

Timelessness

Science/Mathematics discovers Tathagata and Buddha

A transcript from the YouTube channel @BeyondMind-BM - Edited and Annotated by Sifu Sylvain Chamberlain for TLK Buddhism school. All annotations italicized and in parenthesis.

(In several documents and videos I have discussed the component of time in relation to our Samsaric illusions of the cosmos and our clouded perception of the process of the Engine of Life. Here we find a well written document from physics and mathematics dealing with the Saha world leading to a revelation of the Tathagata nature of the cosmos and life. I see this as another opportunity to illustrate Shakyamuni's and Nichiren's insight into the capacity of we modern humans to perceive the true nature of life.)

In 1967, two physicists met at an airport for 2 hours. When they parted ways, they'd written an equation that would shake the foundations of reality itself. The Wheeler Dewitt equation. You've never heard of it. Most people haven't. But here's what makes it terrifying. When you try to describe the entire universe at the quantum level, the mathematics works perfectly except for one glaring problem. The variable for time disappears. Not metaphorically, not approximately. It literally vanishes from the equation. The universe at its most fundamental mathematical description has no time variable, no ticking clock, no flow from past to future. The fundamental equations that describe the world contain no time variable. Which means either the equation is wrong or everything you've ever believed about time is an illusion your brain constructed to make sense of something far stranger. Here's what nobody tells you. At the quantum level, durations are so short that they can't be divided. *(See my video and paper on Max Plank's minimal unit of "time")* And there is no such thing as time. The universe isn't made of things that persist through time *(Impermanence)*. It's made of events that have no duration at all. And you, this thing you call your continuous existence *(self)*, might be the grandest illusion ever created.

Let's talk about what happened in that airport. John Wheeler and Bryce Dewitt weren't trying to destroy time. They were trying to do something that sounds simple. Combine Einstein's theory of gravity with quantum mechanics. Every attempt before them had failed. The mathematics either exploded into infinities or produced answers that made no physical sense. Dewitt arrived with an idea simple on paper, impossible in practice. He wondered, "What if we treated the entire universe the same way Schrodinger treated a single atom? What if reality itself had a wave function, a cosmic equation that described not particles within space, but space itself?" Wheeler's eyes lit up. In that brief moment at the airport, he felt they'd done it. Found the key to quantum gravity, the bridge between Einstein's smooth spacetime and the jittering chaos of the quantum world.

(The "Wave Function" can be equated to the "Potential" of quiescent energy to use perturbations in beginning "Formations" for the eventual expression into "Name and Form" or dissolution back into quiescence. The Engine of Life.)

But when they worked it out, something strange appeared. The equation didn't behave like any other. It didn't describe change or motion or cause and effect. Time, the one thing that makes existence move, was gone. In quantum mechanics, equations usually show how things evolve second by second (*moment-to-moment*). You can watch the wave of probability shift and ripple through time. But the Wheeler Dewitt equation doesn't move at all. It's static, silent, a snapshot of the entire universe where everything just is. Think about what this means. The equation that's supposed to describe everything, every particle, every field, every bit of space itself describes a frozen universe. A universe where nothing happens because there's no time in which things could happen. Except we clearly experience things happening. You are reading this transcript. Your heart is beating. Galaxies are spinning. If the universe is fundamentally frozen, timeless, unchanging at its core, then what are you actually experiencing right now? And more disturbingly, who's creating the experience?

Here's where it gets wild. The Wheeler Dewitt equation doesn't say change is impossible. It says that change is relationship. In the elementary grammar of the world, there is neither space nor time, only **processes** that transform physical quantities from one to another. The universe isn't evolving through time. It's a vast web of relationships between events. And what we call time is just our way of keeping track of how these relationships correlate with each other. Imagine you're in a room with no windows, no clocks, nothing. Someone asks you, "What time is it?" You have no idea. But you could say, "The coffee is half cold." Or, "The candle has burned down 3 in." Or, "I'm getting hungry." You're not measuring time itself. You're measuring changes in physical systems and comparing them to each other. That's all time ever is. We never measure time. time itself. We measure the oscillation of atoms (*energies*), the decay of particles, the position of Earth relative to the sun. We compare variable A to variable B and call that difference time. But here's the kicker. At the fundamental level, there's no master clock, no universal metronome.

