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LIFE AFTER DEATH - PART 2

PROBST: You're watching LARRY KING LIVE. I'm Jeff Probst, sitting in for Larry tonight. We're joined by Dr. Jim Tucker, assistant professor of psychiatry and neuro-behavioral sciences at the University of Virginia. He is a child psychiatrist, and he has studied over 2,500 cases of reincarnation memories in kids. He's also the author of "Life Before Life." And here to explain reincarnation memories and what he's learned from years of research. You heard the story of James, young boy, thinks he was in World War II. Is this a similar story to what you researched with the kids?

PROFESSOR JIM TUCKER, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA: It is. I haven't studied all 2,500 cases. But at the University of Virginia, we've been studying them for nearly 50 years. And what we have found is that kids from all over the world report very similar things at around the age of two or three. They start coming out with these stories about how they lived before. Some of them give a lot of details like James has. Some give much fewer. But it's a very similar phenomenon. It takes place in places where there's belief in reincarnation, but also in places and in families who have never given it a second thought before in.

PROBST: In some of these cases, the kids have similar scars to the people that they are reincarnated from?

(NEO: WAIT, HOLD ON. YOUR ORIGINAL PREMISE WAS THAT A "SOUL" REINCARNATED INTO THE BODY OF A LITTLE BOY. NOW YOU ARE ADDING THAT THE SOUL ALSO BROUGHT WITH IT - A SCAR FROM THE ORIGINAL BODY AND PUT IT ON THE KID?).

TUCKER: That's right. Several hundred of them have had birthmarks or birth defects that match wounds, usually the fatal wound on the body of the previous person.

(NEO: WAIT, HOLD ON AGAIN.

HOW COULD A FATAL WOUND SUCH AS A LARGE BULLET HOLE LEAVE A SCAR? ONCE THE VICTIM DIES, HIS BODY WOULD NOT PRODUCE SCAR TISSUE.

SO WHEN THE VICTIM DIES, HIS SOUL CONTINUES TO HEAL THE WOUND, PRODUCING A SCAR - ON THE BODY THAT THE SOUL NO LONGER HAS? AND THEN IT TAKES OVER A KID'S BODY BY BOOTING OUT THE KID'S SOUL, WHICH GOES SOMEWHERE(?), AND THEN MAKES THE SCAR APPEAR ON THE KID'S BODY - IN EXACTLY THE SAME PLACE AS WHERE IT FORMED ON THE PREVIOUS BODY POSSESSED BY THE SOUL?

I'M GOING TO NEED A FEW MINUTES TO SCOOP UP THE CEREBRAL SPINAL FLUID THAT I LOST ON THAT ONE).

And what we've done with some of them -- Ian Stevenson, who started the work, has done most of this. He was able to get autopsy reports from a lot of the people whose lives the kids seem to remember and to match up just how well the birthmark or the birth defect matches with the wounds the previous person had.

PROBST: Were you able to chart the time between, you know, death and reincarnation?

(NEO: TAKE THIS ADVICE - DO NOT QUIT THE SURVIVOR GIG!).

TUCKER: Well, it varies. The average time is only about 15 or 16 months in our cases. So for the kids who seem to come back with intact memories, the time span tends to be very short. James is an exception of that. We're talking about 50 years. We have others like that. In general, it tends to be quite quick.

(NEO: IF NOTHING ELSE, THIS INTERVIEW SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT THE VALUE OF A PHD. IT IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE ONE WHO ACQUIRES IT, WILL ALSO ACQUIRE LOGICAL, RATIONAL THINKING SKILLS).

PROBST: A study is one thing. Believing in that study that there's a result is another. Has this convinced you these are real?

TUCKER: Well, I think if you look at the strongest cases that they provide pretty substantial evidence that something has gone on here, that there can be this carry-over of memories and emotions that seem to survive after a body has died and then carry-on in another child.

(NEO: LIKE I SAID - NO GUARANTEE).

PROBST: All right. Do you talk about life after death? Why some people don't take it seriously and why they should, when LARRY KING LIVE returns.

(NEO: I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD ACTUALLY LOOK FORWARD TO THE PHRASE "WHEN LARRY KING RETURNS").

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PROBST: Near death experiences; hundreds of people claim to have them every day in the US alone. We're talking about how and why this occurs. And there are people, of course, who don't believe in them at all. Dinesh, you talk about in your book that life after death, it's sort of the elephant in the room. We're all fascinated by it, but nobody really wants to delve into it.

