

The Present Moment

What is the Present Moment? The Present Moment can be best described using two key phrases: “What is *actually* happening,” and “What is *not actually* happening.” This defines what the Present Moment - everything else is not the Present Moment: *What If*, *Should Be*, *Could Be*, *Hope To Be*, *Some Day Will Be*, *This Can’t Be*, *Shouldn’t Be*, *Supposed To Be*, *This Is What Was*, *This Should Have Been* – *I Wish It Was Like This*, *I Wish It To Be Like That*. These phrases tell you that you are not in the Present Moment – nowhere near it in fact. I find the two worst phrases are “what if” and “hope” as both stick one way out into a future that does not exist. “What if I never fall in love?” “What if I loose my job?” “I hope someday to loose weight.” These are all phrases that serve no purpose as they define things that are not happening and may never happen. Your life will improve exponentially if you never utter the phrase – “what if” again.

Before we go any further we need to outline our life experience a little more clearly. One enters an incarnation with a theme of experience. We wish to understand something and we set up a series of scenarios, “plays” if you will, in which we will interact (act) with others in order to reach an understanding. Our life, at a Soul Level, is seen as a whole unit, not bits and pieces as we see it. At our personality level, we see things in bits and pieces. We rarely see how things we did when we were fifteen years old lead to things we experience at forty-five. The connection just isn’t there for us. Life seems like randomly events strung together with little rhyme or reason. Not true. Things take time to unfold. A seed is planted in spring grows to fruition sometime later - the event is “growth to fruition” – a timeline with a very clear beginning middle and end. The same is said for us at a Soul Level. Only we have multiple streams of scenarios, all running simultaneously. We start and stop little mini plays within the big giant life play, all the time. There are plays that run forty years and plays that run forty seconds. They all run simultaneously, each one woven into the fabric of Soul as on complete unit. When we start a stream of experience, a decision is made and the scenario opens up for us to have an opportunity to understand something new.

If I decide to walk up a flight of stairs I start by deciding to climb the stairs. The scenario is opened up – I call this the Primary Moment. The Primary Moment is a point in time in which a decision is made to have an experience and all that it entails, in this case climb the stairs. While I am doing this, dozens of other scenarios (including the big Soul Scenario) are continuing; only my focus of attention has been taken over by the climb up the stairs. So, once decided, I take the first step, then the next and the next, until I have reached the top. Each step is a Present Moment, each step unfolds as a result of the previous step. My brain strings the steps all together as if they are one event, but each new step opens up as the previous step is completed. Each step tells me where I am in the process of climbing the stairs – five to go, three to go then completion. Once I have finished the climb, I have a new Primary Moment decision to make, or do I?

The answer is maybe. If the sole purpose of the stair climbing was to climb the stairs, then yes, a new Primary Moment opens up. But what if the stair climbing was not actually started from a Primary Moment, but rather it was done in midstream of another

more complex scenario? What if the stair climbing was part of a trip to a job interview and the next “step” after climbing the stairs was to enter the office of the firm I was interviewing at? This changes things. If the stream is a scenario of applying for a new job, we must track back to the origins of that decision to find the Primary Moment; the moment at which we decided to look for a job and decided to apply at the firm at the top of the stairs. Within the scenario we have access to our freewill at anytime. Once reaching the top of stairs, we can turn around and skip the interview, which opens up a new stream. Or we can take the interview, but decline the job, which opens up a new stream. Each step in the process is a point of decision. The decision not to take the job might affect a stream that is running simultaneously – say a home mortgage. So declining the job, might put the mortgage in jeopardy, or not.