Just as orchids grow in Florida swamps and not in California's deserts, so is time a product of the planet we are on and its relation to the surroundings, a fluke not inherent to the universe. Perhaps the reason you experience time is because you're a complex system embedded in an even more complex universe and you can only track an infinite decimally small number of variables. Your brain blurs the universe focusing on a tiny subset of relationships and that blurring creates the sensation of flow. Carlo Rovelli, one of the physicists who spent decades trying to make sense of the Wheeler Dewitt equation puts it bluntly. The hugely evident distinction between past and future is really statistical. It's due only to our blurred interaction with reality. (*The Samsaric mind of illusions and ignorance*)

But if time is just your brain blurring reality (*Samsara*), then here's the terrifying question. What else is your brain blurring? What else are you creating through your

limited perception? And if you could stop blurring for just one second, what would you actually see?

(Here we touch the realm of Tathagata, where perception is a state of complete clarity, or the mind's ability to perceive and experience all the cosmos and its very processes all at once.)

But wait, there's one thing that seems to give time a direction. Eggs scramble but don't unscramble. Glasses break but don't reassemble. Your body ages but doesn't get younger. Doesn't that prove time flows in one direction? Not quite. What you're seeing isn't time flowing. You're seeing entropy increasing. Systems moving from order to disorder.

(And this is the "momentum" or evolution of energetic events as they amass from tendencies and conditions in moment-to-moment expressions of potential, the engine of life.)

But here's what they don't tell you. Entropy is subjective (*Karma*). What you call ordered and disordered depends entirely on what variables you're paying attention to. A scrambled egg is only disordered from the perspective of someone who cares about having an intact egg. From the universe's perspective, it's just molecules rearranging themselves into a statistically more probable configuration. There's no cosmic law that says entropy must increase. It's just that there are vastly more ways for things to be disordered than ordered. So systems naturally evolve toward more probable states. And our brains, which can only track a fraction of what's happening, interpret that statistical drift as time's arrow. Take it further. Rovelli argues that time only seems to pass in an ordered fashion because we happen to be on Earth which has a certain unique entropic relationship to the rest of the universe.

Different parts of the universe have different relationships to entropy. In some regions, what you'd call time might run differently or not exist at all in any meaningful sense. The arrow of time isn't a fundamental feature of reality. It's a feature of your relationship to reality. But what happens when even that relationship dissolves? When you strip away perception, entropy, motion, everything that makes before and after make sense, and you try to describe the universe itself. The math doesn't just blur time, it erases it. And the moment it does, something terrifying and beautiful takes its place. Let me tell you something most physicists won't admit. The Wheeler Dewitt equation admits infinite solutions. Not one solution, not a handful. Infinite. The equation describes every possible configuration of the entire universe. Every arrangement of matter, energy, space itself. And mathematically all of them are valid. All of them satisfy the equation. The equation doesn't choose. It just says here are all the possibilities. And here's where it gets uncomfortable. If the equation contains infinite solutions, infinite possible universes, infinite configurations, all equally valid mathematically, then what determines which one you're experiencing right now? Who or what is doing the choosing? And could that something be the same thing that creates the illusion of time itself?

(Here is the logic, reason and evidence for Shakyamuni's insight that all "beings" have the Buddha-nature. In other words, the potential for the experience of the Tathagata state of clarity.)

When you quantize gravity and combine it with quantum mechanics, time as a variable simply doesn't appear in the fundamental description. Multiple approaches to quantum gravity. Loop quantum gravity, string theory, canonical quantum gravity all run into the same thing. At the deepest level, time evaporates. This isn't theoretical speculation. GPS satellites have to account for the fact that time runs at different rates depending on how deep you are in Earth's gravitational field. Time does not pass in the same way everywhere in the world. The closer you get to the Earth, where gravity is more intense, the slower time passes. Leave a clock on the floor and raise another one above it and the one on the floor will run slower. Not much, fractions of a second over a lifetime, but measurably, demonstrably slower. If time were fundamental, it couldn't do that. It couldn't stretch and compress and vary from place to place. But if time is emergent, if it's something that appears at our scale, but isn't built into the fabric of reality, then of course it would behave differently in different contexts. You know what this means? The thing you've been measuring your entire life. The thing you're always running out of. The thing that defines your deadlines and your age and your mortality. It's not real in the way you think it's real.

