

Time Is Psychological, Not Chronological

By Nithyananda Paramahansa

(Source: Gita 2.9 to 2.13)

Know your Past, Present and Future

In Zen Buddhism, there is a beautiful meditation technique to achieve enlightenment. You are asked to meditate on the face you have before your birth. The koan or sutra, a technique for meditation, says, 'what was your face like before your father and mother were born?'

Upon meditating on this koan you realize that you existed in the past, exist in the present and will exist in the future. Your face and body may change but you continue to exist. If what Krsna says is true, why are we worried about this life and about our death? You need to first understand the concept of the past, present and future to enable you to understand what Krsna says.

Let me explain this concept first.

Time is like a shaft continuously moving from the future on the right into the past on the left (see diagram). The future is continuously moving into the past from right to left every moment. The present is the point where the future and the past meet. Your mind as such is nothing but movement, between the past and the future.

You cannot have any thoughts if you stop thinking about the past and the future. The more your thoughts shift from past to future or future to past, the higher the frequency of thoughts. Try to think of something in the present, you will find that you cannot. You can think of it only by taking it into the past or future. The higher the frequency of thoughts, the more you are caught in the physical and material world. For example, if you have 100 thoughts per second (TPS), it means you have jumped 100 times back and forth between the past and future in one second! The higher the frequency, the more you will be away from the present and the more problems will you have. If the number of thoughts reduces, you fall into the present moment.

The upanisads talk of five body layers called kosas. When your frequency of thoughts is high, you are in the physical body or the grossest layer called annamaya kosa. When your TPS is say 60 (here the reference is just proportional), you move into the mental layer or manomaya kosa. When the TPS is still less, say 40, you enter the pleasure layer or the vijnanamaya kosa; you came a little closer to the soul. If you fall into the present moment, you are in the innermost layer that is the anandamaya kosa; you are atman or the soul.

