

Living in the Here and Now

By Kevin Duffy

Conceptually it is easy to understand that living in the here in now is a desirable state of mind. When you read or hear someone say that you should live in the here and now, or live in the moment, it sounds correct. Even so, how do you do it? How does this differ from the belief that you should live in the here and now? Belief is one thing, but doing is another.

When you believe that something, it is a concept that you accept at face value and hope that it will someday prove to be true. Since you do not know it to be true it is only a hope to be true. The problem with a belief is that it does not necessarily shift your consciousness to the state that the concept is describing. It is akin to hearing in great detail about a wonderful place that exists and not be able to visit it for lack of knowledge on how to get there. All you have left is a belief that the place is as it is described.

Would it not be better to be able to go beyond the concept and the belief and actually experience directly that place or state of awareness? To go beyond conceptual knowledge and belief is non-conceptual knowingness, that is, direct experience beyond belief and concept. This is how you can live in the here and now.

Living in the here and now or living in the moment is exactly that. The key words to these phrases are here, now, and moment. These are all words that are related to time. These clues are very interesting, but how does that help us? Well, let us investigate.

Can anything really happen in the past or the future? Not as far as our awareness goes. We can only be aware of now. When you think about your past, you are thinking about memories in the present moment. When you think about your possible futures, even a few seconds in the future, you are thinking in the present moment. Suppose you have a spoon of chocolate ice cream on the way to your mouth, and you are thinking about what it will smell, taste, and feel like when it is your mouth. That thinking will occur in the present moment. It is not until the ice cream is in your mouth during the present moment will you actually have awareness of the ice cream in your mouth. Before you only had awareness of the thought of the ice cream in your mouth. So you see there really is nothing that happens outside the present moment.

How long is a moment? When does a moment begin and when does it end? A moment never begins and never ends. It just is and time is not.

What is really meant by living in the here in now is living in the here and now outside the babbling that is occurring in your mind. The uncontrolled awareness inside your mind is often the thoughts of emotional past and future events. In the meantime, you are oblivious to the world around you. There is always something amazing happening around within your awareness. You are missing the greatest show in the universe if you are not living in the here and now.

Pretend for a moment that you could leave your body and occupy another species' body on a planet 100 light-years from earth. Further pretend that this other species was not very similar to us except that it was intelligent and self-aware.

Do you think you would have any problem living in the here and now for the first couple of years as you explored your body, your surroundings and the miraculous things that were happening in every moment, breath, and movement of your tentacles? You are living that life right now, but you are probably spending most of your moments asleep and missing the miracles. Wake up and smell the roses.