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Dualism 101: Terminal Lucidity and an Explanation

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Abstract

In simple terms, psychological dualism purports that there is an underlying complementary, non-material/physical cognitive component associated with a living organism. Thus mind would not simply be an expression of brain function. Science embraces materialism and generally views any form of dualism with disdain. Yet there are a number of accepted phenomena that are suggestive of dualism and in particular are consistent with the existence of souls. One such phenomenon is terminal lucidity, in which people inexplicably return to mental coherence shortly before death after appearing to be lost to "dull, unconscious, or mentally ill" conditions, sometimes for years. The physical/neural plausibility of such rejuvenation is difficult to imagine. Discussions herein introduce terminal lucidity primarily based on some clinal reports. Next, the medium-based communications reviewed in Chris Carter's *Science and the After Life Experience* are used to introduce the concept of a soul. Further, a dynamic suggested in Carter's coverage is then used to offer a simple explanation for terminal lucidity. Finally, for additional context, the state of neuroscience is considered and some brief conclusions are given.

Keywords

Terminal Lucidity, Dualism, Neuroscience, Metaphysics, Materialism, Free Will

1. Introduction—Materialism and Neuroscience

For an uncompromising depiction of the contemporary materialist vision of life, the words of a prominent biologist, Ursula Goodenough, stand out. Her depiction is:

> [A]ll of us, and scientists are no exception, are vulnerable to the existential shudder that leaves us wishing that the foundations of life were something

> other than just so much biochemistry and biophysics. The shudder, for me at least, is different from the encounters with nihilism that have beset my contemplation of the universe. There I can steep myself in cosmic Mystery. But the workings of life are not mysterious at all. They are obvious, explainable, and thermodynamically inevitable. And relentlessly mechanical. And bluntly deterministic. My body is some 10 trillion cells. Period. My thoughts are a lot of electricity flowing along a lot of membrane. My emotions are the result of neurotransmitters squirting on my brain cells. I look in the mirror and see the mortality and I find myself fearful, yearning for less knowledge, yearning to believe that I have a soul that will go to heaven and soar with the angels (Goodenough, 1998: pp. 46-47).

Additional insight is offered in the novelist Julian Barnes' fine 2008 book, *Nothing to be frightened of* (Barnes, 2008). Barnes' perceptive and literate work addresses death and along with it quite a bit of life. The book opens with, "I don't believe in God, but I miss Him" (Barnes, 2008: p. 3). The book's intellectual framework reflects Barnes's acceptance of the intellectual default model, which naturally means scientific materialism (or physicalism). With this perspective, Barnes can still philosophize around a bit—including taking shots at atheists, philosophers, and more generally modern lifestyles (although there he shortchanged what has become frenetic distraction-ism in favor of traditional "frenetic [commercial] materialism"). But to little end as he surmised. A relevant quote:

> We discover, to our surprise, that as [Richard] Dawkins memorably puts it, we are "survival machines—robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes". The paradox is that individualism—the triumph of free-thinking artists and scientists—has led us to a state of self-awareness in which we can now view ourselves as units of genetic obedience. My adolescent notion of self-construction—that vaguely, Englishly, existentialist ego-hope of autonomy—could not have been further from the truth. I thought the burdensome process of growing up ended with a man standing by himself at last—*homo erectus* at full height, *sapiens* in full wisdom—a fellow now cracking the whip on his own full account. This image … must be replaced by the sense that, far from having a whip to crack, I am the very tip of the whip itself and that what is cracking me is a long and inevitable plait of genetic material which cannot be shrugged or fought off. My "individuality" may still be felt and genetically provable; but it may be the very opposite of the achievement I once took it for (Barnes, 2008: pp. 93-94).

Furthermore, Barnes suggested that, "[n]ow, alone, we must consider what our Godless wonder might be for" (Barnes, 2008: p. 93); Christianity is a "beautiful lie" (Barnes, 2008: p. 53); and modern alternative pursuits—the "secular modern heaven of self-fulfillment"—and their purported realization of happiness is "our chosen myth" (Barnes, 2008: p. 59). And naturally, we should forget

about free will (Barnes, 2008: p. 181).