But here's what nobody tells you. If time isn't real, then neither is the thing you think time is destroying. Rovelli compares reality to a storm. A collection of occurrences. Think about a storm. Where is it? You can't point to a single location. When did it start? There's no precise moment. Air pressure gradually drops. Winds gradually pick up. Moisture gradually condenses. The storm isn't a thing. It's a process. A temporary pattern in the flow of air and water vapor. Now apply that to everything. You aren't a thing that persists through time. You're a pattern, a storm of quantum events that briefly maintains coherence before dissipating. There are actually no things at all. Instead, the universe is made up of countless events. Even what seems like a thing, a stone, a mountain, your body, is really an event taking place at a rate you can't register. The stone is in continual transformation. And on a long enough timeline, it's fleeting, destined to become something else. You're not in the storm. You are the storm. And storms don't persist through time. They are patterns in timelessness, temporary correlations between events that briefly cohere before dissolving back into the chaos from which they emerged. This is what the Wheeler DeWitt equation is telling us. The universe isn't a collection of particles moving through time. It's a super-position of configurations, a quantum foam where every possible arrangement of matter and energy exists simultaneously in a timeless mathematical space. And consciousness is what picks out one thread of correlation and experiences it as now. You're not in the storm. You are the storm. (*The Amalgam I often refer to as the Nidana describes and the formations express.*) But what if this storm isn't alone? What if countless storms, countless versions of you are all raging at once, each unaware of the others? The physicists have a name for that idea. You've heard of the many worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics. The idea that every quantum measurement splits the universe into multiple branches, each representing a different outcome. (*I recently discussed this in a video on the MahaPariNirvana Sutra, when Shakyamuni discusses the multitude of persons as all being an experience of you, the you as a multitude within the cosmos.*)

But here's what nobody connects. If time doesn't exist at the fundamental level, then all those branches aren't splitting sequentially. They're not being created moment by moment. They all exist simultaneously in the timeless structure of the Wheeler Dewitt equation. The *wave function* contains all of the information about the geometry and matter content of the universe, not the information about how the universe evolves. the information about all possible configurations of the universe. Full stop.

You're not moving through time, choosing which branch of reality to experience. You're a pattern in the timeless wave function (*Instantiating your karma in discrete moment-to-moment amalgams of events*) and the sensation of choice, of time flowing, of moving from one moment to the next. That's consciousness navigating between different configurations in the quantum foam.

(The important distinction being that the Samsaric consciousnesses perceive with attachment and persistence, while the enlightened Buddha consciousness observes directly in each discrete moment.)

Think about dreams again. In a dream, you can experience decades in minutes. You can live entire lifetimes in what clock time measures as seconds. Where does that time come from? Your brain isn't creating time. It's generating the sensation of duration by moving through mental states. What if that's all time ever is? Different configurations of the universe and consciousness hopping between them, stitching together a narrative and calling it the passage of time. The Wheeler Dewitt equation describes all possible configurations at once.

What we call time is just the particular path consciousness traces through that space of possibilities. And here's the paradox nobody wants to face. If consciousness is choosing the path, then maybe the physicists who wrote the equation weren't discovering reality. Maybe they were creating instructions for how to navigate it. Carlo Rovelli, one of the founding fathers of loop quantum gravity, calls himself a simple mechanic. He says scientists shouldn't think they've figured out ultimate truth. They're just building useful models of specific aspects of reality. But here's what's beautiful about that humility. It opens a door. If time isn't fundamental, if consciousness is what creates the sensation of flow by navigating through configurations in a timeless wave function, then consciousness isn't a passive observer. It's not just watching reality unfold. It's actively participating in which thread through the quantum foam becomes real for that particular observer. Understanding time, Rovelli argues, becomes understanding the way we work, the way our brain and consciousness works. This isn't mysticism. This is following the physics to its logical conclusion. If the fundamental equations don't contain time and time only emerges from the relationships between subsystems, then different subsystems might experience radically different times. And if consciousness is what selects which configuration to experience next, then consciousness has more agency in determining experienced reality than we've been taught. The agency to navigate, to select from the infinite super-position of possible configurations which path your consciousness illuminates. *(This is awfully close to the Noble Eightfold Path, don't you think? Altering our karma through willful work toward our Buddha nature.)* This isn't about manipulating external reality through willpower. It's something far

stranger and more profound. If all configurations already exist in the timeless wave function, then consciousness isn't creating reality. It's choosing which reality to inhabit. But if consciousness can choose its path through the quantum foam, then there's one question even the physicists couldn't escape. What happens to their equations when the thing doing the choosing is part of the equation itself?

