# The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle

## How can this book help me?

Many of us spend our time either trapped in the regret-filled past or anxious about a future we cannot control. Yet, we cling to the hope that we can somehow improve our lives, become happier and find enlightenment. At the heart of Tolle’s philosophy is an emphasis on living in the present moment to avoid most of the pain that we usually experience. To this end, the book focuses on the connection between the mind and suffering, offering a variety of perspectives on the numerous self-destructive ways that we use our minds.

This book has the power to help you reduce your anxiety and stress about the past or the future and make your present joyful.

## So, what does this book say?

The book discusses how living fully in the present moment can greatly improve your life and relationships.

The past is just memories of previous present moments, and the future is present moments that haven't arrived yet. There are no benefits to dwelling on the unchangeable past or unpredictable future. By focusing only on the now, you can deal with challenges as they arise instead of being overwhelmed.

Pain and suffering are also created in our minds. A part of us, called the "pain-body" needs us to feel pain to survive, so it creates much of the pain we experience. Anger and frustration are often the pain-body taking control. Even pain that seems to come from external sources is largely self-created from our inner resistance to what is.

Another part of the mind responsible for unhappiness is the ego. The ego sabotages our own well-being and happiness for its survival. Observing the ego at work without judgment helps separate from it.

The book advocates focusing on the body rather than the mind. The body lives in the now and knows what's best for us. Jesus and Buddha spoke of the importance of the body. To be present, we should listen to the body's wisdom and follow its lead.

Two techniques to separate from the mind are observing our thoughts and watching them without judgment. This creates space between thoughts and builds awareness of the mind's constant activity. Another useful technique is "active waiting" - being alert and ready for anything to happen in the now.

Overall, the message is that by living fully in the present, without dwelling on the past or worrying about the future, you can reduce suffering and dramatically improve your life and relationships. Being mindful, observing your thoughts non-judgmentally, and focusing on your body in the moment are key steps to presence and enlightenment.

## Key Takeaways

1. By focusing only on the present – and ignoring the past or future – you can greatly improve your life.
2. A part of “YOU” needs pain to survive, and it creates most of the pain you experience.
3. Observing the mind without judgment is the best way to separate from it, and thus free yourself from pain.
4. Try to exist in a state of perpetual alertness.
5. Living in the present can be hard for your partner, but it can also improve your relationship.