

# The Power of Now - Eckhart Tolle

Enlightenment is felt oneness with being. → You cannot suffer in the state of being.  
Being is your deepest self, your true nature. → You can feel it, but never really understand it.  
The biggest obstacle to experience a state of being: Your identification with your mind.  
Because of the mental noise, you cannot experience stillness. → Enlightenment is a state of wholeness, of being "at one" and therefore at peace.

→ It's the end of suffering

→ End of the enslavement to incessant thinking.

Identification with your mind: Judgement, labels, definitions. → All of it blocks your mind from the truth.

→ We are all one with what there is.

If rightly used, your brain is a superb instrument, but it becomes destructive by too many thoughts. → You should use it, not the other way around.

If there is no "off"-button in your mind, through which you can turn it off, your mind uses you.

→ Start watching your thinker.

→ You have the power to stop your inner voice. → This voice comments, speculates, judges, complain... All unnecessary for the present moment.

⇒ You don't see the present as present but see it through the eyes of the past and get a distorted view.

Free your mind from your inner voice. → Start listening to the voice in your head as often as possible. → Pay particular attention to repetitive thought-patterns. Watching your thinker.

→ Do not judge the inner voice!

You will realize: There is this inner voice and I AM listening to it. → That's a new consciousness. ⇒ The thoughts lose power over you.

There will be gaps in which no thought exists that get longer and longer the more you practice.

You create a state of inner connectedness, fully present.

Becoming intensely conscious about the present moment is deeply satisfying. → Practice this by taking any routine activity and giving it your fullest attention. Pay close attention to every little moment.

⇒ Learn to disidentify with your mind. → Creating those mind-gaps makes you no longer taking the content of your mind seriously.

Your mind should never be stronger than you because when you can't stop thinking negative thoughts, you are addicted.

Your mind is a tool and should, therefore, be used for a specific task. When it's completed, lay it down.

To the ego, the present moment hardly exists. → It gives you a false perception of "NOW". Enlightenment lets you still use your mind when needed, but in a much more focused way.

No-mind: Consciousness without thought lets you think in a creative way. → Creative breakthroughs occur in mental quietness. → Learn how to not think.

Your emotions are the reflection of your mind in the body.

The more you identify with your thoughts, the more emotional energy will influence you.

→ If you have difficulty feeling your emotions because it reflects your true self and your mind.

→ Allow the emotions to be there, again you as the watcher of yourself.

⇒ Always be the watcher of your emotions and thoughts. Don't analyze, just watch.

Your emotions can easily take you over unless you stay present. → Thoughts and emotions often feed each other. Your mind tries to get rid of pain through emotions, but the harder it tries, the worse it gets.

You feel emotions of joy and love, only when your mind is still. → Love, joy and peace are deep states of being. Pleasure is derived from the outside and can as well trigger pain.

→ That's why initial "Love" can convert into pain. Real love doesn't turn into pain.

All craving is the mind seeking fulfillment in external things. → As long as I am my mind (identification with your mind), you are your cravings.

→ You shouldn't be free of desire, but stay present while you desire something.

All negative emotions are in some sort of pain.

It's very easy to turn from a "High" to a "low". Also, the pain from the past can hurt you, but NOT when you stay present.

A great part of human pain is unnecessary and self-created. → For the most part, pain is non-acceptance or resistance. → The degree of resistance depends on how strongly you identify with your mind. → The more you identify with it, the more you suffer.

Your true nature becomes covered up by your mind because for it to survive, it identifies with the past and the future. ⇒ The present moment is all you will ever have.

Watching the mechanics in your brain, for example how it is labeling events and seeing how this creates pain, allows you to stay present. → Whatever the present moment contains, accept it. Act if necessary or if you want to change the situation.

Pain also accumulates from the past, it's the pain-body that lives on in you. → It gets easily triggered when current pain resonates with that of the past. → Some pain-bodies attack others and some attack yourself.

⇒ Watch out for any sign of unhappiness in yourself, because it may be your pain-body.

→ You must be present to catch it at the moment. It can only survive if you identify with it.

Once it has taken you over, it will want more pain. → Put the light on your body with your consciousness and it will dissolve. All pain really is, is an illusion.

No longer energizing the pain-body with your consciousness will take out its life-energy.

→ Stop feeding it with consciousness. → It will still be there for a while, but die and come to a stop after you have stopped to energize it. → Just like a wheel.

"Unconsciousness" means to identify with some mental or emotional mind pattern.

