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So you want to meet another of your selves?

Real estate broker offers how-to seminar

The founding fathers were pretty metaphysical. You know, the third eye and the pyramid on the dollar bill — that was their idea. I wondered about that quite a bit after reading "Still Life With Woodpecker" by Tom Robbins. He too, is into pyramids, like the ones on the Camel cigarette package decorating the book's front cover.

"A man is not completely born until he is dead," Benjamin Franklin once said. And at the age of 22, he wrote his own epitaph:

*"The body of B. Franklin,
Printer,
Like the Cover of an Old Book,
Its Contents Torn Out
And
Stripped of its Lettering and Gilding,
Lies Here
Food for Worms,
But the Work Shall not be Lost,
For it Will as He Believed
Appear Once More
In a New and more Elegant Edition
Revised and Corrected
By the Author"*

At the Eugene Hilton, Benjamin Smith recently shared this historical piece with nine women at a "past-life" seminar.

Smith asked the group to be open and to accept new ideas "with love and understanding," as he explained concepts of the past-life notion and led participants through regressions of their past, present and future lives.

According to Smith, everyone has been through every space and time. For example, Smith said he has ventured from being a cave man, a monk in a Buddhist monastery, a sailor on Spanish seas, a farmer in Kansas and a gangster in Portland, to his present position as a real estate broker in Eugene.

Though two-thirds of the world's population believes in reincarnation, the western region is far behind the rest of the world in past-life concepts, Smith said. A Gallup poll indicated that 75 percent of the American population believes in some form of life after death.

"Reincarnation, as a belief system, is ancient," Smith said. He said that belief in past lives can be traced back to the origins of Buddhism, Hinduism and some forms of Mormonism.

Smith says individuals need to trust their intuition, especially when exploring past lives.

"If you see the Buddha on the road, kill him," Smith said.

"You must accept the fact that you have all the answers, but I don't have the answers for you," he said.

Many Westerners are taught to shut out their intuitions, Smith said. "But in this past-life exploration, I can help you get there," he assured.

Recognizing that people have different perceptions of truth is one of the main concepts of reincarnation, Smith said. "I am here to talk to you about the basic truths. But what is truth for me may not be truth for you."



Smith stressed that during the regressions, the workshop participants needed to let their minds flow creatively beyond darkness.

"If you see only black, create something," he said.

Smith led the group through four, 20-minute regressions: highest level of past life, parallel (other current life times), relationships and progressive (future) lives.

Smith got into the metaphysical realm by cosmic readiness, he said.

In 1968, his stepson found a book, "How to Make Your ESP Work For You," by Harold Sherman, in the middle of the road. The boy brought the book home and said, "this is for you, Dad," Smith said.

Smith grew more interested in metaphysics when he had a psychic reading done, and everything he had been told in the reading came true. The psychic told Smith that "everything is going to get worse before it gets better." Shortly after that, Smith and his wife divorced.

Smith went to a past-life seminar after these two incidents. He says he regressed and found himself as a woman making love to a man. It was the first time he felt emotions in a regression, and suddenly the connection with a former life became very real, he said. Smith recalled the first thing he said when he came out of the regression: "You ladies aren't telling us everything."

Individuals interested in Smith's next seminar, which will be held on March 23, can contact him at 485-8550 for more information.

Story by Shannon Kelley
Illustration by Shawn Bird

Each regression followed a similar pattern beginning with deep breathing and relaxation and ending with a count to five, then Smith's abrupt: "Open your eyes... open your eyes... open your eyes!"

After each regression, Smith asked group members to explain what they experienced and how they felt. Most of the women gave detailed descriptions of the time frame, what they were wearing, their residence and environment and the people they were with.

"Are there palm trees in Egypt," one woman asked after going through a past life regression. She had experienced her highest level life as an Egyptian woman, but she said she didn't know Egypt had palm trees until her regression.

Following the progressive regressions, one woman said she saw herself on another planet looking down at the earth and seeing Atlantis coming out of the Atlantic Ocean, and California separating from the other states.

After two regressions, the group took a break. Most of the women went out to the lobby for cigarettes and coffee. Regressions are tiring, according to Smith.

During the break, Smith put his hand on the forehead, or third eye, of a woman who was experiencing visual blocks. Smith explained that this action transfers energy and can trigger a more clear response in an individual. The third eye is an area that needs to be revitalized, he added.

After working with the woman, he went out to the lobby and explained to the group that practice of regression and meditation is not only good for the mind and soul, but for the physical body as well. Smith said that when he first started playing with metaphysics, 17 years ago, he was 20 pounds overweight and had relatively normal blood pressure. Now, at 80 pounds overweight, Smith says his blood pressure has dipped below normal, and his doctor is amazed.

Smith said, "We are each God and the combined total of God."

Also, Smith said that energy never dies, it only changes forms.

"Everything that can happen is happening now," Smith said. "Nothing is solid. Everything is made up of energy, molecules vibrating at a certain frequency. Each time frame has its own frequency."

And each individual has the ability to lead several different lives at once, which multiply into additional lives, he said. People keep coming back until they reach their highest levels of existence. For example, one woman at the seminar experienced her highest level

Concerts to benefit Ethiopia

By Cynthia Whitfield
Of the Emerald

Heart of Oregon's Pledge to Ethiopia (HOPE) and Public Health International of Oregon are sponsoring three concerts featuring local and nationally known rock, jazz, folk and gospel performers March 10 at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts. All proceeds from the concerts will go to Oxfam America, an organization working to provide famine relief and educational self-help projects in Ethiopia.

HOPE was created by Eugene residents Brenda Jones, Lynda Duffy, Greg Runo and Arzinia Richardson "sometime in November after we saw film footage of the starving people of Ethiopia," says Duffy. McKenzie River Gathering, a non-profit foundation for social change, will provide a tax-exempt status for contributions received by HOPE, but is not involved in organizing the event. Other members of the HOPE steering committee are volunteers Sylvia Smith and Dee Roberts.

Public Health International of Oregon originated in Roseburg and provides volunteers to Africa. The organization provides education, sanitation and public health information to people in refugee camps, with an emphasis on teaching self-sufficiency in these areas.

The concerts will be held in the Silva Concert Hall after a 9 a.m. invocation featuring author Ken Kesey, Eugene Mayor Brian Obie, and local and national gospel singers, including the Grammy award-winning Edwin Hawkins. A \$5 donation will be requested from everyone attending the invocation.

The first concert begins at noon with three hours of jazz and classical music with nationally recognized jazz artist Bobby McFerrin, the Eugene Symphony Orchestra, and the Eugene Ballet Company.

A rock concert with some of the most popular West Coast rock will fill the next four hours, starting at 4 p.m. These include the Cashiers, Crazy Eights, Hoodlums, Boys Club and other bands. Ireland's Stockton's Wing will open the concert with electrified Celtic music.

The final concert, beginning at 9 p.m. will feature Dan Seigal and his band, Don Latarski and Richard Smith, Joe Sample of the Crusaders, Nancy King and the Eugene Jazz Orchestra, and other jazz performers.

Admission for each concert is \$12.50 or \$30 for all three. Fifty percent of the cost of the tickets is tax deductible.

Meanwhile, other festivities will be presented from 10 a.m. until midnight at the Eugene Hilton Playwrights Hall, which will be the center of a radiothon conducted by area radio stations to raise additional funds for Ethiopian relief.


Hilton performers include Clown Company, Shumba, and the Whitetones, and Foreign Aid between noon and 4 p.m.

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