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The concept of "THE NOW"

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**Becoming aware of the value of the
'present moment' whilst carrying an emotional burden**

Of all the profound concepts of awareness philosophy I have learnt, the one I continually keep on referring to; the one that is so simple in nature, is the one that seems to have its beauty and value hidden by its own simplicity.

It is knowing that **YOU**, along with your reality, exist for just that instant we call the present. When that instant ceases to exist, a new instant will then come into being. It is knowing that the past is only a shadow of what was. It is knowing that the future is but a dream, it is the unborn child.

In one respect we could say that our lives are part of an infinite series of Instant Moments, and when they are all strung together it is then given a name. That name is **time**. When the instant ceases to be the instant, it is called the past. The instants that are to come are labelled the future, but the past and future do not exist; they are an illusion and all that REALLY EXISTS...is the present. All that really matters is **"THE NOW"**.

ONLY THE MOMENT LIVES:

To understand the value of the Present when trying to obtain relief from sorrow, you must appreciate the link between the truth of the moment that you live in right now, and the illusion that there might be something good for your peace hiding in a mist of shadows and nothingness.

The reflections of clouds on a still pond are not clouds.

Though they have beauty;

if you were to reach out and touch them,

you would disturb the stillness of the water

and lose the peace and beauty you once had.

The only reality was the water.

This link between the present and the past can now be seen as some form of goodness, pleasure or beauty, and when you reach out to be with those qualities, you touch an illusion. From this... sorrow is then born.

REGRET, THE TAUNTING LURE:

If we go through a painful experience, we tend to go through many and varied "If Only" scenarios.

"If only it had happened this way, I wouldn't have this pain".

"If only I had done this then, I'd be happier now".

"If only I had this yesterday, I'd have so much more of that tomorrow".

Among the many whirlwinds within the mind, there are two important areas of concern that you should understand are capable of manifesting pain. They are, a regret of what was, and a regret of what wasn't. I may have become aware of an opportunity that would have been good for me, but through fear, I could choose to remove myself from it. On the other hand, it may have been removed from me against my desire. In another example, I could come to the understanding that something I sought after and experienced has left me feeling shaken and miserable. In each case, I am open to experience pain if I choose to re-live the situation, or dream of how else it could've been.

To maintain...

"If only I **HAD** done this",

...is to invent a past that never was and attempt to live in it. Realities that once were can be bad enough, but to conjure up a past that never was, is to inflict nothing less than torment upon yourself.

To say...

"If only I **HAD NEVER** done this",

...is to deny the reality of a choice.

Through the acceptance of a choice that has brought pain, one can then appreciate that what was understood as truth, is just a reflection of what was, and all that is important is your peace in "**THE NOW**".

After my marriage break-up, a dear friend wrote to me and said in her letter...

"When the energies go back and forth between the past and the future, the healing process is delayed".

At the time, the effect was subtle, and my understanding of it was vague. Since my sorrow was not at its peak, the doors of meaning were not fully open, but planted within me was a seed that was being nurtured by the passage of time.

Slightly more than a year later, my life took another completely unexpected turn. A chance of happiness and friendship vanished with frightening brevity, and its effect was even more devastating than the first. With delayed grief and compounded sorrows, I found myself lost in an ocean of loneliness as the ground was literally washed from beneath me.

This was when I truly began my journey to find peace and restoration and it was to lead me down a road that never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would travel.

PROJECTION:

Upon coming out of the event that had brought significant changes to my life, I found myself floundering in a new state of emptiness and insecurity. I would desperately try and find something to hang on to that would restore me to a former state of existence. My first natural reactions were to review my past and wonder where I went wrong; I would wonder what alternatives of living could have prevented my new circumstance. In looking backwards or forwards in time, I would PROJECT my thoughts out of the reality of the present and try to become a part of an illusion.

This very normal practice is called upon many times in everyday of our lives. To refresh our memory after an absence of concentration is to project. To recall what we wore yesterday so we can wear clean clothes today is to project. To be able to understand this chapter, you will have to project so that your feelings can be compared in order to find understanding and meaning.

Whenever we are happy and we look at a photograph of happy times, this projection or dwelling of a past event, re-enforces our existing happiness. Likewise, if we are sad and we dwell on the events that have brought us pain, then our sorrow also shall be re-enforced or amplified.