⇒ Focus attention on the feeling inside you, know it is your pain-body. Accept it is there, don't think about it. Don't judge or analyze. Stay present and be the observer of what is happening inside you.

Often people rather want to identify with the pain-body, than losing identity which is based on it.

Fear is part of the pain-body. You don't need to fear to do dangerous things, just use your common sense.

But the fear we most often experience is about things that might happen, not about what is happening right now. → You can cope with the present moment, but not with a mind-projection.

The ego itself is very insecure, even if it appears to be confident. → All fear, in reality, is the fear of egos death. → f. ex. approach anxiety "I might *make a fool out of myself*", or being wrong in an argument.

Another part of the emotional pain is the egoic mind and a sense of incompleteness (f. ex. not being worthy/ good enough). Unconsciously it is also craving and wanting.

→ Striving after possessions, money, power, recognition, so you can feel better about yourself. → Even if they attain these things, they still won't be whole.

As long as your egoic mind is running your life, you cannot truly be at ease. → Accept that none of these cravings are really you.

The ego loves complexities and problems and seeks to attach to something to strengthen its illusionary sense of self. → It doesn't want to get free of it.

Being present allows the mind to be as it is, a wonderful tool.

⇒ Disidentify with your mind!

Remove time from the mind and it stops - unless you use it → Identifying with your mind makes you trapped in time.

→ The past gives you your identity

→ The future promises salvation.

→ But neither are truly yourself.

The more you are focused on time, the more you miss the Now. The Now is the only point that can take you beyond the limited confines of the mind. → You cannot feel anything outside the NOW. Nothing ever happens in the past or future. → The reality exists through the Now.

In emergency situations, you naturally shift to the Now. → That's why people do extreme-sports because they get glimpses of "free-mind".

→ You don't need that activity to achieve that state of self.

In the absence of time, all your problems dissolve. Suffering needs time, it cannot survive in the now.

Your mind cannot truly see objects. It presents to you only a projection of it, an image, but never its true essence and inner spirit. Unless you move into the NOW.

→ The mind labels, judges and uses the information to create an image.

Your goal is to achieve a permanent shift in consciousness. → Step out of the time-dimension as much and as often as you can. → Start by observing the habitual tendency of your mind to want to escape the NOW.

→ The moment you realize you are not present, you are. Notice how often your attention is in the past or in the future. Be the observer.

When the reaction or emotion takes over, you become it. Identification with your mind gives it more energy. → You can still refer to your mind in past and future when needed, but you do it consciously. It enhances the abilities of the mind.

Use time in particular aspects if your life, "clock-time", but immediately return to the present after it is dealt with, so you don't build up "psychological time".

→ You can also use it to learn from past mistakes or to set goals.

Remember: Any planning or working towards a goal becomes relevant NOW and is done NOW.

You focus your attention on the NOW but are still aware of clock time. → You refer to clock time when you made a mistake in the past and learn from it. → Psychological time if you dwell upon it and make it part of yourself.

Is most of your doing just a means to an end? Is fulfillment near you all the time or short-lived pleasure? → Are you focused on achieving, attaining, chasing?

⇒ Your mind creates an obsession with the future as an escape from the unsatisfied present.

Obtaining luxuries makes you act the same way but in a different surrounding. → The only place where true change can happen is the NOW.

All negativity is caused by an accumulation of psychological time.

- (Anxiety, stress, worry) → future.
- (Regret, guilt, sadness) → past.

You cannot be unhappy and fully present at the same time. → If you are unhappy, it's not in the NOW, but in your current life situation. When your life-situation is full of problems, there is no room for solutions to come.

Use your senses fully.

- Just look and truly see, but don't interpret.
- Be aware of the space that allows everything to be.

It's not about solving problems, but realizing there are no problems. → There are only situations to be dealt with in the NOW.

When you create a problem, you create pain. → Decide for yourself not to create that problem.

A lot of your mindset is motivated by fear, which is linked to your focus on the future. → Should a situation arise, you deal with it in the NOW.

You can identify if you are taken over by the psychological time when asking: *"Is there joy, ease, and lightness in what I'm doing?"* - If not, you are not in the present. → Focus your attention on the doing instead of the result. You cannot give full attention to something and at the same time resisting it.

⇒ As soon as you honor the present moment, all unhappiness and struggle dissolve and your life will flow with joy and ease. Give attention to the action itself.

→ You no longer depend on the future for fulfillment and satisfaction.