Our stream of experience is guided by Soul’s need for understanding. But freewill interferes with efficiency. Freewill is Freewill, the more self-aware you are, and the more freewill you have access to. Soul has Freewill as does your personality and freewill does not end with one or the other but is a constant that exists at all levels of self. Our personality is swayed by everything we come in contact with, in particular things that bring up insecurity and fear – freewill being the constant means we have choice at any moment. Our Soul may work to set up a scenario to provide us with a job interview that suits our growth, but upon reaching the top of the stairs, we are gripped by insecurity and leave before we take the interview. The scenario collapses and new one opens up. Soul honors the choice to avoid the interview because it must – freewill is freewill and freewill is the only constant. The more in alignment we are with Soul’s efforts, the smoother things go in our growth process, the more at odds we are with Soul’s growth, the harder things can be. This does mean things will be “easy” but it does mean that the effort to understanding will be without a division between the two aspects.

The way we experience things is heavily dependent on our belief in “time;” there is a past, a present and a future. This is not really true, as all things happen at once, but we have come to not only believe it, we have come to accept no other alternative to the past, present, future way of life. Present time is that which is not future or past (as we define it now), but which is happening now. The past is the past; it cannot be changed; only your perception of and connection to it can. The Future does not exist from the Present moment. The Future only exists as a relative event matrix contingent on the choices you *make* in any given moment. Let me say this again, the future is contingent on choices made in the Primary Moment, and as such, does not exist in and of itself. The choices you make now may or may not affect your future, the choices you made in the Primary Moment at the time the Primary Moment revealed itself, do affect your future – but only as it relates to the choices made at the time. The present moment is what is happening, or not happening, in any give scenario. The Primary Moment is the moment of choice, where a scenario of experience opens up from and is totally reliant on awareness of what is or what is not happening then.

In reality there is only the Present Moment, or Present Time, and within certain Present Moments a Primary Moment can be found.

The streams of experience start at all different moments in our process. Things often take years to come to fruition. As you move along in your experience life demands you have a foundation for things before the full understanding can be had and many of the elements that contribute to that picture take time to unfold. Sadly we don't see this. It is clear that a man who wishes to play professional baseball, and has this in alignment with his Soul process, will play t-ball, little league, high-school ball, college and then minor league ball. We can see that each league contributes to the process of a major league at bat. It is easy to string those scenarios together to form a picture of the whole. But there are also hundreds of other scenarios being played out that contribute to other aspects of growth. What if the same athlete had an interaction in high school with a yoga class – and hated it? But after his first season he found a stiffness that he couldn't shake, and low and behold, the dreaded introduction of yoga has suddenly become a potential answer to his problem. The yoga groundwork was laid years before the need.

Let's say you decide to go for a walk. This is a choice you are making. At no time in the past did you determine that you were going for a walk at this date and time. The choice is organic to the Primary Moment. You stand up, and decide to go for a walk. You have opened up a scenario from the Primary Moment. The scenario can include anything from walking only a few feet, to walking on your hands to walking backwards. The choices are infinite as the scenario unfolds. The "walk" will have an initiation point, a process and a conclusion. Not a beginning, middle and end, but a rather a series of experiences, when taken in context, relative to your decision to walk and the choices made while you walk – that will hopefully, in some way, add to you evolution.

What will not be available to you is this; you will not be able to walk outside and never come back. Why? The reason is simple. In the last Primary Moment you opened up a scenario that involved you being on the planet next week and to walk away and never come back would disrupt that scenario – you have simultaneous scenarios running at one time (relationship, job, hobbies, family etc) each with a stream of your consciousness playing out an event for your understanding. You, at some level, decided to have a relationship, have a new job, get cancer, or climb Mount Everest from another Primary Moment. The walk you take is an added scenario, that hopefully adds something to you, but it, in and of itself, cannot disrupt the rest of your process.

Within the walk are many present moments. The first step you take is a present moment, and the next and the next. They are all strung together. One after another, each one stacking on top of the next to form what you will experience as a walk. The Primary Moment got things going, the decisions you make in the present moment, as you walk, decide what that scenario unfolds like. The evaluation at the end teaches you something, or not. The absence of expectation is key to a pure scenario opening up. This allows the scenario, the walk, to unfold in a way that is most profitable, rather than a way that meets limited expectations.

