

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Life Before Death

Colin Fry

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About the Book

As Britain's leading psychic medium, perhaps it's not surprising that more than 200,000 people buy tickets every year to see Colin Fry's theatre tour up and down the country (and in New Zealand). It's also not surprising that his top-rating TV show, *Sixth Sense*, is now in its 7th series and continues to hold an average of 100,000 viewers per month. With such an enormous fan base, there is therefore huge interest in Colin Fry's first book, *Life Before Death*.

A compelling read, full of extraordinary stories from his life and work, it also investigates a theme which comes up time and again in his conversations with people who come to him for readings: how do you make the most of your time in this world. Colin Fry has a gift for being able to receive messages from souls in the spirit world. Remarkable, and fascinating as this is he feels strongly that the messages he receives should be used to help us maximise our life's potential. *Life Before Death* explains how he was able to develop his gift, and what being a psychic medium actually means. But it also gives advice on how to make better connections with your friends and family, how to be open to new things in life, how to both forgive and give more readily, and how to accept all that happens to you.

About the Author

Born in 1962, Colin Fry received his first message at the age of ten and became a professional medium at seventeen. He tours internationally and is the acclaimed star of the television shows *Sixth Sense* and *Psychic Private Eyes*. One of the leading lights in the psychic mediumship world, Colin uses his spiritual knowledge to offer life-changing advice and support to people, providing sensible, down-to-earth explanations about the strange world of the paranormal and supernatural. He is the hugely popular author of *Life Before Death*, *Secrets from the Afterlife* and *The Message*. Visit his website www.colinfry.co.uk

Life Before Death

Colin Fry



RIDER

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I dedicate this book to two people:
Michael Patrick Cotton (in Spirit) – my friend, my guardian,
my angel, my brother, you taught me the value of life

Mikey, my civil partner, who helped me to realise
that you are never too old to love again

Introduction

'It is only when we truly know and understand that we have a limited time on earth - and we have no way of knowing when that time is up - that we will begin to live each day to the fullest as if it was the only one we had.'

DR ELISABETH KÜBLER-ROSS

I don't think that anything can be as emotionally challenging as coming to terms with the death of a child. Over many years as a working medium I have passed on countless messages to grief-stricken parents from children who have passed to the spirit world. A common feeling when a child passes over is that one or both of the parents believe that they cannot continue to live without that child and wish to join them. One such case was Sylvia. Sylvia's eldest child and only son, Stephen had been born with cystic fibrosis and the doctors had predicted that Stephen would not have a long life. Nonetheless, with the dedicated care of his family Stephen had a happy childhood and developed a great passion for music to the extent that he became an accomplished musician, learning both guitar and piano.

Tragically Stephen passed away in his sleep just after his thirteenth birthday and although he had always been a very sick lad the sudden nature of his passing left the whole family devastated. For his mother Sylvia, it was particularly hard. Once the funeral had passed, her initial

feelings of sadness began to mix with feelings of anger and resentment that it was 'unfair' her child had been taken from her. This then caused Sylvia to fall into a deep state of despair and depression. She lost all interest in herself and the rest of her family. Life seemed to her to have very little point and in her mind the only thing she could do was join her child in spirit.

The rest of her family were beside themselves with worry. They had no idea how to help her. Her poor husband Ray was attempting to deal with his own terrible sense of loss while accompanying her on visits to the family doctor and bereavement counsellors but nothing seemed to help her past this loss. At the suggestion of a family friend they persuaded Sylvia to see a medium.

As is often the case with people who visit mediums, Sylvia had convinced herself that Stephen would say specific things to her and give certain pieces of evidence if he was able to communicate from the spirit side of life. However, after having visited a great number of mediums she was at the point of giving up in despair as nothing had convinced her that Stephen was able to communicate from the other side of life. It was a chance meeting with a lady at a Spiritualist church in her home town of Newcastle that persuaded Sylvia to contact me.

On the day that Sylvia made her visit to me all I was aware of was that a lady by the name of Sylvia was coming by train from Newcastle to see me for a reading. As soon as she arrived at my home and was settled in a chair before me, the feeling of her son Stephen's spirit presence became very clear to me and I still think of this sitting as one of the most clear and direct communications I have ever sensed. Many communicators follow a pattern of emphasising evidence of their identity as a prelude to the communication but in Stephen's case he wanted to get straight to the point of his communication.