Science is thoroughly fixated on a molecular-only explanation for life, including of course the mental aspect. Additionally, this contemporary fixation extends well beyond science to effectively include almost all of academia. But there appear to be at least two under-appreciated challenges to this modern vision. First, the foundational role of (the big molecule) DNA as a vehicle for inheritance is running into the formidable missing heritability problem (Christopher, 2020; Sheldrake, 2012). This is most tangible with the inability to identify the DNA basis for numerous health and behavioral tendencies but is perhaps also present with regards to some remarkable instinctive behaviors (Sheldrake, 2012; Christopher, 2022a). Secondarily, materialism appears inadequate for a number of unusual but accepted behavioral inclinations, including those of prodigies (Christopher, 2020).

Nonetheless, neuroscience appears to have thorough confidence in the materialist paradigm. This is readily apparent, even in a popular book like V. S. Ramachandran's (with S. Blakeslee) *Phantoms in the Brain* (Ramachandran & Blakeslee, 1998). In that book, we are informed that over the "last three decades" neuroscientists "have learned a great deal about the laws of mental life and about how these laws emerge from the brain" (Ramachandran & Blakeslee, 1998: p. 256). Ramachandran wrote about the "exhilarating" progress that had been made but acknowledged that this process had left many "uncomfortable". As they wrote:

> [i]t seems somehow disconcerting to be told that your life, all your hopes, triumphs and aspirations simply arise from the activity of neurons in your brain. But far from being humiliating, this idea is ennobling, I think. Science—cosmology, evolution and especially the brain sciences—is telling us that we have no privileged position in the universe and that our sense of having a private nonmaterial soul "watching the world" is really an illusion (Ramachandran & Blakeslee, 1998: p. 256).

The authors then went on to offer the empty consolation that this selfless state was consistent with an intellectual take on "Eastern mystical traditions".

This confident take on mental life, though, is easily questioned via later more authoritative acknowledgement of how little is actually known and how much future work appears necessary to confirm the materialist vision (and thus provide requisite neural details) (Yuste & Church, 2014). Furthermore, regardless of future research ventures, there still appear to be accepted behavioral phenomena that stymie conceivable neural-molecular explanations. One such phenomenon appears to be hyperthymesic syndrome in which experiencers display an ongoing massive day-by-day recall of their lives and also significant events. Such memories were found to be "highly organized in that they are associated with a particular day and date" and that this occurs "naturally and without exertion" (McGaugh & LePort, 2014). Embedded in hyperthymesia is the remarkable ability to map arbitrary dates to the corresponding day of the week (termed calendar calculation).

Another phenomenon appears to be directly suggestive of wholesale mental dualism. That phenomenon is terminal lucidity.

2. Terminal Lucidity

A general discussion of terminal lucidity is found in a *Scientific American* blog piece by psychologist Jesse Bering, "One Last Goodbye/The Strange Case of Terminal Lucidity" (Bering, 2014). Bering considered something that was perhaps initially recognized in the modern era in an article by German biologist Michael Nahm (Nahm, 2009). Nahm described terminal lucidity as:

> The (re-)emergence of normal or unusually enhanced mental abilities in dull, unconscious, or mentally ill patients shortly before death, including considerable elevation of mood and spiritual affectation, or the ability to speak in a previously unusual spiritualized and elated manner (Nahm, 2009).

In a subsequent survey article, Nahm along with Bruce Greyson, mentioned that in a study of 49 cases, 41 of them involved surprising verbalizations during the last week of life (Nahm & Bruce, 2009). In 21 of the cases, the verbalizations came on the same day as death. In some cases, severely mentally impaired individuals had gradually returned to near-normal lucidity before their death. This included mention of a case involving a man who had been catatonic for nearly 2 decades before his reemergence to a near-normal state.

Additional cases are considered elsewhere including in articles in *The Guardian* (Godfrey, 2021) and in *Psychology Today* (Mendoza, 2019). As one doctor pointed out after reviewing surveys, "it is safe to say that this phenomena exists, and likely exists more often than we expect" (Godfrey, 2021). In such articles some poignant episodes recalled by relatives who witnessed miraculous rejuvenations of seemingly cognitively-lost people were given. In one such case a witness recalled her grandmother rejuvenation:

> She was sitting up in bed, smiling as we walked in. For the next two hours she laughed and joked, completely cognitive, coherent… lucid. A lifetime of memory had returned, and we took advantage of it as she regaled with episodes from her past. My mum [mother], who knew many of them, quietly verified them. Her funny, eloquent, vibrant mother had returned. "It all came back to her in one rush," remembers my mum. "It was like a bolt of lightning. The clouds cleared." After we left that afternoon, my grandma slipped back into a semi-conscious state, soon not knowing who my mother was, and died within days (Godfrey, 2021).

