

The Inside Job of Living in the Present

When I am in the Present, I am free to be exactly as I am. I fully accept myself as I am at this very moment, and I flow with my unfolding experience of life. The moment fear interferes with this connection, I'm startled out of the present; suffering and mental oppression begin, and I'm drawn into conditioned patterns of self-defense, projection, and acting out.

Our pervasive fear of simply 'being' has traumatized us individually and collectively since the dawn of time, and devastated our sense of what it means to be alive. But who and what are we petrified of? Could it be that on a basic level, we are terrified of our own believed mind sets of being annihilated, the fear of which has produced a culture of anxiety and violence that dominates our world at large?

The very acknowledgment and acceptance of this fear is the return to the Present. We have glimpses of Being Present at random moments: when we find ourselves quietly enjoying nature, when a baby is born, when we fall in love, when a loved one dies, when we're stilled by beauty. At times such as these, we find that our minds are "still" enough to allow our bodies to connect to the Present, without interference, judgment, or fear. But more frequently, we're "out of time." Our awareness is veiled by unconsciousness, hidden by the fear of Being. Adapting to a divisive world, we expend great energy protecting ourselves from external attack -- both real and imagined -- and from past worries and future terrors. We judge, blame, compare, despair, envy, justify and deny -- so busy surviving that we become "human doings" threatened by the challenge to Be. In the name of surviving this fear we create endless systems of self-defense: armies, governments, and religions, cultures, communities, families, and intimate relationships, which, though not necessarily harmful in themselves, can obscure our innocent, singular, unguarded connection to the moment.

Today we have reached critical mass in this accumulated fear of being, as a river of terror floods our world. Difficult as these dangers are, they also present us with an opportunity to examine and transcend the fears that stand between our lives and ourselves. They represent a chance to free ourselves from the internalized terror of the Present. Becoming conscious of individual fear (as well as collective paranoia) can bring you into a more intimate relationship with your own self-oppression, and help to unleash your natural freedom to be who you are.

Living In The Present can help you to embrace responsibility for Being in this miraculous world, and to respond with love and acceptance to your own obstacles. Courage is not the absence of fear, after all, but the willingness to live with fear without becoming its hostage, and to make room enough in your heart for what is, one breath at a time.

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