



Local presentation on near-death experiences

A public and scientific presentation on 'near-death experiences' is being conducted today.

The phenomenon, one which is uncommonly spoken about, will be presented by Jonathan Matile, clinical and developmental psychologist.

The public presentation will be held at the Victoria Hospital Diagnostic Centre, from 2.30 to 3.30pm.

Mr Matile will be talking about the history of near-death experiences since antiquity, the conditions in which they can occur, psychological consequenc-

es, and the different scientific hypotheses to explain the origin.

For three years, Dr Matile conducted scientific research in psychology, and in collaboration with the Faculty of Protestant Theology, he completed his thesis on this phenomenon at the University of Geneva.

Ahead of the presentation which is being organised by the Health Professional Council, Mr Matile told *Seychelles NATION* that the aim is to improve the knowledge of this phenomenon among health professional

in Seychelles.

He explains that "near-death experiences are 'altered states of consciousness' that are experienced as intense spiritual experiences that would prove life after life"; they can occur during cardiac arrest, coma, accidents, or during meditation sessions. The contents of near-death experiences are relatively similar across cultures and religions.

"This is a taboo phenomenon in society because the people who live it are often afraid of being considered crazy, yet scientific studies show that about 5% of the population can live it. Since the 1990s, near-death experiences are no longer

being viewed as a form of mental illness."

Mr Matile continues by saying that today, near-death experiences divide scientists, with some saying that it is from a succession of neurological dysfunction, while others say that the consciousness of people (their souls) can survive physical death to continue living in a reality that is unknown to us scientifically.

He adds that people in excellent mental health, such as Sharon Stone, Bill Clinton and Curtis Jackson (known as 50 cent), have said that they have had near-death experiences.

According to Mr Matile, the first

written testimonies were written by Platon in antiquity 2,500 years ago. Paintings like that of Bosh in 1500 or that of 'Dante Alighieri's Representation of the Paradise' Gustave Doré in 1892, show the concept of the passage between life on Earth and the afterlife, often represented as a tunnel with a light of love infinite at the end.

Photo sources: Jonathan Matile