Perhaps the most striking case involved a severely disabled young woman named Anna ("Kathe") Katherina Ehmer (Nahm & Bruce, 2013; Bering, 2014). Her case occurred in 1922 and had substantial verification as Kathe was a patient in a mental hospital and her episode of sudden lucidity was observed by the hospital's chief physician Wilhem Wittneben and also its director Friedrich Hap-

pich. Kathe had been born with severe disabilities and as such had never spoken and moreover appeared detached from her environment. And yet in her last half-hour of life she somehow reportedly sung (in a spiritualized fashion), and in particular, this involved the repeated phrase, "*Where does the soul find its home*, *its peace*? *Peace*, *peace*, *heavenly peace*!" In another article it was reported that those "present were rendered speechless themselves; some sobbed in bewilderment; others felt they had witnessed a miracle of the soul" (Burnett III, 2018).

Moving along now to a fine clinical review published in the *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, "Terminal lucidity: A review and a case collection" (Nahm et al., 2012). The scope provided in that paper's opening sentence suggests that what is now termed "terminal [or paradoxical] lucidity", "has been reported over the past 250 years, but has received little attention". Given the amazing nature of this phenomenon the lack of attention seems surprising. But perhaps the authors' observation that "discussions and case reports" became "almost absent in the medical literature of the 20th century" reflects the growing clout of materialism in the scientific ranks.

Nahm et al.'s presentation includes some details with regards to 19 clinical cases (excluding Anna Katrina Ehmer's). Herein I will narrow the presentation down to 4 of those cases and moreover suggest that interested readers consider obtaining the excellent (4 and 1/2 page) article for their own careful reading. I will minimize the traumatic nature of some of the patients' experiences.

The first case considered here involved occurred in 1822 and involved a 6-year-old boy who had fallen on a nail that had thus penetrated his forehead. This was followed by subsequent "headaches and mental disturbances" and by age 17 "he was in constant pain, extremely melancholic, and starting to lose his memory". He additionally, "fantasized, blinked continuously, and looked for hours at particular objects". He was subsequently admitted to a hospital after regularly vomiting and while a patient therein during the next 18 days was "not able to sit or get out of bed". Then on the next day:

> He suddenly left his bed and appeared very bright, claiming he was free of all pain and feelings of sickness. He intended to leave the hospital the next day. A quarter of an hour after the attending physician left him, he fell unconscious and died within a few minutes (Nahm et al., 2012).

The front of his brain was later found to contain "two pus-filled tissue bags the size of a hen's egg".

Another case involved an 81-year-old Icelandic woman who had exhibited symptoms of dementia while living in a retirement home for years. It was reported that despite regular visits from family members "she had neither recognized any of them nor spoken to them" during her final year. But during a visit by her son Lydur, the elderly woman "[s]uddenly sat up, looked him directly in the face, and said, 'My Lydur, I am going to recite a verse to you'". She then recited "clearly and loudly" the verse (which was translated "into unrhymed English by one of the authors"):

> Oh, father of light, be adored.
> Life and health you gave me.
> My father and mother.
> Now I sit up, for the sun is shining.
> You send your light in to me.
> Oh, God, how good you are (Nahm et al., 2012).

The woman then laid back on her pillow and was unresponsive until dying about a month later. Thinking it was his mother's work Lydur wrote down the verse and later found out that it was the opening stanza from an Icelandic poet's psalm. This case was similar to several of the reviewed cases in that it exhibited a deeper or religious perspective.

In a 1990 report, the case of a 5-year-old boy was related. The boy had been in a coma for three weeks as he lay under the influence of a malignant brain tumor. The boy had reportedly been "almost constantly" in the presence of relatives during that period. Then following the advice of their minister they told the boy that it was ok if he died. Next:

> [S]uddenly and unexpectedly, the boy regained consciousness, thanked the family for letting him go, and told them he would be dying soon. He did in fact die the next day (Nahm et al., 2012).

Another case involving Alzheimer's disease had been personally communicated to the authors. The case pertained to an elderly woman who had been sufficiently cognitively-detached for years that "she showed no sign of recognizing her daughter or anyone else". Somehow, though, in the moments before she died "she started a normal conversation with her daughter". The daughter was shocked and was left "utterly confused".

One gross effort to ascertain the commonness of terminal lucidity was also mentioned. That effort involved interviewing nursing home staff and it found that "interviewees from all units reported firsthand accounts" of confused seniors "suddenly becoming lucid enough in the last days of life to recognize and say farewell to relatives and carers".