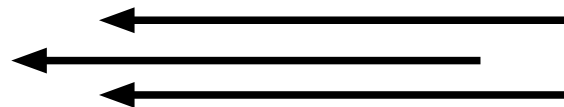
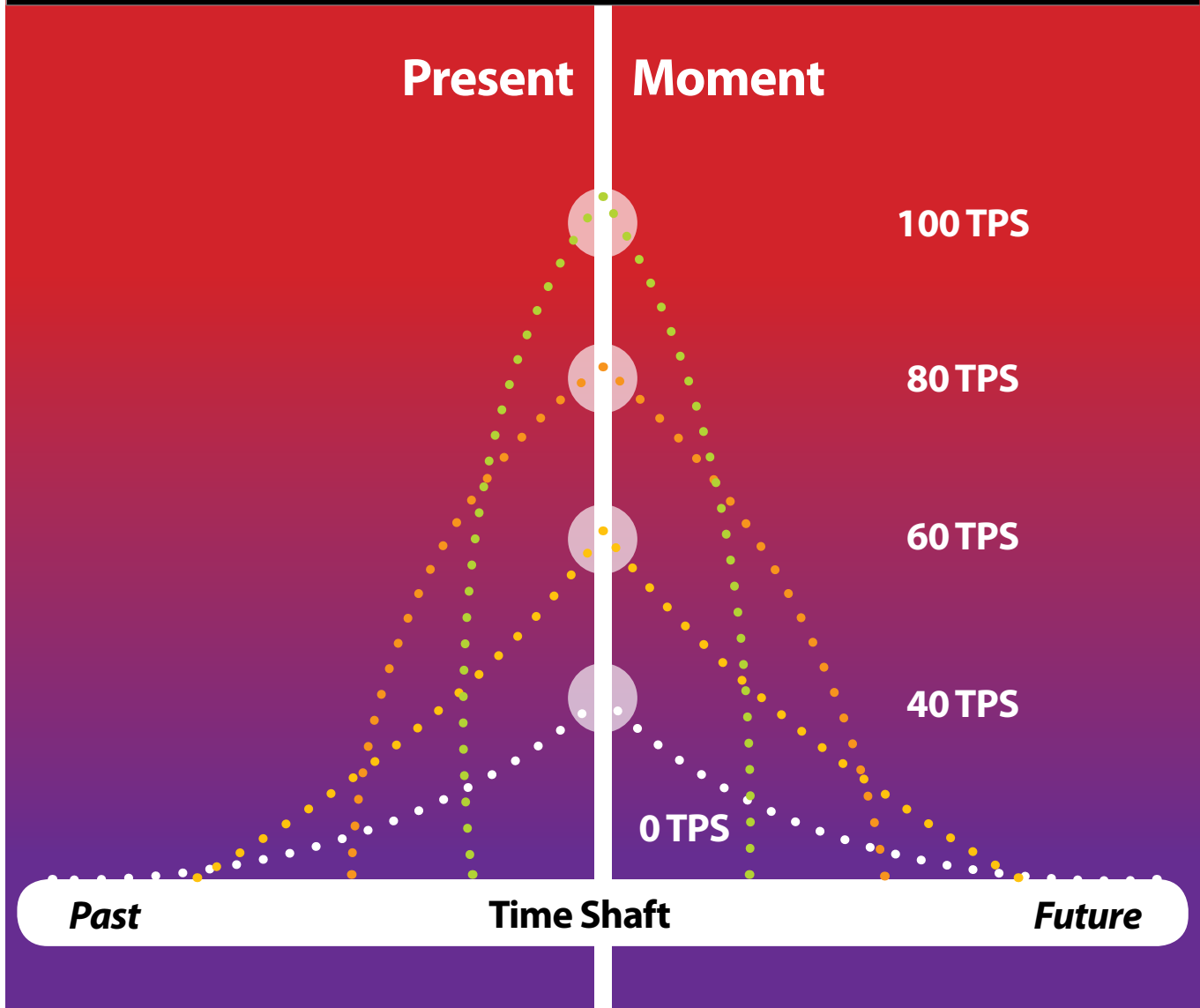
The past, present and future, all the three put together are eternal, nitya or atman. Only when you come to the present moment do you experience atman – your true self, but as of now you are constantly shuttling between the past and future. When the number of thoughts reduces, you will not even be aware of the passage of time. For example, when you are with someone you love, even two or three hours will seem like a short while. On the contrary, when you are with someone whose company is boring, even a short time seems very long. You will keep glancing at your watch and wondering why time does not move!

Time is more psychological than chronological. That is why, in our scriptures or Vedas, there is a word ksana to describe the unit of time. Ksana does not denote one second; but is defined as the gap or time interval between two thoughts. The larger the ksana or the gap between two thoughts the more in the present we are. Each person's ksana will be different depending on how busy his mind is! When our TPS is lower, we will naturally be in ecstasy, in bliss. When the number of our thoughts is high, we are in hell. Hell and heaven are nothing but the number of thoughts that we entertain, that's all. That is why I say heaven and hell are not geographical places, but psychological spaces.

With higher frequency of thoughts, you think you are the body. When the frequency of thoughts reduces, you think you are the mind and just emotion. When the thoughts become zero, you are there in the past, present and future; you realize you are atman – Self. Only then can you realize what Krsna says – you will be there forever. But, right now the frequency of your thoughts is very high. You do not have the patience or the energy to understand who you are, your base and your nature.

Time Shaft–Theory

By Nithyananda Paramahansa



Each moment slipping from future to past

***Source: BhagavadGita demystified by Nithyananda Paramahansa, 2011, Page 79*

When you fall into the present moment, you experience that you were there in the past, are in the present and will be in the future. You realize you are eternal and not caught by the mind, jumping between the past and future.