I have found a simple source of Peace from the belief that in the present moment, I have everything that I need **for that moment**. This long time belief of mine has now been validated for me through the freedom I have obtained from adapting this philosophy when I most needed it. In trying times, such thinking is difficult to maintain, but for me, somehow this unshakeable belief would always be there for me when all else made no sense. When there is a need for a major adjustment to your life and you are experiencing deep emotions such as Grief, Anxiety, or Brokenness, within the pain of the moment you would think that such thinking would be the last thing you need, but if you yearn for someone or something that gave you Love or pleasure, then the situation that arose to remove those things from your life came about through circumstances that needed attention and a necessity to be resolved. Even when you experience the depths of grief and loneliness, the pain of a broken heart, or any other emotion which seizes upon you, such intensity is serving your personal development through the enforced activation of awareness to Yourself, your situation, and your Truth.

I can now see the separation from someone who was once dear to me as a need. At the time I could not see this since my desires were not being fulfilled. Poets and Lovers say within their bitter sweet laments that ...

"You took a part of me when you left".

Within such words lies a subtle truth. When we are without peace, it may be said that we fragmented, and when we yearn for a part of our life that no longer exists; there is truly a part of us that is still attached to that aspect of the past. Indeed, the phrase **"part of me"**, that the poets write about, is in fact essentially somewhere else. Ironically, when we can **truly let go** of the object of our yearning, that "part of us", can then come back to unite us with ourselves and allow us to feel at Peace once again. We are then **WHOLE** once again. Again in retrospect, since there was a particular aspect of my life that was not serving my ongoing need for Love and comfort, something had to happen in my life that could enable me to live the sort of life I have always wanted. In short... I had something to **LEARN**. When I felt pain in the separation, it was because I was associating with an illusion, I was not in the present, I was some where else.

Within such circumstances, knowledge can be a saviour that will help us regain our peace. This knowledge has it's roots in the word **CHOICES**. We do not need to be a slave to suffering, and we need not be at the mercy of lingering emotions. We can choose to stay within our sorrows, or we can choose to acknowledge the past as that which cannot serve us anymore. Here we can also choose to **call on courage** and begin a **new start** to life and a **new self respect**.

To have experienced hurt whilst being kind to someone may prompt us to project to the past to live out an old happiness, but soon agitation then develops in the search for reasons and answers. Those answers are never there, it's like trying to converse with the images we see on a television. Your answers are buried beneath your sorrow in a very serene place, and only in the stillness of **"THE NOW"** is when they can be revealed to you.

Take time out to be silent and go within. Lay aside your dramas and begin a process of contemplation of past actions. Identify areas in your life that are repetitive in nature, and the problems they bring you. Deep within you are the answers that can **change your life**. **Not only must you be willing to seek them, but you must also be willing to employ them. Contemplation is an ongoing process and the benefits are enormous.**

Many times for myself, no matter how hard I tried, I just drawn to my sorrows in an almost irresistible and magnetic way. I just couldn't seem to put them down no matter how bad they made me feel. I had no concentration and many times I was just unavailable to my work, my family, my friends and many other things that were important. The days seem never ending and my sleep would be broken from the calling of memories that refused to leave me alone. During that period, there was a tremendous source of energy within that needed to be released, and as difficult as it was, **it had be expressed**. This was the unavoidable time of my grieving process and it had to take its full path. When we are in this situation, all we can do is be kind to ourself as we experience our suffering. We can even comfort ourselves by wishing for Peace. For myself, I would say..."Peace to Me... Things Will get better".

TIME TO RISE.

When sorrows eventually peak, it is then time to activate awareness philosophy. Understand the value of "THE NOW"; understand what it is you are searching for as you project and ask yourself...

"Will I really find what I am looking for in the past ?"

be daring enough to ask yourself...

"Are my answers already contained within me ?"**"Am I willing to search deeply for my Truth ?"**

Remember that your pain is brought about by association with the past and an isolation from the truth. The beasts of the Animal kingdom who live perfectly in **"THE NOW"** do not know of suffering a yearning heart, since they do not have the ability to make a comparison of past events as we do. Our pain is relative since we compare what is, against what was or what we would like to be. In the present moment there is no association, there is only existence, so when we stop associating we stop the pain.

