

## The Now — Essence

A central message of meditation is that this wakeful state and this world as we see it and know it is also a dream. That is, it is a limited state of awareness and the project of life is to wake up! Wake up from this level of normal awareness, also. Wake up and see this world, your life, your loved ones, with spiritual awareness, or higher consciousness. As long as we live in normal wakefulness, we're not living to the full. We're not seeing the essence and the reality of things. We are seeing only partially and, as Paul said, "The partial vanishes when wholeness comes." We are seeking to see life with the eye of wholeness, with a soul perspective rather than a sense, an ego perspective.

### How to Practice

Level 1 — To begin The Now technique, you simply watch the play of your thoughts and feelings, the play of your awareness, in general — watching the mind, it's called, as long as by mind you understand it to include the feelings you're aware of as well as the thoughts.

Level 2 — After watching your flows of awareness for two or three minutes — or five minutes, if you prefer — you begin the second step of The Now technique. Notice now, as you watch the thoughts and feelings come and go, that they fit within your sense of time. Some of your emotions and thoughts are about the past; some are about the present; and some, the future — your plans, your hopes, for example.

So, during this next phase, as you watch your flows of awareness, you mentally note — as if you were putting a little stamp on them — which of your thoughts and feelings are in reference to the past, the present, or the future. When a past thought occurs, you mentally say "past." When a future thought or concern occurs, you mentally apply the word "future." And when it's a thought about five minutes ago or even two minutes ago, that's "past." When it's even about what you're going to do as soon as you finish meditation, that's a "future" thought. Be very accurate. If it's past — even if it happened ten seconds ago — mentally label it "past." And if it's near future, it's still future, label it "future."

So, for the next few minutes, label, identify, past, present, and future thoughts and apply your mental stamp as you sort out your flows of awareness in a new and elegant way. Label your flows of awareness past, present, or future. Proceed for the next five minutes or so.

Level 3 — Now that you've been able to notice how much of your turbulence relates directly to thoughts of past, present, and future, you can do something beautiful to significantly reduce turbulence and to accelerate your ability to center in your true self.

In Level 3 of The Now practice, you tell your flows of awareness that the past is dead, it's already happened, it's gone, and that you do not wish to think about the past for the rest of your meditation. "I will not think about the past. The past is dead. The past is gone." And you continue watching the flows of your awareness.

However, whenever a thought about the past or a feeling from the past comes into your awareness, mentally say "past," just the word "past" and dismiss that feeling, image, and thought from your awareness. It will likely come back and try again so once again mentally say "past" and let go of that thought and feeling. Just dismiss it.

So, for the next five minutes of your meditation, continue to allow present thoughts and future thoughts whenever they occur to your awareness, but past thoughts are not welcome. Whenever they occur, you say mentally "past" and dismiss them.

If, on occasion, you want to be more emphatic and remind yourself of what you're doing, you could say "past" but also add the declaration, "The past is dead," and this will help you let go of past thoughts and have flows of awareness which are free, throughout your meditation, of any past thoughts and feelings.

And this is as far as you go in The Now technique for the first three days. Just get the knack of labeling your flows of awareness as past, present and future, and then let go of past thoughts and feelings whenever they strive to come into your awareness throughout the meditation

## **Benefits**

The Now technique enables you to cut through most of your turbulence and experience a centered state of being which helps you to wake up and live a better life. To really see your child, to really enjoy the meal, to truly love, and give, and serve, and share, to be present and enjoy what's going on rather than distracted most of the time. In The Now you will find your quality of life is at its richest. So, wake up and enjoy living now!