

Wednesday Night Study Series – “The Power of Now”

Prayer of Surrender: Spirit of Truth, CARRY ME where you will; BRING TO ME what You will; TAKE FROM ME what You will; AWAKEN IN ME what You will. The Christ MAN is around me. The Christ MIND is in me. The Christ POWER flows through me. And, the Christ MYSTERY exists as me. I believe it. I perceive it. And, now I receive it! I am surrendered. Amen. And, so it is!

Letting Go of Psychological Time

Some people have a hard time comprehending the concept that time is an illusion. When I say that it is, my intention is not to make a philosophical statement. I am just reminding you of a simple fact – a fact so obvious that you may find it hard to grasp and may even find it meaningless – but once fully realized, it can cut like a sword through all the mind-created layers of complexity and “problems.” Let me say it again: the present moment is all you ever have. There is never a time when your life is not “this moment.” Is this not a fact?

Intense presence is needed when certain situations trigger a reaction with a strong emotional charge, such as when your self-image is threatened, a challenge comes into your life that triggers fear, things “go wrong,” or an emotional complex from the past is brought up. In those instances, the tendency is for you to become “unconscious.” The reaction or emotion takes you over – you “become” it. You act it out. You justify, make wrong, attack, defend . . . except that it isn’t you, it’s the reactive pattern, the mind in its habitual survival mode.

Identification with the mind gives it more energy, observation of the mind withdraws energy from it. Identification with the mind creates more time; observation of the mind opens up the dimension of the timeless. The energy that is withdrawn from the mind turns into presence. Once you can feel what it means to be present, it becomes much easier to simply choose to step out of the time dimension whenever time is not needed for practical purposes and move more deeply into the Now. This does not impair your ability to use time – past or future – when you need to refer to it for practical matters. Nor does it impair your ability to use your mind. In fact, it enhances it. When you do use your mind, it will be sharper, more focused.

Learn to use time in the practical aspects of your life – we may call this “clock time” – but immediately return to present moment awareness when those practical matters have been dealt with. In this way, there will be no buildup of “psychological time,” which is identification with the past and continuous compulsive projection into the future.

Clock time is not just making an appointment or planning a trip. It includes learning from the past so that we don’t repeat the same mistakes over and over. Setting goals and working

toward them. Predicting the future by means of patterns and laws, physical, mathematical and so on, learned from the past and taking appropriate action on the basis of our predictions.

But even here, within the sphere of practical living, where we cannot do without reference to past and future, the present moment remains the essential factor. Any lesson from the past becomes relevant and is applied now. Any planning as well as working toward achieving a particular goal is done now.

The enlightened person's main focus of attention is always the Now, but they are still peripherally aware of time. In other words, they continue to use clock time but are free of psychological time.

Be alert as you practice this so that you do not unwittingly transform clock time into psychological time. For example, if you made a mistake in the past and learn from it now, you are using clock time. On the other hand, if you dwell on it mentally, and self-criticism, remorse, or guilt come up, then you are making the mistake of drifting into "me" and "mine" – you make it part of your sense of self, and it has become psychological time, which is always linked to a false sense of identity. Unforgiveness necessarily implies a heavy burden of psychological time.

If you set yourself a goal and work toward it, you are using clock time. You are aware of where you want to go, but you honor and give your fullest attention to the step that you are taking at this moment. If you then become excessively focused on the goal, perhaps because you are seeking happiness, fulfillment, or a more complete sense of self in it, the Now is no longer fully being honored. It becomes reduced to a mere stepping stone to the future, with no intrinsic value. Clock time then turns into psychological time. Your life's journey is no longer an adventure, just an obsessive need to arrive, to attain, to "make it." You no longer see or smell the flowers by the wayside either, nor are you aware of the beauty and the miracle of life that unfolds all around you when you are present in the Now.

Affirmation: "I am not back there or out there. I am right here, right NOW. I am not what has happened to me or what I hope will happen for me. I am what is happening through me in this NOW moment. It is wise to look back and even helpful to plan ahead. But, NOW is where I am. When I live in the NOW, I cannot be touched by the pain of the past, anxiety of the future or any resistance to change as time is not welcome in my NOW. This week I will laugh, live, and love in the NOW. Amen."