grandparent as a young child in another life."

"One lady who came for regression went back 12,000 years BC and described a herd of wild pigs running by. Another wanted to see what would happen when she died and found herself going towards the light, which she found incredibly comforting. She saw people she hadn't seen for years."

Very occasionally, Sarah has known people to see themselves as animals in previous lives. "That doesn't happen very often though," she says.

For Sarah, the effects of regression are extraordinary. "It makes you understand more about your life, why we are here and what happens beyond," she says. "I'm convinced more people should do it."

■ Visit [www.pastliferegressionsuffolk.co.uk](http://www.pastliferegressionsuffolk.co.uk) for more information.

■ Sarah Payne, past life regression therapist.



## My year of being thrifty Sheena Grant

### To eat a broccoli stem or not?

What do you do with the 'trunk' of a broccoli 'tree'? I only ask because the behaviour of a customer in the Ipswich town centre branch of Sainsbury's Monday lunchtime got me thinking about it.

As I selected my broccoli I could see this woman out of the corner of my eye, breaking florets off a sizeable head of broccoli and putting them in a bag. When all the outer florets were detached she returned what remained of the stalk to the shelf. I was transfixed by her brazen behaviour, half expecting a member of staff to tap her on the shoulder and tell her it wasn't on, especially as the discarded broccoli would either be bought by someone else or, more likely, wasted.

I couldn't help wondering at the reason for her butchery. Perhaps I should have asked but I was too surprised to form words. Also, in truth, I felt a bit embarrassed on her behalf. I had to assume that, as broccoli is sold by weight, she only wanted to pay for what she was actually going to eat.

Having arrived at that conclusion I wondered two things, well, three really: was this woman, in fact, a thrifty hero? Could I bring myself to follow her example and why is so much broccoli stem on sale in the first place - is it just another way of ripping customers off?

It wasn't until I got back to the office and relayed the tale that I started to wonder something else.

"Don't you eat the stem?" asked my colleague Steve, showing yet again that he is much more thrifty than me.

Until then, it had never occurred to me that you could eat broccoli stem. Even my guinea pigs turn their noses up at it.

But, according to Steve, it's perfectly edible, not woody and hardly requires any more cooking time than florets. In fact, according to a website called The World's Healthiest Foods, broccoli stems have a sweet flavour and more fibre than florets.

You can also eat any leaves attached to the stems. The website advises peeling off the outer layer of broccoli stem before slicing it and cooking for two or three more minutes than the florets. If you don't fancy that, you could add stem pieces to casseroles, soups and vegetable stock.

For me, it's the start of a whole new relationship with broccoli. We're all paying for that stem after all. Well, nearly all of us, anyway..

■ [sheena.grant@eadt.co.uk](mailto:sheena.grant@eadt.co.uk), 30 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP4 1AN, tweet #ThriftyLiving.

Sarah says regression therapy can be useful for pains and phobias such as being scared of dogs, loud noises or confined spaces

I should have asked but was too surprised to speak

