

Introduction

TO RESEARCH THE PRE-BIRTH PLANNING of life challenges, I collaborated with four extraordinarily gifted mediums and channels. Together we obtained information about the pre-incarnation plans of dozens of individuals, ten of whom share their stories in this book. In this introduction I will explain how I found these individuals, how the mediums and I researched their pre-birth planning, and mediumship and channeling in general. The conceptual underpinnings of pre-birth planning—that is, the reasons why we as souls choose to incarnate and experience challenges—are then presented in chapter 1.

Finding Interviewees

People replied to messages I posted to Internet news groups and bulletin boards. In some instances I asked specifically for individuals who were aware of (or at least open to) the possibility of pre-birth planning. On other occasions I expressed an interest in finding those who could talk about their challenges in a metaphysical context. At times I simply asked for people who wanted to discuss the underlying spiritual meaning of the difficulties they had faced. I sought variety and balance in their experiences and backgrounds.

Generally, interviewees said they were motivated by a desire to help others who face the same challenge. Of the ten eventually selected for this book, three used pseudonyms, and all said they would like to hear from readers. You will find their contact information in appendix A.

Eight of the ten interviewees planned their life challenge as a primary experience; that is, they sought the challenge from the initial stages of their pre-birth planning and they knew the challenge was highly likely to occur. One (Doris, chapter 2) planned her challenge as a secondary experience, meaning that its occurrence would be determined by her response to a primary challenge. Another (Bob, chapter 4) did not select his challenge during his initial pre-birth planning but instead created a new life blueprint at the soul level after an unexpected event at birth. Of the many pre-birth plans I examined, these were the only ones in which the challenge was not designed as a primary experience. I included these stories as important illustrations of how we as souls are aware of and use potential forks in the road for personal growth.

As you read the stories, you'll probably wonder whether you planned your own life challenges. My research suggests that the vast majority of life challenges are indeed selected. In general, the more profound the challenge the more likely it was chosen before birth. If a particular experience is important enough for you to ponder whether you planned it, then it is likely you did. One important exception, however, concerns experiences our intuition warns us to avoid. Unplanned challenges can occur when we ignore our intuitive promptings; therefore, internal "danger signals" are to be acknowledged and honored at all times.

It is not, however, my intent to suggest that all life challenges are planned, either as probabilities or as possibilities.

When we incarnate we have free will, and we can exercise our free will to create challenges that were not part of our pre-birth planning. The operative word is *create*. I believe we are the creators of everything we experience, and unplanned challenges occur when we vibrationally draw them to us because we need the wisdom they can engender. (In such instances intuition would not guide us away from the learning we need.) Our growth derives from the experiences themselves, regardless of whether or not we planned them. Therefore, this book will be most helpful if you focus on *why you might have* planned a particular challenge in your life, not on *whether* you did.

The question of *why* will be addressed as you read the stories of others' pre-birth planning. In their planning you may hear echoes of your own. I would suggest you not limit your reading only to those stories dealing with challenges you or your loved ones face, even if you are in crisis. Challenges that appear to be quite different from one another may have been planned to teach similar lessons or result in similar growth. You may find your *motivations* as a soul in the story of someone whose life is, at least on the surface, nothing like yours.

The Stories

Each story begins with an interview in which the individual and I focus on a specific life challenge. These interviews should be read carefully. Often, they contain details that appear at first to be unrelated to the challenge but that in the sessions with the mediums prove to be essential for a full understanding. I have not related complete personal histories; therefore, there may be no reference to certain blocks of time in the person's life.

To make this book as helpful as possible, I focused on common life challenges and organized the chapters by type of challenge. In some respects the stories build on one another, and the first stories provide basic information about metaphysics that will help you better appreciate subsequent stories. I therefore encourage you to read them in order.

Of the many mediums and channels with whom I have worked, I consider the four on these pages—Deb DeBari, Glenna Dietrich, Corbie Mitleid, and Staci Wells—to be among the most talented. Each has conducted thousands of readings over the course of their respective careers. Their contact information is presented in appendix B. I have had personal sessions with all of them, and they were extremely accurate in providing information about my life they could not have known without true psychic abilities, abilities that are different for each. As Corbie explained to me, mediums and channels are like professors at a university: each has a particular specialty. If you attend a faculty cocktail party, you would not approach the biology professor with a sociology question, nor would you ask a scholar in the English department to solve a mathematical equation. Rather, you would recognize their various areas of expertise and appreciate what each has to offer.

Each interview is followed by one or more sessions with the mediums. I had told the interviewees that I would like to begin by asking the medium, “Was this challenge planned before birth, and if so, why?” They had agreed that this was a sound starting point, and further inquiries grew out of the response to that question. In some instances they permitted me to handle most, if not all, the questioning during those sessions.

Generally, when medium Staci Wells did not conduct the primary reading, I asked her and her spirit guide to do a

supplementary reading. This reading served three important functions. First, it provided another confirmation that the life challenge had indeed been planned. Second, it offered additional information about that planning. Third, because Staci has the rare ability to visualize and listen to our pre-birth planning sessions, all her readings (whether primary or supplementary) provided *actual conversations* from them. This dialogue afforded a remarkable glimpse into the nonphysical realm, one in which we were privy to the hopes, feelings, and motivations of souls. As you will see, these conversations focused exclusively on the planning of life challenges—not because souls don’t plan other aspects of their lives, but because Staci and I asked her guide to bring us only the most relevant portions of the discussion. Interviewees were present for primary but not supplementary readings, though supplementary readings were always done with the person’s consent. Before each reading I provided Staci with the interviewee’s name and birthdate, which her spirit guide needed to access information about that person.

In the pre-birth planning sessions that Staci hears, souls speak in the first person; however, in two channelings not conducted by Staci, a soul refers to itself as “we.” Staci’s spirit guide explained that the souls saying “I” are focused on the one life that is being planned, whereas the souls saying “we” are focused on their many previous incarnations.

Following the sessions with the mediums, each story concludes with my commentary. In these commentaries I draw upon my study of pre-birth planning and metaphysics, including the many conversations I had with nonphysical beings like spirit guides and angels, to expand upon the sessions.