‘Stephen is telling me to tell you that YOU MUST NOT do as you plan when you leave this sitting today. It will NOT bring you closer together and will ruin everything.’ At this Sylvia became most agitated.

‘I don’t know what you’re talking about,’ she said.

‘I think you might, Sylvia. I’m afraid your son is showing me that he’s aware you intend to jump in front of a train when you leave me today.’

Upon hearing this Sylvia collapsed into floods of uncontrollable tears and confessed that this was in fact true. ‘What else can I do?’ she said.

Feeling strongly that Stephen would be able to hold his link with me, I paused the sitting to make Sylvia some strong sweet tea and to give her time to compose herself. What followed was probably one of the most loving and heart-warming communications between a son to his mother I have ever been privileged to pass on.

Stephen made many references to other family members: his sisters and his father, aunts and uncles who had all played such a vital part in his life. He asked me to give as evidence many happy memories he’d had of his life on this side with his family.

‘He wants to give you his deepest love and gratitude.’

Sylvia, now in tears, nodded.

Most importantly he went on to explain that he had come to understand that everyone has their time to be on this earth and a time to move on.

‘He is saying he was only meant to be here for a short time and that it was a good thing for everybody.’

‘How?’ said Sylvia, trying not to cry.

‘Stephen is telling me that even though his life was affected by his chronic illness, he believes that it is the reason why he had such a deeply loving, supportive family. You all had to pull together to look after him.’

He went on to explain that by taking her own life, Sylvia could not guarantee that in the vastness of an eternal spirit

world she would be instantly reunited with him.

‘Tell Mum her time will come. It’s not now.’

His message was that by interfering with the natural progression of her existence Sylvia might well create a situation where she would not be reunited with him until such point as the intended time of her passing. ‘You will leave behind the people who love you. And you just can’t do that, Mum. Don’t do it.’

One of the roles of a medium is to help people stop thinking of themselves as passive victims of life events and instead start to think of themselves as people who can learn to manage the despair and disappointment of life and move forwards. Life is always worth living, no matter how tough it might be and that was explicit in what Stephen was telling his mother.

If I could divide up the messages I receive they fall broadly into two categories. Firstly a spirit wants to let their loved ones know that they are all right. They often mention the names of fellow family members and friends who passed over to show they are in good company and not alone. Secondly, they often feel the need to pass on advice or encouragement/moral support where needed. The spirits do not describe their living conditions; what concerns them instead is that their loved ones are doing well here on earth as in my opening story. This is what concerns me too: as interesting and satisfying as it is to hear from the other side, it is our responsibility to deal with the here and now.

After most theatre shows I get to stay behind and meet with members of the audience. The one question I receive almost every evening is, ‘Do you not find it depressing thinking about death the whole time?’ The truth is I rarely think about death, even when I’m communicating with the spirit world. I am thinking about living my life in the most positive way possible and encouraging others to do the same. If we don’t, then it’s us who are dead to the world, not those who I am in contact with. Stephen’s message to

his mother was not to become one of those people who are dead to the world.

During one of my own private conversations with Magnus, my spirit guide (a spirit mentor whose relationship with a medium develops as the medium develops his or her own skills), he told me: 'It is a human characteristic to set your sights on horizons. The danger of this is you can be tempted to rush towards them, only to find that when you reach them there is another horizon and what you lost in your haste was the joy, experience and learning of the journey.' Even in the sadness of having loved ones pass before us to that far horizon we have no choice but to take the slow path to join them as we have to accumulate the joys and pleasures of further human life so we can ultimately journey together to even further horizons. We can't see the big picture of existence from our position, but maybe we have to trust that there is a fairness to it all.

Some months after Sylvia came to visit me I received a letter from her thanking me for the experience of the sitting and the evidence from Stephen but mostly because she believed that if the sitting had not taken place in the manner it had, she would have indeed taken her own life and one moment of tragedy in her family's life would have gone on to cause a lifetime of sorrow for so many more.

