

Reflections on Time and Illusion

This webinar will address some of the illusions that are propagated in the New Age movement, which influences, for many people, their perception of reality, identity, possibility, and what will happen in the future. The idea for this topic came to me when I responded to an email from one of our students.

This student wrote, “I am, as many students are, swimming in concepts that I have accepted as true, but which may not be true, or may be true at one level of experience and not another.”

“Since the idea that 'everything is illusion' came up in a recent webinar, and you discussed its relevance, I have been pondering all of the other untested spiritual beliefs I base my thinking upon. I was wondering if this would be a worthy topic for a webinar.”

Here is the spiritual belief verbatim:

“There is actually no such thing as time. All lifetimes are simultaneous and not chronological. In fact, all lifetimes already all over and done with and we are just reviewing them mentally. If you become 'fully present' you step outside of the time-space continuum into the 'now' in which you realize this is true.”

Here are my reflections about this belief.

If you examine your consciousness level by level, you will discover that each level has its own sense of time.

In the Conscious mind, time appears as an ongoing flow of successive moments.

If you look at memory in the Subconscious mind, what you are doing and experiencing in this moment is recorded, and then you can go and scan the records of memory.

This same process occurs at a higher level on the Akashic Records.

In the Metaconscious mind, you create a future through planning and scheduling, while you deal with issues that arise in the present time; you draw upon your past experiences as resources to help you encounter these current issues.

In the Superconscious mind, you dwell in the eternal now: the past comprises each of the levels of consciousness you have awakened; the future comprises the Initiations that are to come.

In each case there is a linearity of time.

The only level at which your statement would be true is the narrow band of infinite possibilities of the quantum field, which you encounter in the Biophysical Universe, and revisit while sojourning through the first band of the Psychic Realm.

Simultaneity of lifetimes presumes that each lifetime is a *possibility*; this same logic presumes that with a single thought, you would also change the possible lifetimes.

There are lifetimes of the future that are pictured in the Divine mind. These are likely scenarios for future incarnations given the Soul's present situation and condition; these are probably not indelible, as conceivably, an individual could change this destiny by performing adharmic or sinful actions.

To review these lives mentally suggests that you are placing your attention upon them and becoming aware of them. You experience time, however, as movement through these lives as the wave of the present time.

Though your Soul is outside this wave of the present time, and can view past lives—and depending on its station on the path, future lives as well—but viewing is not the same as experiencing.

Viewing assumes you are taking a detached viewpoint, and that what you see is other than what you are—a spectator upon a scene that might be construed as real, or unreal.

Experiencing means that you are identified with your life and have full contact with your present time experience at all levels. From the standpoint of your experience, time is real, it is linear, and it is consequential, for the choices you make in its matrix have real consequences for what you will experience in the future.

While it is possible to take the detached viewpoint outside of the space-time continuum and enter the world of the quantum field, we don't really live in this state—this is a state of mystic trance. And while it is entertaining, it is not very practical, as it does not help you navigate the experience of your real life, which requires you to make real choices, which have real consequences.

This is one of the illusions of the Psychic Realm that many of our New Age and New Thought brethren embrace, believing these perceptual frames embody the whole of truth.

The Seven Illusions of the Psychic Realm

What are these perceptual illusions?

1. Solipsism – only the Self or Soul is real, neither the objective world revealed in the senses or subjective world constructed of beliefs are real and true
2. It is possible to create whatever I wish by thinking it or intending it—[n.b., this is commonly called the faculty of imagination]
3. Alien beings are communicating with me and visiting in spacecraft—this may also take the form of guides, angels, or Masters are visiting me and communicating profound truths, and appearing to me in radiant forms of great beauty
4. Time and space are unreal—only the eternal now is real
5. Beliefs create perception and reality: change your belief, your reality changes—this assumes there is no reality outside what you believe it is

6. God, angels, and my Soul can create miracles—all I have to do is believe, and they will come true
7. I only have to repeat this mantra, incantation, prayer, or affirmation, or do this visualization, and everything will come to me that I desire through the Law of Attraction

So are these contentions true? We might begin by examining the typical viewpoints as to whether the Soul (spiritual or transsubjective world); the subjective world of our thoughts, beliefs, and feelings; and the objective world revealed to our senses are real. In the table below, *yes* means the essence is assumed to be real; *no* means it is not viewed as real.

Outcome	Spiritual World	Subjective World	Objective World
Solipsism	Yes	No	No
Fantasy	Yes	Yes	No
Dharma	Yes	Yes	Yes
Materialism	No	Yes	Yes
Logical Positivism	No	No	Yes
Nihilism	No	No	No

Inspection of these seven illusions suggests that the common perceptual bias in each of these perspectives adopts the stance of either Solipsism or Fantasy. Empirical science, by distinction, embraces Materialism and Logical Positivism. Those who have gone insane embrace nihilism, which posits nothing is real.

