

Every action that we perform needs to resolve itself at some point, or in the words of Newton, every action has an equal and opposite reaction. If you throw a ball up in the air, eventually it will fall back down. The law of karma says that any action we perform will be reciprocated at some point. If I do something nice for you, eventually you'll do something nice back to me. But what happens if I do something nice for you, but then I die before you can reciprocate? The karmic bond created by our interaction doesn't dissolve because I've died; it will just get taken care of at a later date. All of our unresolved actions, and impressions of those actions, are stored in the causal body, so that when we die these residuals will eventually take on a new form to find resolution to our karmic debts. This is, in a truncated form, the theory of transmigration, or the cycle of birth and rebirth. It is an important idea in the three-body scheme, because it is in the causal body that our reasons for being born are held, our purposes in life. Within our three bodies, experience is knotted to an idea of an individual self, to who I think I am and what my story is. Mystical practices untie these knots so that we can experience unfettered freedom. Beyond the three bodies, according to the yogis and mystics, is pure existence, unlimited being, and non-local consciousness. But this is not an easy experience to have; sometimes we have a spontaneous but short-lived experience of pure consciousness. Even a short-lived experience like that can be transformative, but to have freedom as a continuous experience comes from either grace or practice, depending on whom you talk to.

Yoga as a practice was designed explicitly to address, strengthen, and purify all three bodies and to move us toward