

# Time, Stress, Anxiety, Craving, Clinging, and Momentum

Now is not now

## Timelessness

There has been for decades a fetish of the concept of **time** as happening as an idea of “**Now**”. Although this is a step toward better conceptions of what “time” actually “is”, this idea of “now” continues a great many obstacles to understanding our path to **enlightenment**. To consider a **now**, is only possible in its relation, locked and dependent, on **past** and **future**. A time *sandwich*, if you will. This is a **linear** concept of time, and existence itself.

In Buddhist thought, this concept of time is the very nexus of our illusory (*Samsaric*) idea of “**being**”. By making this moment dependent on the “past” we experience some physical and mental “attachment” to support this moment while also anxious and fearsome of the implications of this moment as it inexorably pushes into the next or “future” moment. When considered throughout our study of Shakyamuni’s teachings, all the language of stories and metaphors are a deep dive into this very issue of our conception and adherence to linear time. Now, as a sandwich, of present and future colliding into some sort of meaningful moment is the primary illusion that precipitates **craving** (into some “future”) and **clinging** (of something in the “past”), in order to “**rationalize**” some idea of “now”; we are truly locked into *Samsara*. A missing component of this linearity is **momentum**. Momentum (and even this term is sticky as it too can be rationalized into a linear construct) can present an idea that the very notion of moments is a personal (local) conscious perception of movement without location (outside of the self-mind’s experience). Moments, when tied to consciousness-only, become decoupled with the idea of universal or even “local” time. In other words, the “moment” you and I experience together is **not** the same moment. The moment that you are experiencing is of your own consciousnesses, construction, karma, and momentum, that is completely and fundamentally not my experience etc... This concept of time breaks linearity, freeing it to be among all moments without strict consecutive-ness or ordered constructs. It can be observed within our thoughts that the mind freely moves through impressions and experiences without strict adherence to rules of linearity. Witness any argument over the details of a past event between two or more people and this disparity of experience becomes obvious in the extreme. Your “now” is not my “now”.

How is *now* relevant then, to our Buddhist thought and practice? One way might be to focus our ideas of **being** in momentum as “experience” rather than time or *past/present/future*. Still, even the word *experience* can be married to linear ideas.

Experience, visualized as a cloud of potential with constant random sparks of instantiations appearing and disappearing could be an improved idea of experience. Like Nebulae in the cosmos as engines or factories of stars, Life is a cloud of potential manifesting formations with neither “previous” nor “future” constructs. Occurrences “happening” non-locally, but experienced only locally (in mind) and disappearing in that same moment. This would seem a much more detached experience of time, observation; liberation from the confines, cravings and clinging of Samsara.

Shakyamuni’s stories constantly challenge and play with these ideas. Our “Path” becomes one of movement in all directions at once, rather than some idea of progression along a linear timeline of moments. This is the very core of the conception of 3000 realms in a single thought moment of life. Life is everywhere all the time, all at once. The unfathomably immense “cloud” of potential sparking randomly throughout space witnessed by momentary pockets of sentience within all directions without any direction, everywhere and nowhere, whose only purpose is to instantiate, spark, and dissolve. Which spark did you pay attention to? Does the “where” matter? Are you moving in an alternate direction? Experience becomes a direct exercise of awareness, witnessing the influences on our consciousnesses and the degree to which we are truly directing or responding to influences and momentum.

This is the experience of time that Shakyamuni is chasing, the experience of awakening, the Dharma. This is the dislocation of **identity** that **liberates** us from Samsara. To experience life in momentary bursts of manifested potential unmoored from expectation; to exist fully in the flow of the momentum of karma that provides for our Buddhahood.

## Transmigrate

1. Verb - trans'mi'grate
2. transmigrated; transmigrating; transmigrates
3. **transitive verb:** to cause to go from one state of existence or place to another.

In Mahayana Buddhism of the Lotus Sutra it is to be understood that these movements of state are constant and the core purpose of mental training to influence the stream of states of existence toward the state of Buddha.

Historically, religions and cultural traditions have co-opted this word to mean reincarnation, life after death, and other mythologies. The simplest correction to many of these delusions is to understand that the “**cycle of birth/death**” (see first volume) is a moment-to-moment event and not, as is misunderstood as, lifetime to a mythical next lifetime. This “cycle” occurs from one distinct moment of instantiation and into the next via the influences of 3000 realms in a single moment interstitially into the next. This is “Karma”, and it is the central point of Buddhist practice that we interact and influence these moments with our enlightened attitude and intent.

Since the teachings of the Lankavatara Sutra and later, Buddhism makes the strong case for all “existence” to be a construction of the mind of sentient beings, distinct from the “body” based *existence* of the physical world. Whereas physical existence has its own momentum of arising, abiding, and dissolution, the sentient mind marches through innumerable changes of state in each thought moment. Humans tend to “identify” very strongly with time as a linear concept (see, ***Timelessness***). This illusion attaches us to a sense of permanence in all things. The actual truth that is the Engine of Life as defined in the first volume is that our existence is ephemeral and in discrete moments of such unfathomably tiny units of being, that they are essentially time-less. From one of these units to the next is where the Buddhist idea of transmigration occurs. This is the also the location of the influences of the 3000 realms in a single thought moment of life.

In the teachings of the 3000 Realms (see, first volume) we learn to realize the constant moment-to-moment influences of 3000 states of mind or existence on our momentum of life. By marshaling our mind’s capacity for Buddhahood, we transition through each moment under the influence of our Buddha state.

With dedicated practice we establish our tendencies toward Buddha ever more to remain as our life-state as we course this physical world of Samsara to guide ourselves and all others toward this path.