We believe the healthy and balanced approach is to choose Dharma, which appreciates that we live and experience in all three worlds, and that the reality of each world must be acknowledged and appropriately managed.

So let's test each of these illusions.

Solipsism

Only the Self or Soul is real? If you are in the state of profound attentional absorption—Atma Samadhi—this is what you experience. Move your attention out of that state, and the worlds of dimension of the Superconscious mind reappear. Move your attention back into the realms of the personality, and your subjective world reappears. Move your attention back to the sensory center of the Conscious mind, and the external world reappears. Move your attention back to the waking state of awareness, and you experience that you are in the external world, in a body, that you have a life, relationships with other people, and you are oriented to the environment, and responsible to carry out the roles and duties that comprise your identity.

Imagination

Can you create using imagination? Absolutely! But this creation is in the subjective, not the objective world. Imagine with me that you are holding an eight-pound shot put (the junior size) in your right hand. Can you feel it?

Now, imagine you are turning it into solid gold. Now put it on the table or floor in front of you. Do you see it? Reach over and touch it. Do you feel it? Does it weigh anything? [Please do not let a psychiatrist observe you as you do this experiment. He or she will be very alarmed.]

Now take a physical object from the environment around you. Hold it in your hand. Close your eyes. Now imagine very vividly that you have made it disappear!

Now open your eyes. Is the object still there? You did not really make it disappear.

Does your imagination affect your subjective world? Absolutely.

Does it change the external world? No.

Noumenal Communication

Is it possible to communicate with the spirits of the dead? Spiritual guides? Angels? Saints? Prophets? God? Ascended Masters? Alien beings? Absolutely.

If you bring your attention to the correct band of the Psychic Realm, these entities are waiting there for you, ready to sit down with you for a hearty chat. If you keep going back there, heck—they may even channel a new revelation or scripture to you. You could even start a new religion!

What do you want to know about? They will be only too happy to give you advice!

Are these entities in the external world? No.

Are they in the subjective world? No.

Are they in the transsubjective world? Yes.

So for you to commune with these entities, you have to go up to the level where they are, in a state of deep absorption—or trance—in which you are primed to receive their suggestions.

Now if you can only commune with them while you are in a trance state, and you open your eyes, sometimes your brain, trying to make sense of what you are seeing, will project this onto the environment. When this happens, this is called hallucination.

Do you see the spacecraft with the little green man waving to you? Are you in a state of trance right now? Check yourself!

If you want to verify whether the aliens and their spacecraft are real, bring your attention back to your waking state of awareness, and notice if they are still there.

If they are not still there, you were hallucinating!

If they are still there, run!

Hanging Out in the Eternal Now

This state of awareness, popularized by Eckhart Tolle, and enthusiastically embraced by the New Age Community, suggests that it is best for us to always remain in the eternal now, in which we are in touch with—Ultimate Reality, Truth, or God—a state in which we are able to create our reality, and manifest whatever we desire.

The dictum that we should always remain in an altered state of awareness, incarnating whatever spiritual essence we have been trained to recognize as our essential nature may not always lead to optimal results. Any of you who have read my book, *Religions, Cults, and Terrorism: What the Heck Are We Doing* will recognize that this is a common strategy employed in religious cults, but also in more mainstream religious and spiritual groups to control their followers' thoughts, beliefs, values, actions, lives, and voting preferences.

So what's the problem with living in this life, as if you were god? [Insert your favorite archetype or spiritual essence here.] There are a few problems...

You are altering the sensory input channels, which means that you might hallucinate.

You are altering your sense of embodiment, which mean you might have accidents if you are not aware of what your body position is, and how you are moving.

You are altering your relational perception, so you may begin to look at others as godlike beings or archetypes, instead of flesh and blood people with whom you have established ties of kindred, friendship, and love.

Many who enter these altered states of awareness shut off their reality testing mechanism—this is your ability to think rationally. When this occurs, you are completely open to suggestions given to you, and may come to believe anything. This leads some of those who remain in these states to embrace distorted, fantastic, and outright delusional beliefs.

You are split off from your ego, and may regard it as an illusion. This may lead to states of *depersonalization*, where your life and your personality seem unreal; and states of *derealization*, where your body and the world around it seem unreal.

It may trigger episodes of spacing out, where you cannot remember what you just did, or where you are.

For some individuals, remaining in these altered states of consciousness for long periods of time might trigger the kundalini to remain raised, united with the spiritual essence upon which you are keeping your attention focused.

For others, the executive functions of the Metaconscious mind may shut down, leaving them unable to make decisions, to solve problems, to think critically, to plan for the future, to monitor their values or behavior, to respond in socially acceptable ways, or to make long-term commitments. This may seriously compromise their ability to obtain and maintain a job, or sustain a committed, long-term relationship.

