

REAL HEALING REAL AWAKENING

*A Comprehensive Guide to Overcoming Suffering and
Expanding Your Consciousness*

NOW IS WHERE THE ACTION IS

You can only live your life in the here and now. You cannot act yesterday or tomorrow. You may set an important goal for the future, but you can only make your way toward achieving that goal by what you do now, and the now in every day until you get there. What you are experiencing now, therefore, was created by you, by what you thought and did in the past, including the people you have drawn to you. The future does not actually exist. It is just a set of possibilities based on what you envision and then put into action on a daily basis. The outcome of your daily action creates your future. Your future is within your control. If you face, accept and positively do your best to work with whatever life presents you in each moment, including your own humanness, a fulfilling future is assured.

What you may be thinking about your future now is just that, thinking. It is not your future. It is just your mind thinking.

You cannot change the past. The past is gone. Like the future, the past does not exist except for what resides in your mind's memory. When trapped emotional energy is triggered, for example, it may have come from a trauma from years passed, but it is flowing through your consciousness in the now from your memory system that is in your mind now.

The unawakened ego does not understand this. Our ego thinks about something that might happen in the future, or something that may have occurred in the past. We have an emotional response to the thought and because of this, our ego thinks that something real just occurred. But it is no more real than watching a movie or reading a novel. Because of this misunderstanding about the nature of the mind, the ego gets lost in its own self-created drama and becomes largely disconnected from the reality of what is in the now moment. Our ego does not know how to make use of what the mind has to offer, such as its powerful ability to imagine, for example. As a result, the mind gets lost and out of control. Our imagination can become driven by fear and we can lose touch with what is real. For the average person, most of what the mind is thinking is not about anything that is actually real now. The mind is full of imaginary stories about what we are afraid might happen, or what we wish would happen and we are continually acting as though these stories are real. There is that aversion and attachment mesmerising the ego again.

Only on the level of conscious-awareness can we begin to harness the mind's power.

Our emotions and feelings are telling our conscious-awareness vital information that we need to know in each moment. As I have mentioned before, if the emotions are disharmonious, it is either because the mind is confused in its thinking, or because the actions of someone else is not for our highest good. Our higher feelings are there to guide us forward, to

inform us when some idea, or something is for our highest good. Emotions and feelings are there to prompt our conscious-awareness to pay attention, to observe and assess the reality of the situation rather than blindly react from old fearful imaginings like our ego does.

As we put steps 1,2 and 3, into practice we can *feel* what is going on within us and know, or at least discover, what these feelings mean in regards to caring for our vulnerable humanness and honouring our potential.

Whether it is emotional healing or achieving your goals, skillfully managing what you are experiencing in the now will determine your future success.

When we accept that our life is a journey of continual learning, growing and awakening, we can then harmoniously work with what comes our way. We are no longer in conflict with it or emotionally dependent on it. We can see that every moment is an opportunity to accept our humanness, to know ourself better and to gain a greater mastery of ourself. We can be more aware of what our human mind is doing with that moment and how it gets itself all tangled up and lost. We can relax into the moment we are in and see the benefits of it. We can step forward with our conscious-awareness, our open heart, and be the skillful manager of our life in every now moment.



*What I think, feel and do now, and in the now of every day,
creates my life.*

GUILT, RESENTMENT AND WORRY RUINS YOUR FUTURE

One of the things we discover while we are learning to care for our minds is how much time we devote to not accepting the past and worrying about the future. Be certain that guilt, resentment and worry (or anxiety, a more

acute form of worry) are a complete waste of time. Not only that, they are the destroyer of a positive future.

Accepting the past does not mean accepting unacceptable behaviour. The same goes for forgiving others. An essential factor when learning from the past is learning how to honour and care for yourself now.

Forgiveness arises from the awareness that carrying hate and resentment within your mind is self-destructive and keeps us dependent on, and vulnerable to, those we have bad feelings for. We can still say no to someone we have forgiven. We can still hold them accountable for their actions if we can, but be very aware that seeking justice is not necessarily going to bring healing and a bright future.

Guilt is about not forgiving yourself. It comes from not claiming full authority over your own life, from not acknowledging your human right to make mistakes. Take charge of your life, learn from your mistakes and move on. That is how to grow and mature. If you have harmed another through your mistakes, then making amends may be important to your moving on, but mentally thrashing yourself is violence and should play no part in this process. Self-condemnation is the biggest mistake we ever make. Be aware that acceptance is another word for forgiveness. Forgiving yourself and others therefore, is essential for your healing and wellbeing. You are learning to act as an empowered adult, rather than continue to react as an oppressed, helpless and angry child.

Paradoxically, by accepting the past and learning from it can transform the way we feel about it. In a way it does change the past because we are healing our memories. A difficult past can become a benefit rather than be a burden because it can enable us to become stronger and more mature, wise in other words.

