



SCHOOL OF METAPHYSICS: WINTER SYLLABUS

The Afterlife

December 1 to March 1

For what reason do we give our assent to something? Because it appears to be the case. If something appears not to be the case, it is impossible for us to give assent. And why so? Because that is the nature of the mind, that it should agree to things that are true, not accept things that are false, and suspend judgment with regard to things that are uncertain.¹

Epictetus

...my brain was down and out. And yet despite all of this, I had been alive, and aware, truly aware, in a universe characterized above all by love, consciousness, and reality...There was, for me, simply no arguing this fact. I knew it so completely that I ached. What I'd experienced was more real than the house I sat in...²

Eben Alexander

Eben Alexander, M.D., was a professor of neurosurgery at Harvard Medical School before his practice in Virginia. Here was a man with an elite education in the sciences whose life was entirely reoriented by a coma and 6-day, Near Death Experience. When he recovered, Dr Alexander spent two years studying over 150 books on physics, neuroscience, philosophy of mind, and near-death experiences in an attempt to understand his experience while he was brain dead and in coma.

We only have three months.

But, in the time that we do have we can benefit from the experiences and research of this doctor and others who have first hand experience with near death and brain death who *know* what they have seen is real. We will also study those who have not personally seen the afterlife but have dedicated years of research to understanding this reality.

¹ Epictetus, *Discourses* (Oxford, 2014, 1.28)

² Eben Alexander, M.D., *Proof of Heaven* (Simon & Schuster, 2022, p. 130)

REQUIRED READING & ASSIGNMENTS

ONE:

Bob Olson, *Answers About the Afterlife* (Building Bridges Press, 2014). Olson is not a medical doctor or an academic. He was a criminologist and private detective before he changed his life to pursue the afterlife. He has actually created a commercial business with several websites, including afterlifeTV.com. Regarding this book, Olson is an excellent writer with an encyclopedic approach to a vast amount of evidence which he explains in very understandable detail.

Assignments:

1. List the 22 reasons Olson give for believing in the afterlife.
2. Explain the difference between spirit and soul, according to Olson's research
3. Write a brief description of the spirit guide and our relationship to it as found on pp. 89-96. Is this entity our external daimon?

TWO:

Jeffrey Mishlove's, *Beyond the Brain: The Survival of Human Consciousness After Permanent Bodily Death*. Request pdf file from teacher; or, to download, see <https://www.bigelowinstitute.org/index.php/bics-afterlife-proof/bics-essay-contest-winners-2/> The Bigelow Institute for Consciousness Studies (BICS) <https://www.bigelowinstitute.org/> (BICS) was founded in 2020 by aerospace entrepreneur Robert T. Bigelow to support research into the survival of human consciousness after physical death and, following from that, the nature of "the afterlife." In 2021, the Bigelow Institute awarded a total of \$1.8 million in prize money for 29 winning essays from a dozen countries judged by an expert scientific panel to offer the best evidence for survival of consciousness after death. The work of Jeffrey Mishlove received first prize.

Assignment:

In the conclusion of the essay of Jeffrey Mishlove this can be found: "This essay has been predicated upon the *bundle of arrows* principle that the best evidence for postmortem survival is the big picture: nine different directions of evidence all pointing to postmortem consciousness."

For each of these forms of evidence write a descriptive paragraph which can be taken from the body of this work or from other sources of your choice:

1. Near-death experience
2. After-death communications
3. Reincarnation cases
4. Peak in Darian experiences

5. Instrumental Trans Communication
6. Xenoglossy,
7. Possession
8. Mental mediumship
9. Physical mediumship

THREE: Eben Alexander, M.D., *Proof of Heaven*, 10th anniversary edition (Simon and Schuster, 2022). Note: this updated edition is required. This extraordinary work was referred to earlier in the syllabus. There is so much material here that you could design an entire term around it. Instead, we will only require these two assignments:

Assignments:

1. In Dr. Alexander's Afterword from the 2013 edition he speaks of the final piece of evidence that convinced him his experience was a true vision of the afterlife. Briefly tell the story of this evidence.
2. In the Appendix B, Alexander addresses 9 reasons that have been given to explain his afterlife experience with science. Briefly list them.

FOUR: Michael Newton, PhD, *Journey of Souls*, 5th Revised edition or newer (Llewellyn Publications, 2006). Case studies of a psychologist who hypnotized over 4,000 patients and took them into their spirit life between incarnations of mortal life. (Headmaster Wiegardt has personal experience as a hypnotist in this field.)

Assignments:

1. Describe the 4 levels of evolution in the spirit world
2. Summarize the points you thought worth remembering as found in the conclusion of this book.

FIVE: Independent Internet research on an overview of Reincarnation. See: <https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/reincarnation-overview> . This is from the PSI Encyclopedia online, a remarkable collection of research and descriptions of topics from A-Z. The article on reincarnation is many pages long and is a must read. From the website: "About the Psi Encyclopedia. There is now a vast research literature that validates the existence of psi as an anomalous, fleeting and little understood aspect of human experience."

From the same source, see <https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/choice-reincarnation> regarding reincarnation choice, including the effect of karma on the status of the individual reborn (largely from the work of Ian Stevenson).

Assignments:

1. While reading the PSI Encyclopedia website article on Reincarnation, keep notes in a file on those bits of information that you want to remember. Send the file to your teacher. This is a "check-off" assignment.
2. From the article on choice-reincarnation, discuss the matter of karma.

SIX: Requires independent Internet research to answer the following question:

Assignment:

Briefly answer this question: If we are energy beings with consciousness, how does energy get conscious? In other words, what is the relationship between energy and consciousness?

RECOMMENDED READING & VIEWING

- It may be helpful to review your first year Religion notes on the afterlife to compare religious dogma with current information received in NDEs, etc.
- Raymond Moody, *Life after Life* (Harper Collins, originally published in 1975), the classic exploration of the Near Death Experience (NDE) by the doctor who coined the modern term for the NDE.
- Bruce Greyson, M.D., *After* (St. Martin's Essentials, 2022). Dr. Greyson, a physician without belief systems, spent 40 years doing research on the process of dying to show that dying is a threshold between one form of consciousness and another.
- Dr. Mary Neal's story, *To Heaven and Back*: several YouTube videos, or buy the book at Amazon for less than \$10 as of this writing.
- Brian Weiss, *Many Lives, Many Masters* (A Fireside Book, Simon & Schuster, 1988). A graduate of Columbia and Yale medical school, Weiss wrote this classic when he was Chairman of Psychiatry at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami. This is an exhaustive record of Dr. Weiss and one patient that he accidentally regressed in hypnosis back to an earlier life.
- Richheimer & Evidence for Reincarnation, a pdf file in the College library
- The PSI Encyclopedia <https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/> This is a treasure house of information and must be perused to be believed. It has an extensive list of articles available *fee gratis* with information on all matters of the paranormal, and much more.
- Entheogens: pursuit of spiritual experiences through hallucinogens. UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics. An 8-page paper exploring the various drugs and experiences. Request as a pdf file