

Present Moment Awareness Process

Use this process any time you catch your thoughts going toward the future (or the past) in a way that is making you feel uncomfortable, insecure or anxious. The more you practice catching yourself and bringing your awareness to the now, the easier it will get and the EARLIER you will be able to catch yourself.

- Become aware of the moment
- Notice your body
- Notice your breathing—appreciate your lungs and your heart
- Notice the warm, tingling sensations in your hands
- Feel the life in your whole body
- Notice the sounds around you—appreciate how your ears interpret the vibration and allow you to experience your environment
- Notice the space in the room you are in—feel how the empty space allows the objects to be there
- Notice the light around you and where it's coming from
- Ask yourself, what is right with this moment? What is beautiful? What do you appreciate?

Why does this present moment awareness process work? Because if you stop thinking, by intentionally focusing your mind on the present moment, you stop resisting or worrying—and you feel better. Doing this SLOWS DOWN your thinking.

So, now that your mind is back within your control—ask yourself:

- What would I prefer to think about instead?*
- Is there a different way I can look at this topic that I feel better about?

*Now is a good time to repeat positive affirmations or incantations (in another video).

Be Patient—It Takes Practice

I have experienced the freedom and peace of the Now. But, like most people I used to have a hard time staying there for long.... I would catch my thoughts in the act, bring my attention to the moment, feel relief... and then jump right back into conjuring up future moments in my mind. Then, I'd catch myself again, snap myself out of it and focus my attention back on the Now. I'd experience some relief—at least for a moment or two. But after years of practice I can USUALLY avoid getting sucked into my mind's future fantasies when I know they won't benefit me. Plus, I've developed the ability to imagine what I WANT in the future in glorious detail and to feel the joy of it happening NOW, without the twinge of disappointment that it isn't actually

happening now. This takes practice as well. The key here is that I think about the future when it benefits me, and minimize thinking about it when it doesn't.

Should YOU think about the future?

If thinking about what you want in the future causes you anxiety because you can't help focusing on NOT having it now, then don't do it (until you practice the art of believing in your dreams). Or, if you can't think about the future without worrying about everything that could go wrong, then stop. For you, it would be better to focus on the present moment – not the “life situation” you believe exists at this period of time (the one you resist) but the ACTUAL present moment.

On the other hand, if you can't seem to focus on your immediate surroundings without your inner thinker judging all the things wrong with your current “life situation” – and the future feels like the possibility for respite, hope, relief—you would be better off changing your focus to what you DO want in the FUTURE and GO THERE NOW. The key here being that you must imagine it happening NOW—and believe it—in order to eliminate any suffering.

What it comes down to is the recognition of choice. In this moment, if you become aware, you have the ability to choose to think about whatever makes you feel BETTER in this moment, whether that means bringing your attention to the sensations of the moment, thinking about what's happening from a more empowered perspective, or dreaming of the future in a way that gives you hope or inspiration. The choice is yours and the time to make the choice is, and always will be, now.