(NEO: MAYBE YOU'VE BEEN DOING SURVIVOR TOO LONG. IN AMERICA, 85% BELIEVE IN GOD AND IN LIFE AFTER DEATH).

D'SOUZA: The atheists and the skeptics are always saying, give us some experience, give us empirical evidence.

(NEO: THAT WOULDN'T BOTHER YOU SO MUCH IF YOU HAD SOMETHING TO GIVE THEM).

We don't have -- we can't talk to dead people.

(NEO: WE HAVE TONS OF PSYCHICS TOURING THE STATES, RAKING IN FORTUNES, FOR DOING JUST THAT. ARE YOU SAYING THEY ARE ALL LIARS AND FAKES? ARE YOU DISPUTING THE MIRACLES OF THE RENOWNED SYLVIA BROWNE? THE ILLUSTRIOUS JOHN EDWARD? ARE YOU BESMIRCHING THE REPUTATION OF THE EMINENTLY HONEST JAMES VAN PRAAGH?

BESIDES AS A CHRISTIAN YOU PRAY TO DEAD PEOPLE. SINCE WHEN DID YOU BECOME A SKEPTIC?).

We can't go to the other side of the curtain. But the near-death experiences are probably the closest thing. There are now thousands of them. They occur all around the world. They have a bunch of ingredients that are very similar: the sense of being drawn through a tunnel, of seeing a bright light, in some cases meeting dead relatives or friends, feeling the presence of a celestial being.

For a while, what the atheists would say, well, this is a kind of mind game, a little bit like if you took hallucinogenic drugs, you'd have weird dreams. That's true. If you give 100 different people hallucinogenic drugs, they wouldn't have similar or the same dreams. It's the uniformity and universality of the near-death experience that makes you have to take it seriously. It's not so easy to write it off.

(NEO: IF THEY WERE IDENTICAL, YOU WOULD HAVE A POINT. THE FACT THAT YOU, YOURSELF, ADMITTED TO A WHOLE ARRAY OF DIFFERENCES, SUCH AS: BEING DRAWN THROUGH A TUNNEL, SEEING A BRIGHT LIGHT, FEELING A CELESTIAL PRESENCE, AND MEETING FRIENDS AND RELATIVES - SHOWS THAT THE EXPERIENCE IS ANYTHING BUT UNIVERSAL AND UNIFORM).

PROBST: Sanjay, when you look at the study, 2,500 cases is a pretty decent sample. Where do you merge the medical world and the spiritual world?

GUPTA: Well, it's interesting, you know, listening to both Jim and Dinesh. With regard to near-death experiences, if that's the beginning of your spectrum, I think scientists try and explain a lot of things away scientifically. The tunnel, for example, that potentially can be explained away by a lack of blood flow to the back of the eye. You start to lose your peripheral vision, see a tunnel. Bright lights, sort of the same thing.

Even the seeing of deceased relatives, perhaps, that is a very cultural thing, for example, in western cultures. In Eastern Africa, people who are having near-death experiences tend to see things that they wish they had done in life. That tends to be their cultural thing they have.

Having said all that, what's so interesting -- I wanted to tell you and Dinesh -- was that when I was researching this for a long time, I thought I was going to explain it all away physiologically. But things that I heard and validated and subsequently believed convinced me that there were things that I could not explain. There were things that were happening at that moment, that near-death experience moment, that simply could not be explained with existing scientific knowledge.

So I think that's where you have to put the spirituality sort of answer and some of reasoning on the table when it comes to these sorts of things.

(NEO: CREATIONISTS WILL RECOGNIZE THAT ARGUMENT AS THE "GOD OF THE GAPS" ARGUMENT. IT IS A LOGICAL FALLACY IN RELIGION - AND IT IS STILL A LOGICAL FALLACY IN MEDICINE).

CHOPRA: One very important phrase there: existing scientific knowledge. I don't think science and spirituality are things that are enemies. You know? Science has always looked at the world objectively. When we're looking at consciousness, it is our consciousness that's looking at consciousness.

(NEO: THANKS DEEPAK - WE CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON YOU FOR A DEEP, INSIGHTFUL, MEANINGLESS PIECE OF GIBBERISH).

D'SOUZA: The researcher Elizabeth Coobra Ross had reported years ago that some of her patients who are blind have had near-death experiences. And now there are studies of blind people who have had near-death experiences. And they're able to describe the number and gender of people in the operating room, the kind of instruments that were used, often the color of the drapes, things that they wouldn't ordinarily be able to know.

