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## What Happens To Us When We Die?

### Is the life we are leading all there is – or does something come after?

Many tend to ponder what happens when we die; I know I do. In my case, the question can be prompted by something quite simple like pricking a finger with the point of a kitchen knife. I actually did this the other day. As well as being a reminder to be more careful in future, it made me think – that hurt me; not someone else, but *me*. A silly notion maybe, because everyone experiences pain at some time; and although we might share another's anguish and feel for them; it is in a removed, objective way. We view the world from our own viewpoint. Our being is egocentric, focused specifically on where we are and whatever happens to us. Our individual senses are uniquely personal and are incontrovertible conscious evidence that we are a particular living, breathing creature, and not someone else.

I imagine I've lost you by now, waffling on in an attempt to explain a concept that has been debated by philosophers for centuries. Should that be so, I haven't explained myself very well. I am no more important than each and every one of you; and conversely you are no more important than me. We all serve a purpose in this life, which is why we were born; and once that purpose is achieved in full, we die. When and how this is decided is anybody's guess. One second we are here, the next we've gone; but is that it, nothing more...?

I sincerely believe there must be something after death; otherwise those years of growing, learning, helping others, or being self-indulgent would seem superficial and a waste of effort. And for those who are convinced that death is an end of it, plain and simple, think on this: if we pass away to become nothing once our use-by date expires; does this mean every other person on Earth who still has time left to live will suddenly cease to exist; merely because, for us anyway, our own light has burned out? Of course not – life for them continues. Maybe that's the way it is for the dead too.

There are a few who will claim there is an afterlife, having glimpsed it while dying. It may have been in a hospital bed when they flat-lined. Before the doctors managed to bring them back they believe they witnessed life after death; or at least the doorway to it in the form of an all-encompassing white light. Others maintain they had an out-of-body experience, standing in the same room watching themselves being resuscitated. They are so convinced that one would have to concede something strange did actually happen to them; but dying...? I am more inclined to think that they were on the verge of it in a transitional state between life and death. Being eventually returned to their former consciousness, presumably their time wasn't up and they were alive again; but it does pose a question: for those seconds or minutes, where did they go? For them it was somewhere else other than a physical existence; metaphysical and paranormal certainly. Those fleeting visits to a place beyond whatever had been before seem to suggest there is more after death than just oblivion.

What if there are multiple stages of life, something in the nature of concentric circles? A being might spend time in one; then die and move to an adjacent one. Should the

dividing line between be tenuous and able to be crossed back again, this could explain ghosts. I know, I'm sounding even crazier now; but there are stories about people who have felt the presence of some intangible, invisible being attempting to communicate with them. The concentric-circle theory supports this; as do the claims of those who died, went somewhere else, then returned. It could also lend credence to claims of a person relating events in the life of someone who had died long ago and whom they had no prior knowledge of. What if suggestions are true: that ghosts are the restless souls of dead people who have not passed over; and who choose not to walk into the light because they have unfinished business? Nonsense the skeptics will say. Anyone, however, who was completely alone in their home and suddenly felt a tap on the shoulder, or heard the familiar whisper of a loved one who had passed away; they would definitely disagree with the Doubting Thomas's. For them it was real enough, undeniable; and in many cases they are happy to embrace the visitation.

So, we are back to the question of what happens after death. Are we reincarnated, born again as someone or something else; and is this new life a re-run of a previous existence? It's a possibility that supports the recall-of-a-former-life theory. On the other hand, an existence after death could be totally abstracted from anything we now know. If the idea that only the physical body dies, but the soul continues ad infinitum; what might be the reason? If the soul is regarded as the essence of a life already lived; and it held the entire knowledge and experience accumulated by just one person; that would be a valuable asset when passed on by whatever means to future generations.

Most of us would hope there is something coming to us; a peace-ever-after reward for the life we've lived. It would be nice to think so; but in the meantime we have to carry on making use of whatever time we have left. Here are a few suggestions from my self-help eBook A Season of Happiness...

**As with any goal, seeing what happens after death could help us approach it fully prepared and in the knowledge that we have done our best along the way. Of course, there is no tangible proof of what comes after life and we can only imagine what we are working towards. So, what's the answer?**

**Consider this - your primary function is to experience and learn in preparation for the next stage of your existence. Today and every day, be the person with whom you are most comfortable, someone you can admire and respect. AND ENJOY SIMPLY BEING: Sit in a quiet corner, close your eyes and breathe deeply and slowly. Concentrate on making as little sound as possible. Extraneous stimuli will invade your consciousness, confirming your sensual existence on a physical plane. This is your life, one you can prove and experience. Enjoy it and don't be in such a hurry to seek another until you have made full use of your current one.**

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