You can still have and follow goals, but you no longer expect that something in the future will make you happy. → You no longer pursue your goals with grim determination, driven by fear, anger, discontent etc.

→ You won't be inactive because you won't have fear of failure which for the ego is the loss of self.

Knowing that you are not present is presence. Before establishing full consciousness, you shift back and forth between consciousness and unconsciousness. → Eventually presence becomes your predominant factor.

"Normal" unconsciousness is like a background noise which you only hear and recognize when it stops. "Deep" unconsciousness often means that the pain-body has been triggered and you identify with it.

→ The best indicator of your level of unconsciousness is how you deal with life's challenges when they arise. → When you can't be present in normal situations, you won't be able to deal with the problems when they arise.

Most people live in tension and discontent. You should make it a mental-emotional habit to observe your mind.

→ *Are you at ease at this moment?*

→ *What's going on inside you at this particular moment?*

⇒ If you get the inside right, the outside will fall in place.

You should observe whenever there is created a little bit of tension in your body.

→ Self-observing is key at the beginning.

- *Are you carrying resentment of some kind with you?*
- *What thoughts is your mind creating?*
- *What emotions does your body build up because of your thoughts?*
- *Is it something you would choose to have inside you?*

⇒ Either do something about this situation or drop the negativity.

Be responsible for your inner space.

Drop negativity by recognizing you don't want to suffer the pain of carrying it around. →

Simply drop it if you don't need it anymore.

Realize that you can decide between joy and suffering, ease and unease.

First, you accept everything – The next stage consists in not even creating negative emotions in the first place.

→ If you know that certain feelings and thoughts make you sick, you can stop carrying them with you.

See if you can catch yourself complaining. → When you complain, you make yourself a victim. Change the situation by taking action or accepting it.

Always be “here” and not somewhere else. If something makes you unhappy, remove yourself from the situation, change it or accept it totally. → Take responsibility.

Any action is better than no action, especially if you have been stuck in an unhappy situation for a while.

→ When you fear taking action, acknowledge the fear, watch it and take your attention into it. → It cuts the link between the fear and your thinking. Don't let fear rise up in your mind.

Stress is caused by being “here” but waiting to be “there”. → If you have to move fast or run, work hard, without projecting yourself in the future. → As you work, enjoy the flow of energy.

That way you aren't split in half between present and future.

Die from the past every moment, unless you learn from it, which becomes important to the present.

“What-if”-thoughts are mental phantoms and you can't cope with them. - Just with the NOW.

To quickly become present, deep breathing with consciousness helps, as well as feeling your inner energy.

Is the present moment to you a means to an end? Then you are a habitual waiter who doesn't feel joy in the present. → You shouldn't wait to start living. You start creating an inner conflict. → You can improve your life situation, but not your life.

⇒ You should have goals and strive to achieve them, but it shouldn't be a substitute for being.

When you are dissatisfied with what you got, you want to become rich. But even then you will experience lack and inner conflict. → Give up waiting as a state of mind. Come into the present moment as soon as you recognize it.

It's important to have a journey, to know where you are going. But ultimately what's real is only the NOW. → Your destination shouldn't get more important than the steps you are taking right now. Your outer journey shouldn't overlap the inner.

Realize that your outer purpose cannot give you lasting fulfillment. → The outer purpose isn't there to make you happy.

Your past cannot survive in the power of presence, consciously liberating you from thoughts.

→ The more attention you give to the past, the more you energize it. It is only helpful when you learn from it.

You can't understand presence, you can just be present. → That's because in a state of intense presence you are free of thought. → Still and highly alert. Be deeply rooted in yourself. → To have some of your attention always in the inner energy field.

Highly alert as if waiting and being not to miss something, but without tension or fear.

Presence is needed in order to experience the beauty of nature. It is truly observing your surroundings. - Your total presence is required.

The wider the time gap between perception and thought, the more depth there is in you as a human being. When being becomes conscious of itself, its presence.

The more often you watch your mind, the more power you will have as a watcher and the less power does your conscious have. → You have to free yourself from your mind or you will be destroyed by it.

Silence is a potent carrier of presence, so be aware of the silence between words. Be aware of the gaps. → Listening to the silence creates stillness in you.

A group of people in a state of presence create a strong energy field.

Stop trying to understand being, because you can't put a label on it. It cannot become an object of knowledge. → Through presence you get free from the illusion that you are nothing more than your physical body and your mind. → You get free from fear.