(NEO: THE LISTENER SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THESE TYPES OF ARGUMENTS ARE USED TO FORCE AN OPPONENT INTO SUBMISSION - HOW? - BY LYING. OF COURSE YOU CANNOT REPLY TO SUCH NONSENSE - BECAUSE IT ISN'T TRUE. IF ANYONE COULD PROVE THAT THEY ACTUALLY DID WHAT WAS CLAIMED ABOVE, THEY WOULD BE FAMOUS BEYOND COMPARE).

Now, again, we should look at this skeptically.

(NEO: IF YOU EVER LOOKED AT ANYTHING SKEPTICALLY, YOUR SKULL WOULD SHATTER).

We should see if there are natural explanations for all this. My point is the weight of the evidence, when you balance it out, is that there is something going on. See, if the atheists are right,

(NEO: HOLD IT - WHAT HAS ATHEISM GOT TO DO WITH ANY OF THIS? CAN'T YOU EVEN KEEP YOUR HEAD STRAIGHT LONG ENOUGH TO REMEMBER WHICH DEBATE YOU ARE IN?).

these kinds of near-death experiences shouldn't just be rare. They should not exist at all.

(NEO: WHY NOT? SCIENTISTS DON'T DOUBT THE EXISTENCE OF NEAR-DEATH "EXPERIENCES" - THEY DOUBT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF THEM: THAT PEOPLE HAVE RETURNED FROM BEING DEAD, AND THE CONCEPT OF REINCARNATION, BECAUSE THERE IS NOT YET ANY EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF EITHER CLAIM).

What the near-death experiences are telling us is that even when the body breaks down -- you are clinically dead; your heart has stopped; or there's no measured brain activity -- consciousness and experience seems to go on. It's kind of like saying I've turned the car off, taken the key out, the car is still running.

(NEO: SAME THING HAPPENS WHEN YOU CUT THE HEAD OFF A CHICKEN. IT MAY STILL RUN AROUND FOR AWHILE BEFORE ALL ITS FUNCTIONS SHUT DOWN PERMANENTLY).

PROBST: Got to take a break. A man died on a football field seven years ago and came back to life. His incredible story in 60 seconds.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PROBST: I'm Jeff Probst from "Survivor," sitting in for Larry tonight. We have the ultimate survivor story now. Bob Schriever was refereeing a high school football game seven years ago when he went into cardiac arrest, died and was revived. Dr. Sanjay Gupta spoke to him.

GUPTA: What did you experience? Did you have pain?

SCHRIEVER: No. Nothing.

GUPTA: Schriever was in cardiac arrest on this very field during a high school football game. A team trainer, armed with the school's brand new AED, or Automated External Defibrillator, shocked him back to life.

SCHRIEVER: It was scary.

GUPTA: Schriever was choking up as he showed me the video that day. Then he started to talk about what he remembered. What were you experiencing when everyone was seeing this?

SCHRIEVER: It's very peaceful. It's very serene. And it's extremely, extremely bright. I mean, it is bright. And I saw a place that I was supposed to go. I saw that halo, and something was saying, go toward the halo.

(NEO: SOUNDS LIKE HE SAW THE MOVIE "GHOST" STARRING PATRICK SWAYZE. THE FACT THAT HIS BRAIN REPLAYED THAT WHEN HE WENT OUT, IS NOT A REASON TO SELL THE JEEP AND JOIN A CULT).

GUPTA: He says he was dead for two minutes and 40 seconds.

(NEO: WE KNOW THE BRAIN CAN SURVIVE LONGER THAN THAT BEFORE SUFFERING IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE. I DON'T THINK REPUTABLE DOCTORS WOULD CALL "TIME OF DEATH" AFTER ONLY 3 MINUTES).

PROBST: Powerful stuff. Bob Schriever will tell us more about his near-death experience when we return right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PROBST: Bob Schriever says he died and was revived. We're talking about what happened to him when he went into cardiac arrest and came back from the dead. Bob is the co-founder of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association. What do you remember of that?

SCHRIEVER: Not much. When it happened to me, I was just following the quarterback on a roll-out and I took two or three steps and took a half a step and started to lean. And that's all I remember.

PROBST: No pain?

SCHRIEVER: No pain. I had a heart attack the night before, where I had some minor pain, jaw pain. I was unaware of it. It was during another game. I was unaware I was having a heart attack the night before until after the fact, when I had the symptoms and I more or less recognized it.