For some, continual immersion in their godlike being may lead them to become grandiose, paranoid, or highly delusional.

Our recommendation is that you hang out in the Eternal Now long enough to do your spiritual work of contemplation, transformation, and working on your issues, but don't remain there for sustained periods of time.

Beliefs Create Perception and Reality

This is a well-researched psychological principle that beliefs (expectations) condition what one perceives, and might either increase one's propensity to take action (response), or inhibit it. If you believe you can't succeed, you often give up or don't attempt it. If you believe you can succeed, you will keep trying in spite of obstacles or difficulties.

However, if you suddenly, in exquisite, rich details visualize that you have won the lottery and are now a multi-millionaire does not make you a millionaire. Not sure? Please check your bank balance. Do you have seven or eight figures to the left of the decimal point? You're there! If not, you haven't actually become a multi-millionaire yet.

People who believe they are wealthy do act differently than those that don't believe they are wealthy. This is buoyed up by their optimism about the future—"I'll continue to earn lots of money from my job, there will be loads of new customers for my business, my investments will continue to grow, or I'll get a raise next month and I'll be able to afford to go on the vacation about which I have dreamed."

This readily observed behavior was seized upon some of the pioneers of the New Thought and New Age movements. They reasoned (dubiously) that if the only difference between the wealthy [insert any strongly desired human aspiration] and those who were not was the mindset, e.g., the beliefs and their associated perception of the world. Change the mindset, and voila, you change the results.

The missing logical piece here was that simply strongly believing a thing shall become manifest does not necessarily guarantee it will become manifest. In some cases it does become manifest, but in many more instances, it does not.

We may also point out that factors other than the belief may in fact be responsible for the success or failure, some of which are not in one's control. So someone in Miami changed their belief, and it worked; someone in Detroit did it, and it didn't work. They had the same belief [they did the same success workshop], but had different results. The different economic environment in their two cities, the demand for their product, the varying business skills of the two people, or the network each has established might be playing a role.

Probably a having positive mindset gives you the optimism and willingness to continue to pursue your dream, but does not guarantee you will achieve it.

Miracles Are About to Happen!

Do miracles happen? Sure they do! Every day. They happen to your relative, to your next-door neighbor, and even to you. Have you ever had a miracle occur for you?

We may pray to or invoke whatever supernatural sources we believe are trustworthy and efficacious, and beseech them to work a miracle on our behalf. Will our prayers or entreaties always be answered? No. Will they sometimes work? Yes.

Should we just pray or take action, too? Do both.

So shall I follow the advice of the *Bible*, and expect that God will infallibly take care of my needs and fulfill my worthy desires? Sure. Expect that God will do beautiful and incredible things for you, but also do your part to ensure that these results you pray for will manifest.

And remember that *results are the measure of your effectiveness*. Check to see, do your beliefs and practices produce results?

A Magical Method

It is possible for you to anchor suggestions in your Subconscious mind through autohypnosis, and your Superconscious mind through affirmation and visualization. These suggestions activate the Soul's abilities to assist you achieve your worthy objective, provided both of these aspects of your mind are aligned with your intention.

If they are not aligned, they will sabotage you and put obstacles in your path. If they are aligned, they will support you in your endeavor. These methods work best when you are asking for something that resonates with your Soul's expressed purpose.

The further you wander from that homing signal, the less likely you will get their support.

Are these methods potent? Yes. Are they efficacious? Sometimes. Do they always work? No. Do some people tell you that they always, infallibly, and magically work—then charge you a lot of money for that advice? Yes. Do they work better because you have paid a lot of money to learn about these “secrets”? No.



Reality Check

Just in case some of you listening to this webinar might be harboring some of these illusions, we will do a little exercise to assist you to examine the inner vaults of your mind.

1. Do you ever sense that only the Soul (the Self, the God within, the Atman) is real?
2. Do you ever have moments when you feel that you can actually influence the external world with your imagination? [I promise. I will not tell your psychiatrist.]
3. Do you have regular conversations with entities that other people cannot see?
4. Do you find yourself spending a lot of time in the Eternal Now? If so, do you occasionally also pay attention to your life and the world around you?
5. Do you ever find that something you expected was going to happen as a result of your suggestions, affirmations, visualizations, prayers, and decrees did not manifest, as you believed? Why do you think that might have happened the way it did?
6. Have you every prayed for a miracle, and it didn't occur? Why do you think that your wish might not have been granted?
7. Have you every practiced techniques or methods, and things began to improve for a while, then you stopped getting the results you were getting? Was the technique responsible for these events, or might other factors have been involved? If so, what are those other factors?



Thank you for attending our webinar today!