Worry is taking all the fear and confusion that your human-self has accumulated from the past and creating an imaginary future with it, and a scary one at that. In reality, the ego knows nothing about the possibilities of the future. It only knows its own confused perceptions of the past.

To justify this confused way of thinking, the our looks into the past

and says, “considering what the past has been for me, I am just being realistic.”

The ego even thinks that worrying is being responsible. Our ego thinks it is doing something tangible by worrying. “If we don’t worry about a loved one then that it means we don’t care,” our ego says itself. Of course it is important to have concern for a loved one, who is in need of help, and to do all we can for them, but worrying is not an action, it is indulging in futile thinking that does not do anything other than harm ourself. In reality, worrying does not help our loved one in the slightest.

Worry disempowers us. It makes us a slave to fear and negative conditioning. What the ego does not stop to realize is that because of its worrying, it has been continually making poor decisions that keep attracting to it the same old unhappy experiences. The ego is the unhappy author of its own drama.

Instead of being lost in our own self-created scary movie, we can look squarely at what is the reality in front of us and work with it as positively as we can. A large part of the work is sorting out our own human confusion by paying attention to, and taking compassionate responsibility for, what we are feeling. This inner-work is absolutely essential to gaining the clarity to see life with the right perspective.

It would be a safe prediction to say that our future won’t be bright if we spend our time worrying and resenting and beating ourself up with guilt and so on. Our future depends on how we take care of ourself today, everyday.



I am in charge of my life. With Love as my guide I will create peace, fulfillment and abundance.

HUMAN BEINGS LEARN BY TRIAL AND ERROR

Having gained a few insights into the nature of our troubles, our ego has a tendency to think that it has got it all figured out and becomes attached

to this belief. We don't truly know if we have genuinely learned something, however, until we have attempted to put it into action. In doing so, our ego discovers that there is a lot more to learn. Our ego's pride tends to get upset at this and falls into thinking that it is all too hard and that life is unfair. The ego just makes it hard for itself by trying to grasp at the reward without doing the real work.

Unrealistic expectations placed on children to get things right first time is a very sad and common theme. Children often impose these expectations on themselves as well. As a therapist, this is one of the most common stories my clients share with me about their dysfunctional childhood experiences. Once their awareness is awakened to the destructiveness of this form of discipline, it is often a shock to my clients to realize how much their lives have been effected by it.

In reality, one of the most joyful and satisfying experiences a child can have is the freedom and encouragement to explore new things. There is a certain thrill about approaching a new project in various different ways, suffering a bit of frustration at times, but with some gentle guidance and encouragement, finally mastering a new skill. If the parental guidance is appropriate, what the child will remember the most is the excitement of the achievement. All the mistakes and frustrations along the way will not be regarded as a problem, rather, they will be regarded as the natural stepping-stones to success. As a result of this positive mentoring, the child grows up confident in his/her natural abilities and creative power. Disappointments are taken in one's stride without a sense of reduced self-worth.

How different it is when a child is expected to get a task right the first time. When this does not happen, the child is criticised and ridiculed when he/she naturally lacks understanding or stumbles over new challenges of coordination and problem solving. Fear and shame quickly invades the experience, and trying new things soon becomes a source of anxiety. Lack of self-confidence and creativity is the inevitable result, along with a limited ability to effectively face life's challenges.

In reality, trial and error is a natural and essential mode of learning for any human being. Denying this is a fast-track to suffering. Everything takes time to learn, no matter how academically clever we are, no matter how naturally adept we may be in something.

Playing golf is a good analogy for this. You can digest a library full of golf books and DVDs but it is a very different matter when it comes to placing that little white ball onto the tee and slogging it straight and high down the fairway, especially if there is a group of onlookers. If you think learning to play golf is hard, try changing an old ingrained habit, such as regret or worry. It can be done, but it takes time, persistence and a lot of trial and error.

It is impossible to grasp the nuances of such complex tasks in a short time. Repeated experience is required to simply gain awareness of what there is to grasp.


How long did it take you to learn your trade, or to gain your diploma or degree? How much effort did you put into that? Do you think mastering your human mind is going to be any easier? Think again. It is your life's work, and be sure that everything else depends on it. Being skillful at caring for your mind is the foundation of all your happiness and wellbeing in every area of your life.

Be very aware, therefore, of being hard on yourself for not getting things "right". Fully mastering some deep issues may not even be possible in your lifetime, but learning to skillfully manage these issues certainly is possible. Other issues go less deep, and with persistence can be completely overcome.

I am routinely helping people manage and even overcome self-defeating behaviours, just as I have overcome the chronic depression of my past. Often more orthodox therapists have given up on these people. My clients are often told that medication is their only solution. I have had the pleasure of showing them otherwise.

To achieve this success, each of these people have learned to accept and care for their human-self, using their own adapted variations of this

powerful process. Their success was assured because they did not give up. They have learned to open their hearts to what is in front of them in each moment and make the most of it.

 *Don't expect perfection on the way to perfection.*