Don't get attached to specific words such as "God". → If a word doesn't work for you anymore, then drop it and replace it with one that works.

You should feel your body from within, feel the life inside your body. You are cut from being as long as your body takes up all attention. → It creates mental constructions such as fear.

→ Take your focus away from thinking and direct it into the body, where being can be felt.

Feel from within, don't start thinking about it. Pay attention to whatever you can feel. No one has ever become enlightened through denying or fighting the body or through an out-of-body-experience.

You are your body, so there is no need to fight against it. Underneath it lies the invisible inner body, the doorway into being.

The more consciousness you direct to the inner body, the higher its vibrational frequency becomes. → Don't give your attention away to the mind and the external world. When you are waiting, use that time to feel that inner body. When a challenge in life comes, become deeply present in your body, so fear doesn't build up.

Attention doesn't mean to start thinking about the body, it means to just observe the emotions and feel them fully.

When you are not in your body, an emotion can survive inside you for days or weeks. So place attention to your body and check whether your mind is holding on to a pattern such as guilt or blame. → Forgiveness is to offer no resistance to life – to allow life to live through you. The mind cannot forgive, only you can.

The feeling will get you closer to who you are than thinking.

Being aware of your inner body slows down the aging -process. When consciousness becomes your normal mode, your body-cells can't accumulate time and therefore your aging is going to slow down. → And even if your body gets older, your inner body will remain vibrant and alive.

The more consciousness you bring into the body, the stronger your immune-system becomes. → When you inhibit your body, it will be hard for unwanted guests to enter.

→ Mentally and physically.

When you feel getting sick or you are sick, put attention to parts of your body and feel the life energy inside those parts as intensely as you can. → After that, feel the body in totality.

If you find it hard to get in touch with your body, focus on your breathing first. - Consciously breathe. Follow the breath as it flows in and out of your body. Visualize yourself surrounded by light. Breathe in that light. Don't get attached to any visual image.

Whenever a creative idea is needed, focus your attention on your inner energy-field. Become aware of the stillness. Go back and forth between thinking and inner kind of listening.

When you listen to someone, don't just listen with your mind, but with your whole body.

→ Give the other person space to be.

Being in touch with your inner body creates a clear space of no-mind within the relationship can flower.

Make going deeply into the body a meditation. Make sure there are no distractions, keep your spine erect, relax your body, close your eyes and take deep breaths. Observe your breathing in your lower abdomen. → Don't think about it, feel it. Focus on the feeling. Take your attention even deeper and become one with it. After connecting with your body, look around you without labeling.

Feel your inner body in everyday life, especially when engaged in relationships or in nature.

→ Feel the stillness deep inside. Keep the portal open.

Meditation opens the portal of mindfulness for a moment because it creates thoughtless mind gaps.

Love isn't a portal, it's what comes through the portal into this world. → Don't search for love, but find a portal through which love can enter.

Paying attention to outer silence creates inner silence. The essence of all is emptiness.

→ Pay attention to the space itself, not the things in space.

⇒ You cannot make "nothing" into something, because your brain will identify with it. You cannot think and be aware of space or silence.

People pursue physical pleasure, because they believe it will make them happy and free from a feeling of lack. → In the end it's short-lived satisfaction. It projects yourself in the future again.

True salvation is a state of freedom – from fear, suffering, lack and form past and future.

→ There is nothing that will get you closer to salvation than it is at this moment.

"Love"-relationships often result as Love-hate-relationships.

→ You get addicted to the person with love. You fear to lose it.

→ And it often is a source of negativity

You make your partner a solution for all your problems, you make her responsible for your happiness. → And when the behavior of your partner doesn't meet your needs, your ego will feel attacked. → You make your partner the cause for those feelings.

Every addiction brings out the pain and unhappiness that is already in you. → That's why you try to escape the present moment,

A true relationship is created by intensifying your presence. To disidentify from thinking is to be the silent watcher and observer of your thoughts and behavior.

First, you stop judging yourself then stop judging your partner.

You are already connected with a bond to people, animals or plants. - Only the degree of intensity feels different.

Love cannot flourish until you are free of mind identification and your presence is intense enough to have dissolved the pain-body. - Only love can remain then.

→ At least remain present as the watcher.

Most relationships are not rooted in being and turn into a source of pain and become dominated by problems and conflict. You cannot transform your partner, all you can do is to create a space for transformation to happen.