Obviously, because of our humanity, a person would need attain great Skill, Knowledge, Discipline and Love to live **Perfectly** in the present, and until we come to live permanently in such a state, we will always be prone to experience the burden of pain and its seemingly never ending quality. However, through knowledge that de-mystifies human behaviour, we can give ourselves a chance to resolve grief in a much more effective way than we could have if we were to lack such knowledge.

PEACE WITHIN:

I have learnt to live my life as a continuing series of packets of time. Since through my humanness, I cannot live PERFECTLY in the moment, I have to live in time. Therefore I choose to live with a limited past and a limited future. Some people manage to live a day at a time, and if your life style can support it, that's good. For myself and at the time of writing this book, my life style concerned itself with about a week. A week for me was good. I have commitments and obligations and it works well for me.

Staying in **"THE NOW"** also helps to drop the emotional baggage that we cart around with us so much. By giving yourself the opportunity to experience the peace of the present, you will find yourself being able to gently release futile feelings the likes of blame and guilt. To do this, will then allow insights of understanding to filter into your mind to dissolve hurt, anxiety, and other crippling emotions which stop you acting to your truest feelings.

SOME EVERYDAY EXAMPLES:

In regard to projection outside the topic of sorrow, I offer this story to provide a balance to the concept of **"THE NOW"**. The wife of a friend of mine was under threat of losing her job through staff cuts in hard financial times. After reviews and recommendations, the outcome would eventually be known with some inevitable casualties. After the staff assessments, my friend came to tell me how his wife had been fortunate in keeping her job, however his face still showed concern. I asked him why and he replied sombrely that "Her job was only safe for a year". Even though the past few days had given him good reason to be concerned, he still managed to remove himself from being in a happy state from his wife's good news. He immediately projected without awareness a whole year ahead. He had leapt over 365 days of security to be with the pain of a retrenchment that might never eventuate. There was no awareness that his behaviour was normal, justified, or otherwise. There was simply no awareness. His actions were sympathetic of his thinking... his thinking was guided by his Ego... and his choice brought him pain.

Once again, by looking at Ego thinking based on fear, it wanted him not to bear any pain of job loss, so it projected him to the future in an attempt to find answers to a non-existent problem. It found none and brought him back with a burden.

The problem lies when we project without limitation, but what is even more devastating is to project without awareness. When we project and don't realise it; when we live in dream world, we are missing the healing peace of the present. To dream "If only" thoughts are a waste of energy since your thinking will not change the past. Similarly, when we worry over

an event that we know is to come upon us, we tend to circulate the event around and around inside our minds without producing any positive output. We draw no conclusions and we make no plans; we end up waiting for the arrival of pain (which very often never eventuates), as we dwell on how we are going to cope. We in effect bring extra pain upon ourselves through our own choice of behaviour.

How painful it would be to know what our future is. The past is bad enough as it lasciviously tries to keep the hurt alive through a constant re staging of the original drama.

FUTURE PROJECTION:

Sometimes we have an option to be involved in a future event but in the present moment, we may feel down in spirits or emotionally not available for what ever reason. It is here that a chance becomes available for the feelings you have in the present, to be projected into the future. To say...

"I'm feeling tired and rundown lately and the thought of that trip to the country next week doesn't appeal at all... I'll cancel"

...is to project low feelings into the future, and presume that you would still be feeling this way when the event comes around. If you don't have to make a decision in the present moment, forget about it entirely. Living in "**THE NOW**", is reality. If your miserable, then acknowledge your feelings. It's O.K. to feel what comes from within regardless of the emotion. Stay with the truth of the emotion and don't attempt to rationalise or validate yourself or your feelings.

Simply experience what you feel and let it go after it has passed. Don't burden yourself with thoughts such as...

"I should be feeling this..." or "I shouldn't be feeling this",

It's simply you expressing what is true and valid for you, and you know of your commitment to goodness.

MASTERY IN CHILDHOOD:

Children are Masters of "**THE NOW**", and children are masters of unconditional Love. Since a child has its needs fully catered for, it does not concern itself with distant future, or past events. They are able to freely express their desires and wants with out limitations or restrictions. They are naturally Loving, and they seek and respond without reserve to the Love given to them by those in their care. They consider nothing about the next meal or whether there is enough food in the cupboard, and they are oblivious to the effort behind the care put in for their well being. They simply sense a need, express it, and find themselves catered for. A child not having to fend for itself stays perfectly content in the present moment. As far as children are concerned, meals just happen, toys have always been in their room, and there is always a soft and cosy bed to sleep in.

