

What is this moment's treasure? There is so much happening right now as you read these words. Thoughts, feelings, desires, sensations, and the whole world of objects and events are all taking place in this very moment. And yet we often look outside of this moment for happiness, satisfaction, freedom, and ultimately our true nature. When you look outside of what is actually happening, all you can ever find is an idea or fantasy. That is what is meant when we say someone is not in the present moment. It is not that they actually are somewhere else, it is just that they are looking somewhere else and the only other place to look is in their own mind at a story about another time.

The tricky thing is that our stories about the future or past are very convincing. The mind is a good storyteller. And every now and then, one of our stories comes true: the thing we were imagining in one moment actually happens. If we are honest, we have to admit that this is quite rare. Most of the time, instead of being able to say, "I told you so," we really should say "I never imagined this happening!" However any psychology student will tell you that an intermittent reward is more powerful as a reinforcement than even a constant reward. We are so powerfully rewarded when a story our mind tells comes true that we simply overlook the many times our stories turn out to be irrelevant.

Where is there a more constant reward? What can we pay attention to that is accurate and true? One thing we can say about our present moment experience is that it is always accurate and true. We do not have to wonder if it is going to come true or not, as it already has! So the content of our present moment experience is always true. Even our thoughts are truly thoughts. It is undeniably true that we are thinking whatever we are thinking, even if the content of the thought is not very likely to become true. So every experience we are having right now is a true experience. It has some reality and significance, unlike the content of our thoughts which may or may not turn out to have significance...

If our present moment experience is always present and real and true, why do we pay so little attention to it? Why aren't we filled with wonder and curiosity about this endless parade of true, real experiences showing up in every moment? It's not a lack in the present moment. It's our simple misunderstanding that what matters is what happens, when what makes a moment satisfying and worthwhile is the awareness of what happens.

If our focus is completely on what is happening, then there is always something better that could be happening instead. And since we all have perfectly good minds that can easily tell us what could be happening instead, we focus even more on what should or could be happening. If what

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matters is what happens, then it makes sense to pay attention to what we want to happen, or at least to what we don't want to happen in hopes that we can then prevent it from happening. If the important thing is the content of our experience and by extension the content of our thoughts, then of course we will pay attention to that.

But what if the most important thing is what is aware of what is happening? What if what really matters is both the ultimate nature of awareness and also the specific quality of our awareness in this moment? This is the 900 pound gorilla in the room that nobody is talking about. The awareness of the present moment is a constant feature of every present moment. The awareness is a complete mystery, and yet it is the source of every experience of joy, peace, happiness, satisfaction, and love that we have ever had. The only difference when something we want to happen happens is that we usually pay full attention to those experiences. And in that full flow of awareness there is always a quality of our Being which is satisfying. The satisfaction is not in the content of our experience; it is in the flow of awareness.

Recognizing this fundamental truth about the source of our joy, peace, and love can dramatically simplify our lives. It turns out it doesn't matter that much what is happening. The real treasure in this moment is always to be found in the awareness of this moment, and not in the content of our experience. So it's not that important if something better is happening or not. Discovering this simple perspective is like finding out you live in a candy store. Everywhere you turn is another goodie!

Beyond that, is the recognition that this endless supply of goodies is what you really are. You are not the content of your experience; you are the awareness that brings life and joy to every experience. Talk about not having to worry about what happens! Nothing that happens can change what you are, and what you are is the biggest treasure. It is hidden in plain sight right in front of you, always in the experience you are having right now.