



Essean Perspective Series

PRESENT AND FORMER LIVES: A LINK TO THE PAST

There exist two fundamental sources of experience vital to the successful transaction of life. Those may be defined as Environmentally Acquired Data (EAD) and Genetically Acquired Data (GAD). EAD and GAD formulate the basis of our awareness and existence. They provide information regarding the past and present, together with insights into the future that, for the most part, we take for granted. Yet, in fact, our material existence depends upon both data sources. They comprise the substance of cosmic "revelation" without which we could not function, let alone survive.

Environmentally Acquired Data (EAD) is fairly easy to comprehend. It consists of our day-to-day experiences. These experiences affect the basic fiber of our beings, instigating subtle microscopic changes that alter the way we function. For the most part, there is no real controversy over what EAD does. We merely question the impact it has on future lives. In other words, we are uncertain as to how much if any of the environmentally acquired experiences is genetically transferred to become resident in the genes we pass on to our progeny.

Genetically Acquired Data (GAD) is a practical reality. It consists of biologically transmitted information that we inherit from our ancestors, extending backward in time to the emergence of life on Earth. The ability of a single embryonic cell to reproduce itself and develop into a complex member of a certain living species with the capacity to act and react in the cause of its material self-preservation, and the capacity for instinctive behavior such as web building in spiders or the complex social behavior of bees and ants are living proofs of the existence of GAD. These capacities which we usually refer to as inherited instincts or genetic programming are aspects of GAD. Such evidence abounds in Nature, from the simplest microorganism to the most complex mammalian species including ourselves.

Within the bounds of our beings, GAD is more than simple reflexive behavior. In its generally recognized form, it is a complement of behavioral programs imprinted upon the basic cellular structure of our bodies. However, in a real sense, it should more appropriately be called our ancestral memory for it is a history of living experiences that have been accumulated since the primordial beginnings of earthly life and transmitted across the eons to produce the bodies we now possess. In some manner, each generation adds to the GAD pool of information by acquiring experiences that create microscopic mutations and subtly change the way the acquiring entity behaves. We now are able to identify the gross DNA mutations anticipate some changes our bodies will undergo in time. However, the subtleties of that DNA transfer still elude us for more unexplained data appears to be transferred to the cellular structure of the brain. Under appropriate conditions, we can regress and evoke memories of past events and lives that science is at a loss to explain. In some aspects, it appears as if the human brain functions as a time machine, able to transport us backward to eras far removed from the present day, providing data of former lives. Logically, it would seem plausible that, if instinctive patterns of behavior that are not readily evident in DNA can be transferred from one generation to the next, more elaborate patterns (memories) could be transferred as well. Thus, it is incumbent upon us to investigate further this phenomenon of ancestral memory and seek more effective ways of delving into our storehouse of GAD.

It has been said that to pose a question, we first must have some inkling of the answer we seek. If this is so, all answers to life's mysteries thus far gleaned by modern science may have been resident within our minds, awaiting the proper questions. Possibly, we should devote equal time to the exploration of our own minds. Who knows what may unfold. We even may discover more wonders by probing our memories of former lives.

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