As we leave childhood and pass through all the various stages that take us into adult life, the influences of people and events envelope us as we journey in life. To quote that much used cliché, "The Innocence of Childhood", is lost. We grow up and experience the world. We come across disappointment and hardship, and we find there are times we have to take a back seat. People can let us down, and we build up a library of memories and feelings linked to experiences.

When profound circumstances in our Adult life make us stop and evaluate where we are going, (usually an event that demands change), we then have the potential to rediscover the

gems of childhood which have always been within us. Through this discovery we can then have the best of both worlds. It is in fact when we are reborn through the fire of our pain, and find that there is much more to life than we could ever had imagined. Through a new Love, it is possible to see our link in Spirit. This when a person is born again of an awakened spirit; discovering the link of Love and Life, and the true connection with life and what it has to offer. All this can come about if we unite ourselves with the wisdom of Adulthood, and the Love of a Child.

A CHANCE FOR PEACE:

To live with ongoing peace after understanding the concept of "THE NOW" will bring great freedom. Start to nurture this state by letting things unfold without your anxious yearnings and worrisome concerns. Deal with problems when its time to deal with them. Obviously one needs to put some attention to future events. The planning of financial budgets, shopping and preparation of meals, holidays, business ventures etc. The preparation of the future is a valid part of the present, but after these efforts have been fulfilled, simply continue on with what requires your present availability.... your daily duty.

If you think there will be strong winds blowing your way soon, simply acknowledge that fact as your major preparation. Do what you have to do efficiently and peacefully, then go about your business in the meantime. Don't spread your energies around to much at one time. Prioritize your workload against your personal interests. Put your duties first and get them out of the way. When you're very keen to do something whilst at the same time other things demand your attention, there can be a temptation to do a bit of this and a bit of that. When your energies are distributed like this, you are prone to mistakes from frustration since each task is advancing slowly. You will be eager to see some positive output, but because the other duties are calling for your attention, you can tend to rush and end up doing less than your best efforts would otherwise allow.

If you project to the task that you would like to be doing rather than being available to the task at hand, your state of mind then becomes inappropriate to the job you are trying to do. An attitude is then maintained that the job is a drudgery and a chore. However, by staying in "**THE NOW**" with the reality of the job at hand, you will perform more efficiently and the job will just fly by.

Have you ever had a day where time just seems to whiz past?
What you were experiencing, were a combination of events and circumstances which had called for your present availability. You were in fact living and operating in "**THE NOW**" in a very refined way. Though you were unaware of it at the time, the scene eventually registered within you from your peaceful attitude. Your peace was highlighted by the lack of worries and concerns within. This type of feeling is available to you more often as you develop awareness and stop yourself from projecting and being concerned when you don't have to be. The demands of the present are more than enough without added loads brought on by choice. To live in "**THE NOW**" is to finely tune your ability to manage the day to day problems that will always come your way.

When you become open and available to the flow of your worldly events, you will learn to see situations with greater clarity since fears and concerns shall be framed in a quite state of mind. Many times, fears can be seen as unrealistic. Genuine problems can also be tackled in the most appropriate ways since you are able to see into the truth of the situation. You shall see a problem and through your stillness and refined instinct, efficiently apply a solution. The problem is then no more and you then continue on with our business. Each time you act this way, the benefit that your actions bring you shall nurture your confidence as you learn that the potential for problems is no longer a problem.

**Be available to your destiny.
Foster Stillness and Gentleness.
Love being peaceful.**

Don't be too concerned or anxious about the direction of your life. As you change your outlook and learn to be guided by your goodness and instinct, good things will then begin to come your way. Opportunities will always present themselves when they can serve a need for your development. Believe this and get the strength to believe it by remembering your link with the Infinite.

CONTEMPLATION:

Anxiety of the future makes us stumble in the present.
Anxiety of the past keeps us in chains.
Only within the Present, is where we will be
Free and Peaceful.

Be Peaceful,
Adrian