That question became the paradox that haunted them all. The one they still call the problem of time. The Wheeler Dewitt equation describes what states are possible, but it doesn't tell us how those states evolve because there's no time parameter to evolve them through. Physicists have proposed hundreds of solutions. Maybe there's a clock variable hidden in the geometry of space itself. Maybe time emerges from entanglement between subsystems. Maybe we need to completely rethink what we mean by evolution. But here's what nobody wants to say out loud. Maybe the problem of time isn't a problem. Maybe it's the answer. Maybe the reason we can't figure out where time comes from is because it doesn't come from anywhere. It's not an ingredient of reality that we haven't found yet. It's a perspective, a way of organizing our experience of a fundamentally timeless structure.

Time is ignorance. Rovelli writes, "We blur the world to focus on it, blind ourselves to see. We ignore almost all the relationships and variables in the universe, focusing on the tiny subset we can track. And that focusing creates the illusion of flow, of past and future, of time. The universe in the Wheeler Dewitt equation is timeless. Every configuration that can exist, does exist, simultaneously, in a vast quantum superposition. And what we call consciousness is the process of sequentially experiencing those configurations, stitching them into a narrative, and calling that narrative my life. So what does this mean for you?"

First, every moment you've experienced still exists, *not as a memory*, not as a fading trace, but as an actual configuration in the timeless structure of the universe. The child you were experiencing that birthday party, opening those presents, feeling that joy, that configuration exists eternally in the Wheeler Dewitt wave function. It's not *past*. It's simply one of the infinite configurations that consciousness can potentially experience.

Second, *the future isn't coming*. It's already there in the super-position. What you call making choices might be consciousness selecting which branch through the quantum foam to follow. Not creating the future, but navigating toward one of the many futures that already exist in potential.

Third, death isn't the end of time for you. It's the end of this particular sequence of configurations. But the configurations themselves, their permanent eternal structures in the timeless mathematics of the universe. But here's where it gets uncomfortable.

If all moments exist simultaneously, if your entire life is laid out in the timeless wave function (*potential expression*) like frames in a film strip, then in what sense are you making choices? In what sense is anything uncertain? The answer is subtle. The timelessness of the Wheeler Dewitt equation doesn't require determinism. Quantum

mechanics is fundamentally probabilistic. Multiple configurations can coexist with different probability amplitudes. Your consciousness might be navigating between genuinely undetermined possibilities, even though all possible configurations exist timelessly.

(This is the Go-Honzon, the ultimate goal of awakening the 9th consciousness of Buddha mind to embrace all 8 consciousnesses below it to ultimately align all of them to the Bodhisattva state of being and experience the constant path of Buddha. This requires profound chanting to invoke our Buddha mind. With Nichiren's mandala we focus our consciousnesses to adopt the leadership and clarity of the Buddha consciousness in order to "purify" all of our physical senses to train and subdue our Samsaric mind.)

But here's the part that should stop you cold. The equation has infinite solutions, infinite valid descriptions of reality. And what makes one of them your reality isn't written in the mathematics. It's not determined by the laws of physics. The laws of physics just describe the menu of possibilities. Something, some process, some mechanism, some aspect of reality we barely understand is selecting from that menu moment by moment, configuration by configuration. But maybe it isn't a mechanism at all. Maybe it's awareness itself. The one thing that can never be observed, never be measured, never be reduced to mathematics.

(Ah yes, the Tathagata, the force that cannot be named but through the evidence of its existence by the expression of Buddha in the human mind.)

The physicists call it an observer. The mystics call it the self. The ancients called it the breath of the universe. It's not inside your skull, not trapped behind your eyes. It's the silent witness through which the cosmos becomes aware of itself (*Tathagata*). The thing that dreams stars into existence and then forgets it was ever dreaming. What if that's what you are? Not a being moving through time, but time moving through you. Not a fragment of consciousness, but consciousness itself pretending to be a fragment. All the equations end where awareness begins. Every theory collapses at the threshold of the one thing that cannot be described, the experiencer, because you are not inside the universe.

The universe is unfolding inside you. And when the illusion of time dissolves, when the story of before and after fades into stillness, something remains. The same stillness that was there before your first breath. The same presence that will remain long after your last. That's what the physicists glimpsed in that airport in 1967. Though they couldn't name it, they saw hidden inside the mathematics. The shadow of the infinite. A timeless reality where everything that ever was, is, and will be simply is. The Wheeler Dewitt equation wasn't the destruction of time. It was the first whisper of eternity. And maybe the reason you're hearing this now is because eternity is trying to remember itself through you.

Love and respect,
NaMuMyoHoRenGeKyo