

The Nature of the Moment

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Life unfolds on a platform of time and space that we experience as a series of moments, each one a single frame in the long filmstrip we call a lifetime. Every moment carries the residue of every moment before it, indexed by the mind into a structure that suggests a past and a future. And yet the moment itself is essentially timeless. Try to reach out and grasp one. Before you can hold it, it is already gone, replaced by the next, which is gone as soon as it arrives. All you can ever actually grasp is the content of the previous moment, now living only in memory. The moment you are experiencing right now is empty of content except for whatever your own awareness brings to it. A moment is an artifact of consciousness, deeply personal. Without you inside it, stamping it with your reality, it would not exist at all.

Each moment carries this dual nature. On one side it is linear and

conditioned, a platform of experience traveling from a distant past into a distant future, dependent for its existence on the mind's belief in time. On the other side, the moment is timeless, a doorway into unbridled expansion and a state of total freedom. To truly catch the moment is to become timeless along with it, to go beyond the place where past and future exist, beyond your own conditioning. When the beliefs, fears, expectations, and fantasies that make up that conditioning loosen their grip on your awareness, you begin to experience timelessness, and within that timelessness lies unconditional expansion. The only real restraint on consciousness, always, is self-imposed.

Both of these experiential modes are available to us in every instant, and in every instant we make a decision, conscious or not, about which way to travel. Do we keep drifting down the river of time, carried along by memory and expectation, one more episode in a familiar story? Or do we choose to reside fully within this one moment, through the simple strategy of being right here, right now.

Being right here, right now is itself a state of meditation, a vehicle for infinite expansion in every direction, one that carries us back toward who we really are, whatever that turns out to be. Here, the vehicle is not the river of time with its past, future, memories, and expectations, but the river of consciousness itself, whose only essential characteristic is unlimited, ever-expanding growth. Within that unlimited expansion is found the truest ecstasy there is, and it is entirely free, waiting patiently inside each of us.

For a deeper exploration of the self, self-actualization, and the nature of time, see *Freedom: What It Is and How to Achieve It*.

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