Living in the Now — Lesson 2

Techniques for Living in the Now

Living in the now is something that can bring joy and peace to your life. While it sounds like being fully present in your life is easy, it's something that can feel difficult.

The reason is because most people have a mental image of how living in the now "should" be. However, what you get might be different from what you imagined. As a result, you may end up feeling unsettled or unhappy.

Why It's So Hard to Be Present

Being present can be difficult to achieve because doing so can trigger feelings of discomfort. The discomfort comes from thinking you must be completely within the present without slipping up.

When something does happen to shake your focus, it can make you feel like you've failed to achieve living in the now. However, being present isn't something that has a success or failure scorecard. It's simply learning how to pick up on the situations when you're not practicing living in the moment and gently course correcting.

It can be hard to be in the present because you might get caught up in the mundane. There's nothing peaceful about the stresses of life. When the dishwasher floods or the car breaks down, it can be easy to start daydreaming, rather than focusing on what's currently going on in your life.

Living in the present is something that can take practice.

It's easy to fall back into bad habits. You can find yourself handling life the way you've always done. Your habits are your "go-to" response and your brain can automatically fall back into those thought processes.

When this happens and you realize that your mind and your reactions are opposite of living in the now, you can always hit reset. Just because you think you blew it doesn't mean that you did.

Everyone will have times when they forget to focus, especially when life gets hectic. However, as soon as you're aware that's happening, you can pause and start fresh.

It can be hard to be present when you're in the middle of something that's stressing you out or making you angry or sad. This is totally normal. It's common to have difficulty concentrating or focusing when you're in the middle of a crisis.

That's why you want to focus on learning to "live in the now" even if your life seems peaceful and calm at this moment. Then when difficult things happen, you'll be able to maintain your peacefulness because you've spent time practicing.

Some people struggle to be present because they fear living in the moment means they're going to be handing over control. Sometimes, it's easier to think that if you worry about something or fret over it; you can prevent bad things from happening simply because you pre-worried.

However, living fully in the moment isn't about giving up control. It's about focusing your awareness so that you don't waste valuable energy worrying about what has happened or what might happen. Instead, you're experiencing fullness of life exactly where you are.