

Chapter 2 - How Do I know Who I was Before?

How do I know who I was before? I think this is one of the most frequently asked questions that I and many others who have past life memories receive. I find it hard to describe how I personally came to know that I was Manfred von Richthofen because it was a personal battle within me to come to that conclusion. One does not simply, rationally decide that one was someone else when that is not the custom of one's culture, and the struggle is so close that I can't clearly describe any process. I really didn't think I was someone so well known and worth all the fuss that is made over me, so I had to prove it to myself before I could feel comfortable sharing this with others. The first thing I did was try and stay objective and open minded. The second thing I did was write every memory down into a notebook and put as much detail down as possible. Detail means to observe where, when, what, and why while keeping all the five senses in mind when answering all those questions. Then I started doing research by looking for books about Manfred von Richthofen and the pilots that he served with. It is and was very important to find lots of pictures and any moving film footage if possible. I observed which people I had strong emotional reactions to and those who I did not. (I also learned how to ignore what was written in the historical accounts and go with my true gut feelings. This was a difficult step and required me to have confidence in myself.) So how did I conclude that I had indeed been Manfred? Well, emotionally, I knew deep down inside that I couldn't deny it, so I started looking for more factual reasons. Several observations backed up my gut feelings; 1) my current handwriting matched Manfred's handwriting, 2) my current facial expressions match Manfred's, 3) the look in my eyes and his eyes matched, 4) current personality attitudes and interests matched many of Manfred's, 5) I never met Manfred in any of my memories despite the fact that I met and knew people that he knew very well, 6) I dreamt as a toddler about flying red biplanes and fantasized about wearing WWI pilot clothing (please note: No one in the immediate circle of

family or friends was a pilot), 7) I have had several memories where I am referred to as Manfred, and finally 8) I have childhood memories involving the Richthofen family. There is also deep personal connection that when untrue things are written and said about Manfred, I take them very personally as if those words were being said about my present self. The reactions are involuntary, natural, and unavoidable. So that is how *I know*. I am not certain if this set of requirements would satisfy someone else, but they leave me with too much to deny. And I am comfortable with who I am and what I have discovered.

So how does one know that they have past life memories? Well, first one must have a feeling, dreams, or actual awake memory flashes of a time or place not connected with their present lifetime. Sometimes an individual will have skills or talents that are unexplainable. I discovered one summer that I had the ability to lay tile without training and I was quite picky about how it was done. I was barking orders at my best friend and caught myself wondering why I was acting in such a fashion. And as the huge 400 square foot project continued on, I started having memory flashes to back to Roman times. I believe if one does not have any of these, then it may not be the right time for them to remember or they may simply have never lived before. Not everyone has had a previous lifetime. Also staying objective and critical is important, one must analyze memories for connections to books and movies. Rarely, do historical events match the movies and documented accounts unless it is written first hand by the actual participant. But even autobiographies can be held to scrutiny. For example, I as Manfred wrote a book called Der Rote Kampfflieger and it doesn't show all the realities of my life since it was basically created as a propaganda tool. Much of what is written is correct, but so much is left out and what is left out was very important. It has a very young and idealistic view of the world and only once in a while did reality sneak it's way in between the lines.

To help understand how the process of discovering who one may have been, I am going to share the process that I went through to help another person figure out who they were in a past life.

First of all, this lady that I am using as an example remembered having lived a life here in the United States as a soldier during the 1800's, so she was familiar with the concepts of reincarnation. She held a strong fascination for WWI aviation and was somewhat infatuated with the Red Baron and may have secretly thought that she may have been him. She even went to the extent of writing to one of the veteran pilots of Jagdgeschwader I and developing a good friendship with the old gentleman. This all happened during her youth along with several traumatic nightmares of dying in a plane crash. She also experienced strong emotional reactions to films involving the old style planes. For example, as a child, she begged her family to take her to a film that had biplanes in it and when, in the opening scene, a plane crashed violently, she froze up and would not view the film anymore much to her parents annoyance. They did not understand the horrible connection that she felt as she watched the character in the movie perish in the plane crash. All they could see was their child acting spoiled and not appreciating the movie that she had begged them to take her to. I wonder how many other people as children have suffered the same humiliation and frustration as my friend did.

When she and I met on the Internet, there was an immediate feeling that we knew each other somehow. It was not a romantic connection but one of friendship. She knew that she was not Manfred von Richthofen, but she felt a strong connection to me and with this in mind we began to work on figuring out who she was. This situation was quite ideal and conducive for figuring out who she was. And please note that an ideal situation rarely happens.

First, I asked her for some information that I could use as clues to narrow down the possibilities. She definitely felt that she had been a pilot. I asked this since there were many observers and other personnel who flew in planes, so I wanted to be sure we were looking for a pilot. There were a lot of German pilots during the First World War and a good portion of them had photos published in history books. So I asked her for a good photo of herself that clearly showed her face. More than one photo is best especially ones that show the individual in different moods. I have

discovered that people often look a certain amount like their former selves regardless of sex. It is generally the look in the eyes and the smile or other facial expressions that remain the same. Sometimes reincarnated people will have the same hairline, scars from the previous lifetimes, and strangely enough, sometimes injuries will continue into another lifetime. I suffer from bad knees and migraine headaches and I had them as Manfred after I was hit in the back of the head by a bullet. These are all clues that help determine who someone might have been. There is never a guarantee that one can figure out who they were since the amount of documentation needed to be able to complete this task would be phenomenal. But we had the advantage of knowing that she had been a pilot who knew me, had died in an airplane crash, and had received the Pour le Mérite, and lived in a time period where documentation was more readily available. We could narrow our search down by using these parameters.