With this in mind, I thought that rather than only write about what I think might happen in the afterlife, I want to focus this book on how we live our lives before we die and give you examples of what we can learn from readings. Let's face it: no-one wants to die. Yet it is unavoidable. We cannot choose how we die but we can choose how we live. And for me that means living each day to the fullest, without fear or regret. We can make a decision to make the most of every moment in our lives so that we benefit not only ourselves but others. And if we do manage this and

don't waste our precious time on this earth then our lives will have purpose and meaning.

When I speak of meaning I am talking about what matters to you, not anybody else. Your life is your own so it's best not to waste it living somebody else's. Each of us has our own gifts. The hairdresser, the writer, the florist, the baker, the counsellor: they all have something they can do to the best of their ability. Whether they do or not depends on their self-discipline and their determination to ignore what others are achieving and concentrate on their own achievements instead. The key is not to covet someone else's gifts but celebrate your own. And remember, the grass is not greener on the other side. Everyone has their problems in life. We seem to live in an age where society presents us with superficialities and encourages us to compete for non-existent and non-meaningful goals. We should be positive about the wonderful potential available to us.

When asked if I think being a medium makes me feel abnormal or extraordinary I reply that I consider myself to be a totally normal person leading a normal life with a normal gift – that some people think is an extraordinary gift. I don't believe that I'm particularly special. I have the same financial worries as anyone else, the same health issues. I have dreams of places I wish to visit, and goals I want to achieve. No-one should put me on a pedestal; I'm a normal guy, who likes a smoke, and a drink just like everyone else. Mediumship just happens to be my gift but we all have gifts. Some people are born with good hands, others with high intelligence, and others with the ability to swerve a football in mid-flight. Some can create music or art and others can put a smile on other people's faces and ease their burdens. I just happened to be born with heightened senses – an ability to tune into different frequencies of communication. As in any profession or vocation I get to meet others with gifts similar to my own,

and people with overrated or underdeveloped abilities. I can have a good day or a bad day like anybody else. My gift is really no more special than yours.

One of the first times I really stopped and thought about what it is I actually do professionally was at the start of my career, when I had to fill in a rather boring life insurance application form. I raced through and ticked my way through the various sections until I came to the one marked 'job description'. Goodness me, I thought, whatever shall I put down here? At that point it all became a bit comical as I paused and asked the broker how best to express on the form that I was a psychic medium and that I primarily communicated with dead people for a living?

There was much 'tut-tutting' and eyebrow-raising as everyone searched for a solution. In the end, after I'd produced various materials showing that I had given demonstrations for charities, Spiritualist churches and newspaper interviews, the rather surprised broker remarked - and he was only half-joking - that I should fill in the form with the words '*life assessor*'. His opinion was that if I couldn't see myself dying in the near future, then an actuary in head office was unlikely to predict anything different! My application was duly accepted.

The truth is, of course, that I can no more predict the future than you can, but I have been communicating with the spirit world since I was ten years old. I truly believe that I was born with the gift of being a psychic medium, although it took many years to learn how to harness this gift, and several more to realise how it should be used to bring comfort and support to those who might need it. In the past few years we've have seen a big increase in the publicity surrounding psychic abilities, especially in the United Kingdom. I have been very fortunate to have been one of those involved as it has allowed me to present my mediumship to ever widening audiences.

I can only speak for myself here and describe how I am able to receive a message from a soul in the spirit world. Sometimes I hear a voice, sometimes I can see a person, but more often than not I sense the spirit of a departed soul. It is almost as if that soul impresses its personality over my thoughts, allowing me to use my five normal senses to express what they are trying to tell me. The spirit will give me evidence of their continued existence by telling me things about the person who sits in front of me that are personal to them. By relating these things I hope to pass on the message that they continue to exist.

The function of a good medium is not just to tune into these messages, but also to try and interpret them in the right way. I have always felt that there are two main types of medium. There are those who are gifted to receive specific accurate information such as street names or exact dates of birth, and others like myself who concentrate on passing on an emotional resonance from a spirit and not just dry facts. Almost all mediums are psychic, but not all psychics are mediums.