→ Whenever there is anger or an argument, know that there is a pain in your relationship. Accept that the relationship is here to make you conscious and it will offer you salvation. Even if your partner doesn't cooperate, do it either way. You bring in the light in the darkness.

You can then express your thoughts and feelings the moment they occur. Learn to listen to your partner in an open, nondefensive way.

Give space to each other, because without, no love can flourish. The ego needs problems to survive.

If you are mainly in your head, the distance between you and the emotional-driven women is greater, as well as to your inner body.

→ A lack of presence results in lack of love which results in the women attacking you with blame and criticism. It triggers her "pain-body" which activates yours. Remove the pain-body and the women can express her true emotions to you, as well as you can to her.

Male and female build oneness in a relationship of being. But you need to be at ease with yourself first because only this way your relationship will be truly based on love.

There are "negative" events that are people's greatest teachers. - These experiences made them more real.

→ Whenever something negative happens to you, there is a deep lesson concealed within it. It can show you what is real and unreal in your life.

⇒ In that, all conditions are positive when you accept what is, there is no "good" or "bad".

There is a higher good that includes the bad. Allow it to be as it is.

Do what you have to do, accept what is.

Ego is the unobserved mind and runs your life when you are not present.

→ It cannot solve problems, because it is the problem itself. Many forms of illness are created by the resistance of your ego.

→ You must allow the present moment to be and all of life's dramas will end.

→ No one who is one with himself can even conceive of conflict.

The flow of life consists of cycles, which means up and downs. You have to let the cycles of failure go because otherwise, you refuse the flow of life.→ Dissolution is needed for new growth to happen. One cannot exist without the other.

There is failure in every success and success in every failure.

Many illnesses are created fighting against law cycles. Nothing will ever satisfy you except temporarily. Joy arises from within as the joy of being.

Learn to offer no resistance to what is, allow the present moment to be and you will find peace.

Cycles will come and go, but with dependency gone, there is no fear of loss anymore.

→ When negativity arises, use it as a sign to become more present.

If negative things arise, don't build a wall against them, but let them go through you.

→ Don't give those things control over your inner state.

At a level of being, all suffering is looked upon as an illusion. → Awareness of a deep bond between yourself and all other creatures.

The world as it appears to us now is largely a reflection of the egoic mind. Fear being an unavoidable consequence of egoic delusion, it is a world dominated by fear.

Your inner peace will reflect all beings around you. Make sure not to carry any resistance within yourself.

Surrender doesn't mean to give up or to fail, but to experience the flow of life in the NOW. Inner resistance is to say "No" to what is.

→ Accepting what is frees you from your mind and reconnects you with being. This does not mean you cannot take any action to change a situation.

You don't need to accept an undesirable or unpleasant life-situation. → You recognize fully, that you want to get out of it.

Your psychological and your physical form become rigid through resistance.

Through nonresistance, the quality of your consciousness and therefore the quality of whatever you are doing or creating is enhanced immeasurably.

Ask yourself: *"Is there anything I can do to change the situation, improve it or remove myself from?"* → If so, take appropriate action.

You can still be planning, but stay in the now and don't project yourself into the future.

### Letting go of resistance:

Start by acknowledging that there is resistance. Be there when it happens, when the resistance arises. → You cannot be conscious and unhappy. Even the pain-body cannot survive for long in your presence.

The external conditions that were being resisted also tend to shift or dissolve quickly through surrender.

You can also say "No" to a person or situation when it comes from within. → A "No" that is free from negativity.

Take responsibility for your life. If you cannot surrender, take action immediately.

If you never accept what is, you will want to change a person or situation.

Observe the attachment to your views and opinions. Feel the mental-emotional energy behind your need to be right. Don't energize your argument through resistance. → Only the ego believes that in your resistance lies strength.

Surrender does not directly transform what is, but it transforms you. When you are transformed, your whole world is transformed, because the world is only a reflection.

Anything "bad" that happens in your life. → Use it for enlightenment.

Every time something goes "wrong", know that there is always another side to it.

→ You say yes to what is outside, accept what isn't. Then you do what you have to do, whatever the situation requires.

If you cannot accept what is outside, accept what isn't. → Do not resist the pain. Allow it to be there. You attract and manifest whatever corresponds to your inner state.

→ When there is no way out, there is still always a way through. So don't turn away from pain. Face it. Feel it fully. Don't think about it.

→ Don't let the mind use the pain to create a victim identity for yourself out of it.

Full attention is full acceptance. At first, the mind won't like the NOW, because it is unknown to it.