Whatever dies can never live. Whatever lives can never die. Your deep consciousness says that something is living in you. You attribute this quality of life and consciousness to your body and mind. Do not misunderstand your consciousness to be your body and mind. You are not the body or the mind. As long as you are caught in the past and the future, you think that you are the body and mind. The moment you come down to the present moment, you experience that you are beyond the body, beyond the mind.

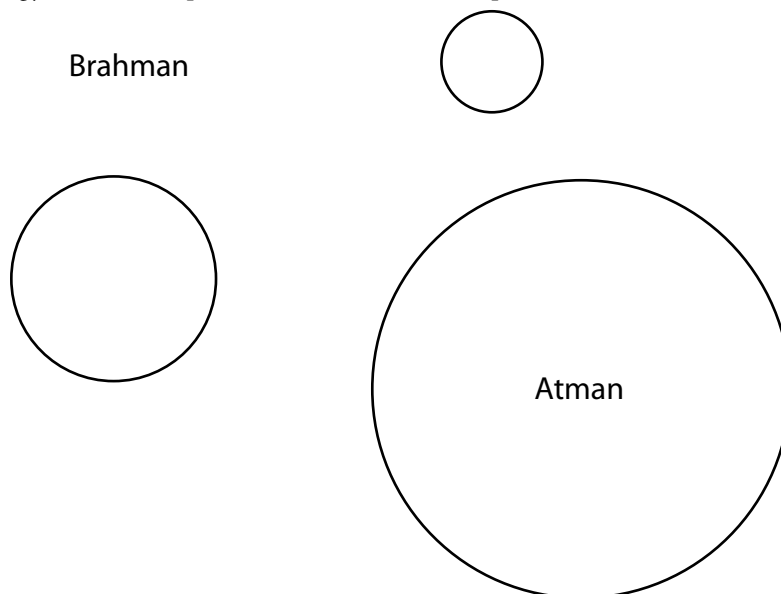
*When the frequency is a little less, you move into the higher energy layer called pranamaya kosa.

Here, krsna does not mean that we existed in the form that we are here now or that He was present always as krsna in the form we imagine Him to be, with a flute in His hand and a peacock feather on His head. He means that our spirits that are eternal always existed and will always exist as the divine, one with the universal energy, *Brahman*.

The gist of the second chapter is that you are the soul, that you are divine and that you are God. The body passes through its seasons of childhood, youth, and middle age and old age as the seasons of nature do each year. Finally, it passes through death and the soul reappears, just as trees shed leaves in autumn and produce new leaves in spring. One does not grieve as one enjoys the pleasures of childhood, youth and middle age. Why then should one grieve the onset of old age and then death?

At death, the soul passes from one body into another body. It has three Ksana to achieve this, each Ksana being the time period between each thought. A person who is in a high thought-frequency state, a high TPS state, has a much shorter time to shift from one body to another compared to another person whose TPS is low, whose frequency of thoughts is low. A person in a no-mind, no-thought state has infinite time, as the time between thoughts is infinite. His spirit is at liberty to stay free without taking another body as long as he chooses, or more correctly, as the universe chooses.

All enlightened masters are in this category. When the spirit leaves the mind-body system, it becomes one with the universal energy. Imagine a number of circles drawn on a whiteboard. Think of the whiteboard space as the universal energy. The circles drawn on the whiteboard represent individual body-mind systems. The white space enclosed in the circles is the spirit and this is the same energy as the white space outside the circles. The space within is the individual soul and the space outside is Brahman.



When a body-mind dies, when an individual dies, all that happened is that these perimeter lines get erased, that is all. The spaces within the circle merge with the space outside the circle. White merges with white. Energy merges with energy. When the spirit, the energy, is ready to move into another mind-body system, it enters another circle. It is a continuous, ongoing process and a natural process. One who understands this process and accepts it is an intergraded person. Krsna refers to him as a “dhirah”, one who is firm, centered and aware.

Source: Bhagavad Gita by Nithananda Paramahansa, Pages 77-83