I end this introductory look at terminal lucidity with a potentially instructive example from the skeletal realm. Roughly twenty-five years ago, I was out running in a snowy field and inadvertently stepped in a snow-covered hole. That misstep apparently somehow injured my left big toe. After about a month, I visited a podiatrist who promptly took an x-ray of my left foot. In short order, he displayed the resulting x-ray image to me. I promptly pointed to what appeared to be a broken bone and said "busted"? The podiatrist in minimalist fashion nodded his head. I then asked is "there anything I can do help the situation?" The podiatrist then simply shrugged.

This was a remarkably terse, informative, and ultimately frustrating experience. I had broken one of the imbedded bones beneath the (first and) biggest joint associated with my left big toe (this bone is termed the medial hallucal se-

samoid). That bone is apparently difficult to heal and normally provides some helpful regulation of the associated joint. As a result, I have opted to wear stiff-soled shoes and more generally avoid bending my big toe backward (in extension). Needless to say, it would be a miracle if this skeletal flaw were to rectify itself. Additionally, if that correction then inexplicably un-did itself that might constitute a negative miracle.

I suggest that this situation is crudely analogous to the circumstances in which terminal lucidity occurs. There has been a significant physical setback and that would seem to make very difficult a return to normal functioning. In the case of neural setbacks these normally do not happen instantaneously (as in my foot's case) but it also appears that they—as evident by symptoms—worsen over time. So how could neural function return to normal as death approached? Additionally, how in some cases is this break from dysfunction a short-term reversible affair?

3. Medium Communications, Dualism, and a Possible Explanation for Terminal Lucidity

Other phenomena that offer possible evidence for the existence of souls (and thus dualism) include near-death experiences (Holden et al., 2009) and medium-based investigations (Carter, 2012). I pursue the latter topic here as it is potentially insightful with regard to explaining terminal lucidity. The later portions of Chris Carter's book, *Science and the Afterlife Experience*, contains remarkable—and remarkably corroborated—accounts of medium-based communications with deceased individuals. Such purported post-death communicators included a mix of proverbial nobodies and somebodies. These accounts offer what appears to be a consensus roughly consistent with a traditional life-after-life dynamic with strong justice or karma-like moral underpinnings. That dynamic as described by some communicators included potential advancement across incarnations—either in terms of species or ultimately planes of existence. The accounts appear to have been communicated without reference to religions (although fuller accounts such as those in Geraldine Cummin's *The Road to Immortality* do include significant references to Christianity and God).

Carter's medium coverage includes discussions of the amazing efforts that were made to corroborate the medium-based communications. These efforts included efforts to obtain a connection with a deceased chess grandmaster and then have that connection confirmed via a game played with a contemporary grandmaster (Carter, 2012: pp. 204-218). Perhaps such medium-based efforts are analogous to the communications offered by some mediums with regard to living people. There are a number of such striking examples included in Elizabeth Mayer's fine *Extraordinary Knowing* (Mayer, 2007). Additionally, the somewhat related phenomenon of remote viewing also reported on in Mayer's book and it was then followed up in Mark Gober's subsequent *An End to Upside Down Thinking.* The latter book included very positive classified official reviews of that viewing process (Gober, 2018: pp. 71-72).

Such accounts obtained by mediums may be rare (and taboo for some), but nonetheless, the potential insights appear noteworthy and very interesting. One obvious limitation of such reports, though, is that they are at best, careful communications from a few (post-death) souls with regard to their limited experiences and observations (as some communicators acknowledged).

Moving along to an introduction to Carter's coverage of medium communications. In terms of the big picture and potential meaning of life there were a number of relevant descriptions. Communications with the philosopher Frederic Myers suggested an almost ladder-link progression as souls move up from simple life forms (including plants). In a concise assessment he stated that souls:

> Must gather … numberless experiences, manifest and express themselves in uncountable forms before they attain to completion … Once these are acquired, [these entities] … take on divine attributes. The reason, therefore, for the universe and … the purpose of existence … [is] the evolution of mind in matter (Carter, 2012: p. 305).

Additionally, the popularly communicated (through Jane Roberts) figure "Seth" in a summary of his work was thought to believe that:

> Each individual consciousness must undergo a long period of training and learning through repeated physical embodiments. Being human is simply one "stage" in this process of development, and when, through repeated incarnations, this stage is finished, one passes onward to other planes of existence which offer more exalted opportunities for development. The most crucial "lesson" to be learned is karmic or ethical (Carter, 2012: p. 304).