If you have an expectation about that walk is to be like, and it doesn't unfold that way, you may abandoned it. This is your choice. The problem here is that you may leave before the events reveal a truth, an understanding, or even a laugh. "This walk wasn't

supposed to be like this” suggest that you are not in the present moment, but living in the future. When you take the walk, are you focused on the walk or thinking about a dozen other things (talking on the phone), if so, are you in the Present Moment – the walk?

We know what the past was, at least according to our own point of view, we know what the future is supposed to be, at least according to our expectations, but few can define what the present is. When I ask this questions during sessions nearly everyone tells me what the present is not, by referencing the future. The classic is a waiter who is an actor. When asked what they “do” the waiter will say, “I’m an actor, but right now I’m waiting tables.” Then, you are waiting tables and you are not acting. Therefore you are a waiter, there is of course is nothing wrong with this, but the opposite is never spoken when an actor is acting. He will never say, “I am acting now, but I’m really a waiter.” Folks will often say “I’m only in this job until (future) I find my true calling.” Again, this is defining the present by what it is not, not by what it is. If you are walking you are walking, if you switch to reading you are reading, if you switch to sleeping you are sleeping. This kind of confusing of the present moment is really awful when folks will justify what they are doing by saying, “I am doing this but I really *should* be doing that.” We are so torn up with should as a reference we actually will diminish sleep, by often saying, “I’m sleeping when I *should* be exercising!” Can you define your reality, as it is today, without referencing the future? Look around you reality and define it exactly as it without saying: I’m going to, I wish, It should be, Not now but hopefully...

What we are doing in the Present Moment is often not what we *want* to be doing. We desire to do things based on programming, marketing, fear and confused beliefs. Our desires often conflict with what our growth needs. This conflict prevents us from seeing where the Present moment actually is. Most people define their lives by starting off with what they aren’t doing yet, but will be in the future. An actor working as a waiter will tell people they are waiting tables but are really an actor. Justification of a perceived negative present is often done with a reference to the future. The problem here is obvious, when defining the Present Moment by the future, a future that does not exist, one is confused about what is actually happening – a waiter, an actor, or both? Of course the obvious issue here is the compulsion to justify a “lesser” job by accessing a perception of the future and ascribing it to the present moment. If one is a waiting tables, then one is a waiter and not an actor. If one is acting, then one is not a waiting tables. The justification element keeps up out of the present moment, hating waiting tables and longing for acting jobs. Of course the absurdity of this problem is that we are none of these things, these are just things we do to learn about ourselves.

Try this. Sit in the most chaotic spot you can find, work, school, even traffic. Get a sense of your reality at that moment. Then close your eyes and say to yourself on the inner plane “This is all there is ever going to be.” Say this over and over again - forcefully if you have to, but say with truth behind it. Notice the pain in your voice when all “hope” is lost that things will be different in the future. Hope is the bane of an earth plane existence. Hope is future. Hope is not present moment, action is present moment. All the pain, lament, sorrow, you feel when uttering that phrase is you out in the future where you do not exist – where you are weak. There was a presidential candidate whose

platform is “hope.” How totally infuriating, why not *now*! Why do I have to wait until the future for change?

Now, once the air has cleared and you begin to sense that you are at peace with your reality. The sorrow will pass and you will suddenly see you have a grip on things. Sit back, open your eyes and say to yourself “this is all I will ever need.” Every tool you need to get to the next moment is right in front of you. There are no hidden tools in the present, none exist only in the future, they are all there right in front of your eyes, you just tend to miss them because you only want to see tools that will bring you the future of your expectations. It is all right there. Say this phrase until you see one tool you had not seen before: a book, a friend, an inner understanding or even a moment of quiet - quiet that can only without the draining energy being wasted in the future.

There is no future, only the present moment, all of your power lies in the present moment, you have none the future and none in the past. To truly access your power you must first identify the present moment clearly, not based on what it supposed to be, or should have been or what you wish it was – but what it is!

