

# Addiction of Samsara

## **Question;**

You mention in the video how craving/clinging take away our agency. That immediately made sense to me on an intuitive level but I'm not sure how to understand it conceptually (putting words to it). If you have time, could you please explain what you meant by that?

## **Answer;**

Let's take this all the way back to the Four Noble Truths.

First Noble Truth, "Life is Dukkha" or all Life is suffering, stress, and anxiety, etc. How is "all life suffering"? Because all life is in the grips of Samsara; that is, craving and clinging. Craving and clinging are not merely mental attitudes and constructs, but are established in us physically. When our minds arise desires, those thoughts quickly become manifest in our Skandhas, our physical basis for sensations and experience in the world. When you desire a food, a drug, or any interaction, does not your mouth water from anticipation? Your skin, your further thoughts and so on, all are peaked in their anticipation. Life becomes beset by impatience to the point of desperation for those elements and the satiation of those desires. Are these not the basic fundamentals of addiction? Sure, it can get very deep and psychotic, even self-destructive, but it begins quite simply and immediate.

Third Noble Truth, "Cease the formations of cravings and clinging to end dukkha". This could just as accurately be translated as, "Cease your addictions to regain your agency". Agency is your liberated volition, your detachment from Samsara, to be free to experience enlightenment, your Gohonzon mind of Buddha. Agency is your self-directed actions. When Shakyamunibuddha said that we should be in control of our mind, and not the opposite of letting our minds control us, it was regaining our agency that he spoke of. When our mind controls or conjures our actions, we are in Samsara. When we set our minds to task and direct our actions in accord with our willful path to enlightenment, we regain our agency.

When the mind is uncoupled from every thought moment of identification, collecting data, and possessing, the mind can become engaged with the engine of life in each moment to moment experience. Sensations become validation rather than addictions. This is the elegance of Nichiren's method for shutting down the Samsaric mind via the complete focus of the mandala and the chanting of the Engine of life, NaMuMyoHoRenGeKyo.

Love and respect,  
NaMuMyoHoRenGeKyo