

Notes on the 12 links (nidanas) of dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada)

Time		English	Tibetan	Sanskrit	Wheel of Life symbol
past	1	ignorance	ma rig pa	avidya	blind old woman
	2	tendencies; formations	'du byed	samskara	potter's wheel
present	3	consciousness	rnam shes	vijnana	monkey in tree
	4	name and form; identity	ming dang gzugs	namarupa	passenger
	5	sense fields	skye mched drug	shadayatana	house of six windows
	6	contact	reg pa	sparsha	couple
	7	feeling tone	tshor ba	vedana	arrow in eye
	8	craving, thirst	sred pa	trishna	sweet drink
	9	clinging, grasping	nye bar len pa	upadana	grasping fruit
	10	becoming	srid pa	bhava	sex
future	11	rebirth	skye ba	jati	child-bearing
	12	old age and death	rga shi	jara-marana	corpse

Craving or thirst

(Pali tanha, Skt trishna, Tib sepa)

- craving pleasure
- craving existence (becoming)
- craving nonexistence (nonbecoming)

Craving is never fulfilled, since it is based on the delusion of separation between an independent, permanent self and an independent object that can ultimately satisfy.

“Grasping at things can only yield one of two results: either the thing you are grasping at disappears, or you yourself disappear. It is only a matter of which occurs first.” (Goenka)

This points to the decay and death that inevitably follows the becoming and rebirth of any sense of self.

“The world is on fire with desire, hatred, and delusion”

Craving is the fire
Clinging is the fuel
Nirvana is extinguishing the fire
(not the ending of experience)

the three vedana: like, dislike, ignore
the three trishna: craving, hating, blinding
the three upadana: grasping, rejecting, being deluded

There are 10 fetters (samyojana) that bind the mind to the round of death & rebirth

- belief in self (ditthi, drishti)
- scepticism or doubt (vicikiccha, vichikitsa)
- attachment to rules and rituals (silabbata-paramasa)
- sense desire (kamaraga)
- ill-will (vyapada)
- craving for form (rupa-raga)
- craving for the formless (arupa-raga)
- conceit (mana)
- restlessness (udhacca)
- ignorance (avidya)

We cling and grasp to four things

(Skt upadana, Tib lenpa)

- clinging to sense objects
- clinging to wrong views (self, permanence, no karma)
- clinging to rites and rituals
- clinging to a sense of self

Clinging to self or objects contradicts the reality of an interdependent, relational world that is a dynamic flux of co-creation.
(see Stephanie Kaza, Penetrating the Tangle)