My friend and his wife used to have knock-down drag out fights over the future, over “what if?” It was shocking to me how she would get so upset over the “what if” as if it was real. She needed to win every “what if” argument. I finally said to him, “let her win all of them, she’s winning nothing as the future does not exist, and letting her win makes her feel better.” Never argue about the “what if” or the possible future. Never get excited about the day you are finally going to win the lottery.

Insecurity in the present about the future is usually a concern that one cannot handle and event that may happen. People handle things only when they have happened in the past and they will handle things when they actually happen. If you are getting worked up about how you will handle the sudden death of your infant child, or the moment a nuke blows up in your city, simply look around you and say, “if it is happening it is happening.” Then notice how your future concern is not happening. Getting out into the future in an insecurity-based frenzy is the weakest place you can be. But you can be in the most empowered place you can be by simply getting back to what is happening.

What is happening is happening, everything else is irrelevant.

Event conclusion. Suppose you decide to play a professional tennis match. Tickets were sold, people came, things were happening. After the first game you realized the guy was so much better than you. Should you quit, no, the scenario must be played out. What most folks will do it is “wish” they were somewhere else. Weakening them to the extreme by putting their focus elsewhere. What they need to do is get really into the present moment and think of something to do. In a French Open final with Ivan Lendl and Michael Chang, Michael Chang did just that. At the end of the match he became exhausted and was unable to serve. He surely wished he was someplace else. So, instead of quitting, he served underhanded. While totally breaking with convention the tactic worked and he,

having stuck out the scenario to the end, won. The understanding for him was not going to present itself until the very end, to that point he was doing fine and the challenge was standard stuff, but the backend of the event revealed something he needed to see.

Athletes find the present moment quite often. They describe it as being in the zone. They describe making all the right choices. They are not thinking about past mistakes, or three plays ahead, they are only thinking about that precise moment in front of them. Artists describe being in the zone, tuning out the entire world while they are creating. Often an artist will be so deep in the present moment they cannot remember how they created a work. The present moment is what is happening, not what will happen, or could happen, or has happened, but what is happening. That seems simple, but it is not.

You are at your most powerful when you are in the present moment. I demonstrated this to my friend when she was 11. I said to her, put your foot forward a bit, lean into me and push your hand against mine (a test of physical strength). I said, now push and keep me from knocking you over. Once she got a feel she stopped. We started again. This time I asked her to think about an awful event that had happened to her – I easily knocked her over. Then I asked her to think about a trip she was taking in three weeks, I easily knocked her over. Her mind went into the future and the past and left her weak in the present moment. You can test this for yourself. Try picking up something heavy, and think of a past or future event.

People will endure horrifying situations based on an idea that the Present Moment horror will bring a reward in the future. In fact this is crazy. Folks will suffer simply because their mind has been programmed with hope. Why? The idea that the future will be better is the opposite of empowerment. No matter how distasteful the present moment is, or seems, it is exactly what is happening. And the only power you have is in that very present moment. To flee to the future is to weaken oneself. In prison they have a saying, there are two days; the day you come in and the day you leave. Focusing on the future will make you insane in a great many circumstances.

So what is the power we are talking about? Freewill of course. More precisely the power of you to choose where you manifest your energy. The only place where you have choice is in the moment. So the only place where you have power is in the present moment. For most the present moment is a wide swath of energy, but the closer you can get to that exact center point of that moment, the closer you get to true power. While being in the present moment is great, being in the real present moment is where really deep power lies. Work to keep winnowing down your present moment to get as close to the center as you can.

All your choices, those you know and those you do not know will be in the present moment. You have no choices available to you in the future, or the past, none. Your choices, ergo your power, all resides in the present moment. Get there and you will see the choices, those you know and those which make the unknown ones. Remember, you do not have to know all the choices available to you in that present moment, only that

there are choices there. This is a nice trick to help you get over the problem of not knowing choices beyond those you know. Just know they are there.

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