Being the macho guy I was, I refused to do anything about it.

(NEO: THE LISTENER SHOULD NOTE THE EUPHEMISM "MACHO GUY" REPLACING THE TRUE DESCRIPTION, "STUPID IDIOT").

But when I went down with Sudden Cardiac Arrest, I had no pain, no nothing. I just blanked out. That's all I remember.

PROBST: Sanjay, obviously, you know Bob from doing the story. but you also explore the idea of near-death experiences in your book. Similar story?

GUPTA: Yes. Yes. The stories are very similar in terms of what we hear people who have sudden cardiac arrest, and other things as well, especially, again, in this country, very similar stories. The point I was trying to make earlier a little bit is this idea that as part of what they experience, though, they couldn't have possibly had that experience explained away completely by the brain or explained away completely physiologically. Some of what happened to Bob and what he told me, I couldn't explain it. That's what was so interesting.

(NEO: "GOD OF THE GAPS" - HE CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, SO IT MUST MEAN AN ETERNAL SOUL EXISTS).

D'SOUZA: There's a psychologist, Susan Blackmoore, who has advanced a theory that's widely discussed now. It's called the dying brain. The idea is that when your brain goes into shutdown mode, it generates these kind of experiences.

Bob is a kind of walking refutation of this theory for the simple reason that if all the people who have had near-death experiences are living among us. They drive to work. They function normally. If Bob's brain died, how did it reconstitute itself? How did it repair itself so he's now functioning normally? The dying brain theory, I think, doesn't hold up to scrutiny.

(NEO: THE DYING BRAIN THEORY DOESN'T SAY THAT SHUTDOWN MODE IS IRREVERSIBLE - IT DEPENDS ON HOW FAR IT HAS PROGRESSED.

AFTER 2 MINUTES AND 40 SECONDS, BOB'S BRAIN DID NOT HAVE TO "RECONSTITUTE" ITSELF. THE BRAIN, LIKE ALL OTHER BODY PARTS, DOES REPAIR ITSELF. AS FOR "FUNCTIONING NORMALLY" - THESE PEOPLE RARELY FUNCTION NORMALLY AFTER SUCH AN EPISODE.

THE ONLY THEORY THAT DOESN'T HOLD UP TO SCRUTINY, WOULD BE ... YOURS).

PROBST: Let's get Michael back into this. Michael, if Bob had been hooked up to your machines, what would they have shown?

SHERMER: He wasn't dead. You started this hour off with Sanjay Gupta explaining we can't say somebody's dead at one given moment at a particular time on the clock. That's not how it works. It takes two, three, five, ten minutes to go through a dying process. The ref wasn't dead. He was in a near-death state.

We know from Dr. James Winnerry, from the US Air Force -- he has documented over 700 near death and out of body experiences in pilots going through G-Force loss of consciousness. It's simply apoxia or oxygen deprivation to the cortex.

PROBST: There's a little bit of semantics going on there. We made the point of saying that the old way of saying you're now dead is being revisited. But there's still the idea that death is a process, and I think what we're saying here, Deepak, is if you go with that, that Bob was in the process of dying.

D'SOUZA: I think also there's a larger physical framework here. You know, 100 years ago, if you said life after death, if you used particularly religious vocabulary, heaven, hell, the idea of having a resurrection, in modern physics, none of this made any sense. Space and time were presumed to extend definitely in all directions. People said, matter, we know what that's like. We know how that behaves. Bodies die. What is there to live on?

Today, a scientist will talk about hidden dimensions, multiple realms, other universes. Do we know if these other universes exist? Well not a lot. But we know that if they exist, they have laws totally different than our universe.

(NEO: AS ALWAYS, YOUR ATTEMPTS AT LOGIC DEFY THE LAWS OF LOGIC. HOW CAN YOU PROVE THAT THEY HAVE LAWS TOTALLY DIFFERENT THAN OUR OWN UNIVERSE - IF YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW THEY EXIST?).

SHERMER: It's important to remember that before we say something is out of this world that we first haven't gotten a worldly explanation. You said earlier, Deepak, that I can't explain everything naturally. OK. So what? That doesn't mean there's a supernatural force. That just means you can't explain everything.

The fact you called consciousness the hard problem. Right. The fact that we don't have a cogent theory of consciousness doesn't mean that altered states of consciousness are something spiritual or supernatural.