The dynamic suggested in Carter's book that is possibly relevant to terminal lucidity will now be considered. Some of the communications described particular connections between the soul and the associated body. In a discussion on the nature of dying Fredrick Myers suggested that:

> [t]he two are bound together by many little threads, by two silver [constituent] cords. One of these makes contact with the solar plexus, the other with the brain. They all may lengthen or extend during sleep or during half-sleep, for they have considerable elasticity. When a man slowly dies these threads and the two cords are gradually broken. Death occurs when these two principal communicating lines with brain and solar plexus are severed (Carter, 2012: p. 307).

Myers went on to suggest that dying is much more peaceful for the soul than bodily symptoms might reflect. The weakening connection of the underlying cords is suggested to leave the soul largely removed from bodily suffering.

Another communicator, identified as the musician Sir Donald Covey, made similar comments including references to the underlying cords:

> At death, this [silver] cord is dissolved or severed, and can be compared with the umbilical cord which is all dispensed with after birth. Death after

> all, is like another birth into another world, excepting that one's new body is a counterpart of the lately vacated physical body (Carter, 2012: p. 298).

Additionally another communicator—self-identified as "E. K."—also spoke of the nature of death and the limited suffering associated with it:

> [a]s old age comes on the two forms of being represented in the body begin to grow apart. Failing health and failing senses are the symptoms of this withdrawal. The brain tissues often seem to sever connections first before the other organs of the body are ready. This is the meaning of senile decay. When the final breath is drawn the process of severance is practically complete and rounded off by unconsciousness. … Much of the apparent suffering of a death-bed is not consciously felt by the sufferer. His real life is already half retired from the mortal body and neither experiences nor records its pangs. Shakespeare is very near to the literal fact when he speaks of "shuffling off this mortal coil" (Carter, 2012: p. 299).

This relatively detached process appears consistent with the dualistic implications suggested by terminal lucidity.

Furthermore, on the topic of senility the communicator Frederic Myers suggested:

> [t]he very old may, before their passing from earth, in part lose memory or lose their grasp of facts, their power of understanding. This tragic decay all too often causes the observer of it to lose faith in an After-life. For the soul seems, under such circumstances, merely the brain. This however is a false conclusion. The soul, or active ego, has been compelled partially to retire into the double during waking hours because the cord between the brain and its etheric counterpart has either been frayed, or has snapped. The actual life of the physical body is still maintained through the second cord and through any threads which still adhere to the two shapes. So the aged, apparently mindless man or woman, is in no sense mindless. He or she has merely withdrawn a little way from you, and has no need for your pity (Carter, 2012: p. 308).

Of note here is the implied detach-ability of the soul (i.e., "etheric counterpart") and also its implied role as the prime cognitive instigator. Along these lines then the brain (like DNA) might simply play a crude superficial role with regards to consciousness. Related phenomena might be the staggering abilities displayed by some prodigies, abilities which appear unlikely to be plausible via neurons (Treffert, 2010; Solomon, 2012).

A simple model then for terminal lucidity might begin with the fact that the soul gradually retires from conscious/cognitive engagement with the brain. That hypothesized retirement could entail a loss of connectivity through something akin to the purported cord. The soul, though, somehow manages to stay onboard with an awareness of surrounding events and thus the accurate recall displayed in some terminal lucidity incidents. The terminal lucidity phenomenon

might then reflect that a soul somehow sensing impending death makes a final successful push for a connection—again through the suggested cord—and thus a cognitive reappearance is obtained. This re-connection might be very difficult to realize and apparently can be quite short. The underlying motivational factors might include a mix of desiring to show gratitude to caregivers and friends, and also perhaps simply desiring to have a final animated appearance to punctuate a long and frustrating shutdown.

A materialist explanation would seem to have to account for the re-realization of apparently lost brain functions; have that re-realization potentially be a transient one; and finally align the re-awakening with a pending death.