This book is not going to prove to you that I or anybody else is a psychic medium. I cannot, nor wish to, 'prove to you' anything. Nor do I wish to change anybody's belief system or religious faith. Ultimately belief is as real as you want it to be. Most people will accept supporting evidence for the things they believe in and reject evidence for things they don't believe in. In short it is often the believer who provides the belief. This book also cannot prove to you that there is an afterlife. I know there is. The messages I have personally experienced from the spirit world have convinced me that there is life after death, that our spirits and personalities continue to exist after our physical bodies die. Of course millions of people across the globe of many faiths already believe this, irrespective of what I claim to see, sense or hear when I practise my mediumship. I can tell you what I believe, but you the reader will have to

make up your own mind. That, after all, is what much of living is about.

When I was starting out and unaware of how raw my abilities were, I was privileged to meet the grand dame of British mediumship Ms Doris Stokes. In my arrogance I asked her to advise me on when she thought I'd be ready to take my mediumship to the highest levels. She smiled back at me and said, 'When you're older and have lost your loved ones, when you have suffered the pains of experience and when you grow a few grey hairs then you'll be ready.' Sad to say I have long passed all of her benchmarks, but with her thoughts in mind I wish to assure you that all the episodes in this book actually happened to me, although I have changed names to respect people's privacy. Some stories might seem fantastic, but I assure you they are all true to the best of my knowledge and many of them happened in front of large theatre audiences or in a TV studio.

But this isn't about me. It's about how I can help you. Through stories of my readings as well as my own experiences in life I've tried to give you some ideas and suggestions to motivate you to embrace life to the fullest. It isn't comprehensive by any means but what I hope this book will do for you is help you cut through the confusion of messages that we all deal with in our lives today so that you can clear your own head and work out what and who matters to you. No matter what your faith or beliefs, I sincerely hope this book will help provide some food for thought in your quest for spiritual growth.

Colin Fry

1.

Are you living or existing?

'There is no cure for birth and death, save to enjoy the interval.'

GEORGE SANTAYANA

HOW MANY TIMES have you heard yourself say, 'I wish I'd done that'? It's perfectly normal to have missed opportunities or passed them up in our lives and it's something that all of us have done at various times, since it's not always practical to take advantage of everything. The real problem is when you start making excuses for not doing anything with your life. When you start hearing yourself saying things like, 'I'll get around to it one day. Maybe when I'm not so busy/have some money/lose some weight' that you need to ask yourself the really serious question: 'Am I leading a life or just waiting for one to happen?'

While you're thinking about that, take a moment to consider this: as humans we are not productive from the moment we are born. In fact it takes us quite a few years to get going and acquire the basic knowledge that we need in order to feed, dress and look after ourselves in general. Then, add in the years we are ill or infirm until we finally get old and need to be looked after again. Ultimately out of, say, the eighty or so years that make up the average

lifespan, we don't have that many years where we can actually be properly productive.

I'm sorry if that sounds a bit scary, but I deliberately wanted to give you a wake-up call, a very simple one. I believe that you and I need to make sure we make the most of our time here *in a way that is meaningful both to ourselves and to others*. Humans have a unique ability in that we can choose what we want to do, who we want to be and who we want to share our lives with. Something I'm asked a lot is, 'Do you think we are all part of some grand plan - are we travelling along a pre-destined journey?' My feeling is that we are all on different fixed paths, but along those paths we have the ability to travel as we choose.

No-one else can choose for you

Being free to choose is one of the most important things about being human. Of course freedom of choice also brings with it the burden and responsibility of making the 'right' choices, whatever they may be. That doesn't mean we can live our lives perfectly, never making mistakes, but it does mean that we need to be able to manage our lives. Nobody else is responsible for our actions except us: that is what living is all about. If we opt out of taking the responsibility and wait for others to rescue us and make it better, we are not really living, we are just existing and that to me is just a criminal waste of our time on this earth. Because we only get one chance to live our lives in a physical sense, wouldn't it be useful to have some lessons to help us along the way? I believe this is where our communication with the afterlife can help us. When a spirit chooses to pass on messages, I believe they do so for a reason. The fact that they have made the effort to communicate suggests there may be something we can learn from them. The messages can often be deceptively