CHOPRA: I don't believe in anything supernatural. When did we use the word supernatural?

(NEO: IT IS IRRELEVANT WHETHER OR NOT YOU USED THE EXACT WORD "SUPERNATURAL." THE FACT THAT EVERYTHING YOU BELIEVE IS BASED ON BELIEF IN THE SUPERNATURAL, IS SUFFICIENT TO UNDERSTAND YOUR POSITION).

D'SOUZA: Either there is life after death or there isn't. It's like asking a caterpillar, is there life after being a caterpillar? The caterpillar might say, no way, I can't conceive of what it's like to be a butterfly. But that's just part of the natural order. You don't need supernatural.

(NEO: CAN YOU CONSTRUCT A SINGLE THOUGHT WITHOUT USING AN ANALOGY? THE REASON WHY YOU CAN'T, IS BECAUSE YOU NEED FALSE ANALOGIES IN ORDER TO MISLEAD LISTENERS. YOU CANNOT CONFRONT A QUESTION IN A STRAIGHTFORWARD MANNER, BECAUSE YOU LACK EVIDENCE FOR EVERYTHING YOU BELIEVE; SO YOU ARE FORCED TO TRY TO TRICK PEOPLE WITH MISLEADING ANALOGIES.

YOUR LAST ANALOGY WAS AS PATHETICALLY MISLEADING AS ALL YOUR OTHERS. SINCE YOUR ANALOGY ASSUMES INSECTS CAN CONCEIVE IDEAS, I WILL GO ALONG, AND ASK: WHY DO YOU ASSUME A CATERPILLAR WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONCEIVE OF LIFE AS A BUTTERFLY SIMPLY BECAUSE IT HASN'T REACHED THAT STATE YET? IF IT SAW OTHER CATERPILLARS TURN INTO BUTTERFLIES, THEN WHY WOULDN'T IT BE ABLE TO CONCEIVE THE IDEA?).

CHOPRA: By the way, there are traditions that say the in-body experience is a socially induced collective hallucination. We do not exist in the body. The body exists in us. We do not exist in the world. The world exists in us.

(NEO: ONCE AGAIN, SCIENCE IS TRUMPED BY "TRADITIONS." IT IS AMAZING WHAT PASSES FOR EVIDENCE IN A MIND THAT REQUIRES NONE).

SHERMER: That doesn't work for me.

CHOPRA: I know it doesn't work for you. Who's the you that's talking to me right now?

PROBST: Let's get the you that's here in the room with us, Bob. Weigh in on this.

SCHRIEVER: I'm not a medical person. What they're talking about is over my head. All I know is in our organization, we have many, many survivors who belong, and they tell the same story or basically the same story. I did witness something. I didn't go as far as some members did, because they were dead, clinically dead, if you want to put that term, much longer period of time, thanks to the medical we have today, where they can keep them alive, than I was.

You hear the stories they tell. And before this all happened to me, I was not a believer in this. I have to tell you right now, I am now a believer in this.

PROBST: More spirited debate about a very spiritual matter, or maybe not, right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PROBST: Welcome back to LARRY KING LIVE. I'm Jeff Probst. Why can some people die and still go on living? We've been exploring the life and death topic with some experts. Deepak, if there is life after death, then does it matter how you live this life?

CHOPRA: I think just because there's life after death doesn't really change anything in the deeper sense. But it does because, you know, when you die, you're not going to be a better person than you are now. You're going to carry-on the consciousness that you have now.

(NEO: AND YOU KNOW THIS HOW?).

PROBST: There's no hope for me?

CHOPRA: If you do have -- live beyond hope. Hope is a sign of despair. You have to live in a state where you want the truth, OK?

(NEO: TIME OUT!

THAT LAST ONE CAUSED ME TO BLAST A MOUTHFUL OF VANILLA PUDDING ALL OVER MY KEYBOARD. GIVE ME JUST A MINUTE.

OKAY, I'M BACK.

DEEPAK, IF YOU HAVE TO LIVE IN A STATE WHERE YOU WANT THE TRUTH - THEN I'M AFRAID YOU HAVE AN AWFULLY LONG ROAD AHEAD OF YOU).

PROBST: We'll do therapy later.

(NEO: YOU TELL HIM).

CHOPRA: If there is life after death, the quality of your life tomorrow depends on the quality of your life today. So the best way to ensure a great future for you is to be present now and live it the best way you can, with loving kindness, compassion, joy at the success of others, peace, and equanimity.