While I searched through my books looking for photos of pilots that looked a bit like my lady friend, we continued to correspond with each other through email and on an Internet service called ICQ. As we shared stories and chatted about life in general, she remembered having a motorbike during that lifetime. She also remembered having her bike stolen from her by two other pilots. This rung a bell with me. Werner Voss and I took off with a bike, which I had originally thought may have been his since Werner was well known for his love of motorbikes. The more we talked the more we remembered and realized that we shared a memory of an incident from two different points of view. She was the man that threw a rock at me as I sat on the back of a motorbike that Werner Voss was driving. An unexpected bonus of this correspondence was that I had started to gain what the linguists might call “an ear for her writing style.” So when I suspected that she had been my old commander, Oswald Boelcke, who did die in a rather nasty plane crash, I picked up a book that was a collection of letters that he had written to his family. The writing style of the letters made me feel as if I were reading something that the lady had just written to me. It was a fantastic similarity. She was

unaware of this book, so I sent her the information about it so that she could make a purchase of the book. It made sense that one's writing style should remain the same. It also made sense that one's handwriting should remain the same. We were unable to find any samples of Oswald Boelcke's handwriting, but I had found samples of Manfred von Richthofen's, which did match my present day handwriting. I suspect that if I had been able to find samples of all the people that I suspected were friends of mine in that lifetime that we could get some more solid evidence that handwriting remained the same.

In the end it was up to this lady to decide whether she really felt that she in fact had been Oswald Boelcke, the famed co-founder* of modern aerial tactics. As time went on, we had more memories of that time period when we were together. Of course, our points of view on situations often varied, but there was no doubt that we were referring to the same incidences. A wonderful friendship developed until her husband decided to take another job. Now, I had understood from her that she had told her husband about our friendship since I was even contemplating visiting them with a couple of friends of mine. But I guess, one can never be completely certain of what goes on in another place without actually being present. So soon after her husband took a new job closer to home, she asked me to make sure that I no longer sent her any "silly" ** emails containing stuff that we remembered back in the old days because she felt that her husband would not understand. He also had a tendency to read her email messages. I had no problem with this request, but as time went on, her replies dwindled until I finally called her to make sure that she was alright. She had called me in the past when she had felt alone or afraid while her husband was away on long trips. I think she was very lonely at times. We had talked on the phone frequently, but it was long distance and expensive, so we had to keep the phone calls to a once or twice a month event. The last time she answered the phone was with a voice so cold that it struck like a spear through my heart. Apparently, I had not gotten the idea that she did not wish to communicate with me anymore at all! She never

told me that she didn't want to be friends with me anymore. She just wanted to keep things serious and respectable. Her new state of mind came as a great shock and it hurt me deeply.

To this day, I still have no real idea what happened except that I no longer have a friend that I spent two years chatting on the phone and the Internet with. Unfortunately, these things happen. And it is not all that uncommon for people with past life memories to experience some difficulties emotionally. Sometimes these problems result from the friends, family, and associates from the present time. They are either unwilling or unable to open their hearts to a different way of seeing the world. I have tried to formulate explanations as to what and why things went the way they did. I had always known that there was something dark within our relationship, but what it could be, I had no idea. Currently, I believe it was her husband's lack of acceptance, but during the time of these events I investigated other possibilities as to why this happened. Something that I had written in Der Rote Kampfflieger sung out to me, but as to what it meant, I did not know at the time. After our friendship ended, I spent nearly a year trying to get over the strange feelings that it evoked. I had wondered if there was something possibly more to this strange change of attitude to the extent that I actually went to someone who was certified in the art of hypnosis to help me figure out what happened. This was a major step since I did not normally need hypnosis to remember my past life experiences, but this was so important to me, I was willing to try. From this experience I would learn that I am not capable of relaxing enough to be able to be put under hypnosis. However, I do suspect that the relaxation techniques helped me pull forth the next day a few flashes of recollection that helped me come to terms with the end of my friendship with the lady who was once Hauptmann Oswald Boelcke.

The memories that I recalled while chatting with her are in the following chapters along with some of her memories*** that deal with me. What I remembered is explained and examined in Chapter 4, but does not completely answer why she should have such a strong change of heart. This

lady is the only friend from the past that has turned away from me. I have several other friends that I have renewed friendships with and continue to enjoy to this day. Some of their memories are also within the following chapters.

Meeting people from other lifetimes and renewing friendships is also another topic that may bear future discussion. It seems to be an accepted fact amongst experts in the study of reincarnation and spiritual mediums that we travel in the same circles, but we do not always meet up with *old friends*. I have most recently discovered that a gentleman, who had been a friend of mine during this lifetime, was hired to murder me during the lifetime that I lived as a Bavarian knight in Renaissance Italy. He remembered it rather clearly. I have encountered other people with past life memories that have renewed relationships with old enemies as their parents, spouse, or even as their children, and it seems that this new relationship has helped them reconcile the past. I have also lived many other life times, but the one as Manfred is the clearest and the easiest for me to present to you, the reader. Perhaps I will incorporate these additional lifetimes into a last chapter for those that are curious, but for now, please enjoy what I do remember about my life as Manfred.

* From some strong impressions, I have begun to suspect that Max Immelmann also had a great deal to do with Boelcke's famous Dicta of flying along with several other pioneering fighter pilots whose names seem to have been forgotten.

** Back during the war, most of us had a rather crude sense of humor and could be quite vulgar, but these jokes and stories were shared primarily amongst ourselves and not with outsiders.

*** Her memories of being Oswald Boelcke were originally published on my past life memory website. I have since archived them due to my concern about her well being.