4. Discussions and Conclusion

The backdrop to a discussion on terminal lucidity here includes consideration of the state of contemporary neuroscience. Such consideration might best begin by focusing on discrete mental conditions and the associated status of neuroscientific knowledge. Three conditions stand out for such analyses—schizophrenia, autism, and Alzheimer's. Notably, for autism and schizophrenia, they are in large part presumed to have genetic origins but despite enormous efforts those origins are still missing. Additionally, for the physical/neural basis of these two disorders—and also for Alzheimer's—neuroscience is still trying to identify those dynamics. A number of the publicized hypothesis—involving amyloid plaque for Alzheimer's disease and mirror neurons for autism—apparently have not panned out (Kosik, 2020; Mosbergen, 2022; Napolitan, 2021). Thus, the presumed genetic origins of two basic mental conditions, as well as the functional basis for all three conditions, are still alluding the grasp of neuroscience despite enormous efforts. These are general conditions involving significant derailments of normal conscious functioning.

A relevant sample of this situation showed up in a *New York Times* article, "The 'Nation's Psychiatrist' Takes Stock, With Frustration" by Ellen Barry (Barry, 2022). The article reflected on a new book by the retired head of the National Institute of Mental Health, Dr. Thomas P. Insel. Insel had headed NIMH for 13 years and steered their resources "away from behavioral research and toward neuroscience and genetics [or a basic science approach]". Insel as he put it had "bet big on genomics." His new book's somewhat predictable take on the outcome was that ever bigger searches were required thus implying that very many variants contributing even "smaller and smaller effects" must be responsible. Insel—like other geneticists—are essentially tied to this ever more tentative conclusion because science has bet everything on DNA, and thus the unfolding failures imply they simply need to search ever more for elusive DNA explanations. Insel in his book in fact states he feels we need to "double down" on basic research.

Additionally, science's materialist fixation came out indirectly in the article's interview with Duke University's Dr. Allen Frances. Frances had opposed Insel's

big bet on genes and yet was recently quoted as saying:

> [t]he end result of these last 30 years is an exciting intellectual adventure, one of the more fascinating pieces of science in our lifetimes, but it hasn't helped a single patient.

What is of note here is that even a critic felt compelled to put a positive spin on what has been an enormous failure (for details on the vast scope of the efforts and their outcome see "Schizophrenia's Unyielding Mystery" (Balter, 2017)). And a big relevant mystery here is that "[s]chizophrenia has a more benign course and outcome in the developing world" (Luhrmann, 2012). Further it appears that in our country people with schizophrenia commonly spend a lot of time homeless in part because "[t]hey dislike the diagnosis even more than the idea of being out on the street, because for them the idea of being 'crazy'" is worse (Luhrmann, 2012). Additionally, Tanya Luhrmann also wrote that "Indian families don't treat people with schizophrenia as if they have a soul-destroying illness" (Luhrmann, 2012).

And now with increasing awareness of the terminal(/paradoxical) lucidity phenomena it appears that whatever explanation neuroscience identifies, they will also have to explain how such neural dynamics can dissipate (and potentially in transient fashion) prior to death. I suggest that terminal lucidity adds a significant layer of mystery on top of a substantial collection of mysteries associated with mental functioning.

Nonetheless, neuroscience appears rock-solid in their confidence in materialism. Thus, in a recent popular article dealing with the timing of death, the neurologist Michale Stanley made a number of claims including "[t]he brain is what makes you, you" and "there is no evidence of an active mind without living brain" (Stanley, 2022). I suggest that neuroscience is headed for some shakeups.

5. Conclusion

For those interested in questioning science's "biochemistry and biophysics"-only vision of life, there are many established approaches (Sheldrake, 2012; Carter, 2012; Kelly et al., 2007; Stevenson, 1997; Tart, 2009; Alexander, 2012; Tucker, 2005; Radin, 2006). Each of these approaches provides some support for a form of dualism. I suggest, though, that in order to really breech materialism and its effective nullification of deeper visions of life, one need to take on DNA and its assumed foundational role for life and evolution (Christopher, 2020). Previous work by the author has suggested that the traditional reincarnation model appears to be a good starting point to explain some mysteries including the general missing heritability (Christopher, 2017a; Christopher, 2017b). Additional work in this journal considered some evolutionary phenomena and their possible transcendental-based explanations (Christopher, 2022a; Christopher, 2022b). A reincarnation (or transcendental) approach would also be consistent with dualism (as argued in the above-cited works by Stevenson, Tucker, and Carter).

Terminal lucidity appears to offer compelling straightforward support for the

existence of a soul and with it the inadequacy of the established brain-only hypothesis. Terminal lucidity could as such fit into a transcendental model or perhaps also a one (embodied) life model. In either case, this mysterious cognitive rejuvenation seriously challenges the materialist's assumptions about the mind and as such provides significant gross dualistic evidence.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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