SHERMER: Deepak, that's the smartest thing you said today. I have to say. I completely agree with you. Whether there's an after- life or not, that's precisely how we should live our lives. We are in agreement.

PROBST: Let me ask you this. Would a near-death experience of a serial killer be different from that of somebody who's lived --

D'SOUZA: It would be. In fact, initially, the near-death experience seemed entirely positive. But now there have been extensive compilation of nightmarish and hellish near-death experiences, which have shocked people into transforming their life. I think here's the point: if there's no life after death, and we reflect on that, then, in a sense, we are passengers on the Titanic. We can rearrange the deck chairs. We can turn up the music. But the whole ship going down.

(NEO: REALITY SUCKS - DON'T IT DINESH?).

On the hand, if there is life after death, then we have a reason to believe in cosmic justice.

(NEO: AND THAT OF COURSE IS ... YOUR GOD).

We will believe that good will be rewarded, evil will be held accountable.

(NEO: THAT IS NOT TRUE. ACCORDING TO YOUR CHRISTIAN BELIEFS, YOU CAN BE FORGIVEN THE MOST HORRIBLE SIN - AS LONG AS ONE CHOOSES TO WORSHIP YOUR GOD).

We have a sense that we can face death more bravely, because it's not the end;

(NEO: IF THAT IS WHAT YOU NEED TO FACE REALITY - KEEP IT).

it's a gateway to another life.

(NEO: THAT'S PROVIDED YOU ARE ABLE TO KICK OUT THE SPIRIT THAT IS INHABITING THE LITTLE KID, WHOSE BODY YOU ARE TRYING TO TAKE OVER).

We can teach morality to our children. We derive a sense of meaning and significance in our life, which is part of this larger framework.

(NEO: ETERNAL LIFE IS WHAT REMOVES MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE IN LIFE. IF YOU ARE GOING TO A BETTER PLACE - WHY DO YOU CARE WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS LIFE?).

So I think life after death, even if there's residual uncertainty -- I think the preponderance of the evidence supports it. But even if there's residual uncertainty, it's good for me to believe. It makes sense.

(NEO: IF WHAT YOU BELIEVE MADE SENSE, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO RELY ON FAITH AND FALSE ANALOGIES).

PROBST: Sanjay, is there any unethical aspect to the process of death has begun, and you're going to stop it and bring it back?

GUPTA: Absolutely not. I mean, that's what doctors in the medical community are trained to do. It does raise questions of what do we really know about death, what's really happening? What is death, per se? I don't think we're very good at determining that yet. I mean, even within hospitals, the idea of brain death, which Deepak sort of talked about, it's, for the most part, a clinical exam. So in one hospital they may give you a slightly different answer versus another hospital, which may not seem like a big deal, except the fact we're talking about death here, and it becomes a very big deal. It's not at all unethical to obviously try and reverse that process.

PROBST: Michael, we've spent an hour going back and fourth. Deepak is going to be looking for you somewhere in between wherever you are and wherever we are right now. Have you taken anything from this?

SHERMER: I do think that the preponderance of evidence argument is the way to go, because it can't be proved or disproved like in a court of law. I think we have to look at the preponderance of evidence. In my case, I tend to still be skeptical. In Dinesh's case, he goes the other way.

PROBST: Deepak would say to you, Michael, you prove it then.

SHERMER: Well, the burden of proof is not on me. I'm not making a positive claim that there is an afterlife, therefore I don't have to prove it. I'm just saying, let's keep an open mind, but we don't know. Why not just say --

CHOPRA: That's the first sensible thing he said: let's keep an open mind.

(NEO: YOU WOULDN'T KNOW A "SENSIBLE THING" IF IT SLAPPED YOU ACROSS THE FACE).

SHERMER: No, no, second sensible thing. Remember, I agreed with you.

CHOPRA: OK, second thing. There's a difference between cynicism and skepticism. I'm glad that he's a healthy skeptic. Cynicism is a risk factor for sudden death from premature heart disease.

(NEO: YOU BETTER HOPE THAT ONE OF THE RISK FACTORS ISN'T BLATANT IGNORANCE - OR ELSE YOU MIGHT AS WELL START MAKING FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS RIGHT NOW).

PROBST: I wish we did not have to wrap this up, but we do. Thanks to Larry for letting me sit in the chair tonight. It was a pleasure.

(NEO: GLAD YOU ENJOYED YOURSELF - WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME).