

Hello there and thank you for joining me today. And I want to say a big thank you to those of you who have left reviews on iTunes, I have a few of them now. So, I'm very excited about that. We haven't really marketed this podcast or asked for reviews outside of the people who are listening. So, if you get a second, I would love, love, love it, if you could leave a review on iTunes. And it's easy to do if you're on your phone, you just go to the show, the Healthy Leader Podcast, and then scroll all the way to the bottom to leave a review. Or if you want to, you can go right to the show notes. And I provided a link right there and quick little directions on how to do it. So, if you could leave a review, I would love it.

Alright, so today we are talking about the power of the present moment. Now, you are probably already familiar with this concept. You know that there isn't a lot of value in dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. And the idea of being in the present moment is fairly simple. And we know that it has value. When we are in the present moment that is when we can focus on a task at hand and basically master whatever it is that we are doing. It could be playing an instrument or calculating numbers or listening attentively.

So, when you are able to focus you can get in the flow. And we all know what that feels like to be in the flow of something and to be in the moment and enjoying what is actually going on. And the idea is that if we are present and paying attention to the present moment to this literal second in time, that that's where we find peace and joy and contentment, and well-being.

Now the idea is simple. It can certainly feel extremely elusive, especially if we don't want to be in the present moment. If we're thinking, no thanks. this present moment for me right now sucks. You know, and this is true if you are in physical pain, or emotional pain. So, you might be thinking, okay, listen, this is a great concept at all, but how is it going to help me especially when I don't want to even be here. So today, we are going to talk about how you can actually use this concept of being in the present moment in a way that is meaningful in a way that will support you right now, in this present moment.

So, before we dive in, I want to encourage you to listen to the last episode, if you haven't already. And that episode was on intentional self-awareness. And in that podcast, I review a process that you can use to increase your self-awareness. And that's directly linked to being in the present moment. And I give you a meditation that you can use that will guide you to specific areas for you to be aware of to for you to be present within yourself. And this is really cool because this tool helps you to create a little bit of space to begin to witness yourself, and to see yourself and basically to see your personal reality and what is going on with you mentally, emotionally and

physically. And when you see your personal reality, you also see your personality, what are your thoughts and your emotions and your actions. And when you can see it, then you can change it if you want to.

And it's not always an easy thing to do to see ourselves. It's not easy to see ourselves because we are really wrapped up in what's going on around us or what we are thinking about what's going around us and being able to step out, takes presence, it takes consciousness. And it takes having the ability to have self-awareness and to see yourself in moments and in the present moment. And so, you can have self-awareness around past moments, future moments, and then also present moments. And so today we're talking about the present moment. If you haven't already, I invite you to go back and listen to the podcast right before this one intentional self-awareness.

So, I want to start off by sharing a story with you all. Wow, that is about 25 years old. And it takes place in a small classroom inside of a Unity Church. Where I was studying to become a unity minister. And we were studying the book *The Power of Now*. And in fact, that was the name of the class *The Power of Now*. And that is a book by Eckhart totally. And the minister Donna was talking about the value of the present moment. And the idea that this is where our joy and our peace comes from. And we are in the present moment. And I distinctly remember this woman raising her hand, I could see her now she's about five rows in front of me. And she says, listen, I get this, I understand the spiritual concept. I get it in general and let me tell you what's going on with me. My husband has cancer, he is in the hospital right now. Our small business is flailing, and my sons are having a really hard time. And she's extremely emotional, of course. So please tell me Donna how the power of now and being in the present moment is going to help me at all. And you could feel a little bit of tension in the room. And Donna and her beautiful way reflects back to this woman, hears her. And then at the end of seeing her and acknowledging how she was feeling what was going on for her asks the simple question, and what is wrong now?

And the woman was like, did you hear me? What's wrong is my husband, small business, my children, and she read her reiterates it. And again, Donna and her calm presence and just beautiful way of reflecting and being present with somebody reflects back to our understand and what is wrong right now? And so, this kind of conversation went back and forth a couple of times until Donna asked one last time and what is wrong right now? And the woman responded by saying, well, my nose is running. And Donna said, can somebody get her a tissue?

And I would never forget that moment because it was tense. I got the concepts of the power of now. And I also understood what this woman was saying. She's like, listen, things are not good

right now. So how is this even going to help me. And the point was brought home extremely profoundly that right now, in this moment in this room, in this second, what is wrong, and the truth was that nothing was wrong in that moment. All that was, quote, unquote, wrong was that she needed a tissue. And it showed me how difficult it can be to be in the present moment. And I will never forget it because that is when I understood truly, for the first time, the power of the present moment.

And I want to tell you why this is important. It's important, first and foremost, because it can bring you peace in the present moment. It can take you out of your story, just like it did with that woman, and bring you into the moment and to understand what is in this second in time. And so, it can take us out of our stories about how bad the past has been, or how bleak the future might be. And to just bring us right here to this moment. And this moment, is where you can use that intentional self-awareness and think, okay, what is going on with me, mentally, emotionally, and physically. And for that woman, she went right to physically, my nose is running. And you can solve that in the present moment. And understanding and being self-aware to what is going on with you first and foremost in the present moment and this exact second. And then you can also be aware of what's going on in the external environment, you know, what are other people saying what is going on with the traffic or transportation or what exactly is this person saying to me. And so, you can be present to both yourself, first and foremost, and then also to what is going on around you.

And when we are able to recognize the moment, it's an opportunity to gently pull ourselves out of the whirlwind of life. And it allows us to back up a little bit. And being able to that all by itself, in and of itself is healthier, right? it detaches us from the momentum of our stories. And so many people tell me that they feel like their lives are out of control that they don't have time to work out, they don't have time to meditate or to get six hours of sleep. And the great thing about this is it doesn't take any more time to be conscious to be present. It does take mental energy. It does take awareness; it does take practicing shifting your mind and your thoughts. But it doesn't take any more time. Right. It doesn't take more time to notice your emotions and to pay attention to them and to be present in the moment. It doesn't take any more time to notice what is going on with you physically. And it doesn't take any more time to notice what is going on and to just be present and when we create that space now we are no longer sucked into it. We are noticing it we have this higher level of awareness, which when we do that, we are literally using a different part of our brain.

I remember there was this course that I was taking in it was called Organize your Mind and it was

part of a certification for being a wellness coach. And there was this great slide that was created by Dr. Carson, and Meg Moore, who's the head of Well Coaches. And it shows the different regions of the brain that light up during different brain states. And so just going to try to describe this to you, if you can imagine two intersecting lines like a cross, or a small T with a high part on the on the T, and along the x axis, or the horizontal line is your degree of focus or control, basically, of your thoughts. And on the left side is high control. And then on the right side was low control. And then along the y axis, or the vertical axis, is the range of thinking that's at the top and then at the bottom is experiencing, and right in the middle of those two lines at the center intersection at the center of the cross, if you will, is meta-awareness.

And meta-awareness is when you are witnessing yourself. This is the place where you are aware of your thoughts and your emotions and your physical state. This is the place when you are witnessing yourself. And this intersection right here is the place this space, the mental awareness, the meta-awareness of where you transform, it's where you reflect on yourself in your own learning. And it is where you develop higher order thinking and create that space and gain perspective that you just cannot have when you're in the rat race and when you are consumed by it when you are thinking of the past and in the future. And when we have that space, then, and this is another benefit of being conscious of the moment, then you can be conscious of what it is that you get to do in that space, instead of just circling around, and not even being aware of it and being stuck in the thoughts of the future the thoughts of the past. And that emotional and mental habit pattern. Feeling like you're on the same hamster wheel and that you can't get off.

I was just listening to I think it was a podcast where I heard that 90% of our thoughts are recycled from the day before, 90%. And if that's true, then that means that 90% of our emotions are also recycled. And so, if we are practicing the meta skill of being aware of ourselves in our moment, and when we master that and notice what is going on with ourselves, then we can change those thoughts and those emotions. And this is why one of the very first things that I do with people when I'm working with them on habits is to understand whether or not they know what they are doing in the first place. Are you even conscious of what you are doing?

So, for example, how did you reach the bottom of a chip bag? And then you're like, oh, my gosh, I'm a little surprised, I didn't even realize that I ate all of them. Or another example would be if you know, have had an argument with your teenager and then afterwards you're like, oh, darn it, I did it again. I you know, I wasn't listening, I flew off the handle, I you know, I said things that I said I wasn't going to say anymore. Or here's a really good one, you find yourself deep in the internet. When your project is sitting on your desk, and an hour has gone by and you're now behind. If

that's you, you're certainly not alone. And the first step is actually realizing that you're doing it in the moment. And that means being conscious and present of it noticing, oh, shoot, right now I am eating.

And I am eating off of my protocol. I'm eating chips that are not on my protocol. Oh, shoot, you know what, right now I'm starting to say things to my child that I said I wasn't going to say. Right now, I am. On the internet, when I really should be working on my projects, we just have to notice what's going on in the present moment. Because we can't bring ourselves back to focus, if we don't realize that we're off the path to start with. And so being conscious in the moment, when you have the urge to eat, to drink, to yell, to stop working on your project, it's key to be conscious of that because that is when you have the opportunity to bring yourself back. And that's when you can say, ah, okay, here it is. This is the moment this is where I get to be consciously present and not resist what's happening or judge it in any way but to sit and be with it. Now, here's the warning. what eventually happens at this point, when we start becoming conscious, when we are watching our behaviors. We have cognitive dissonance, there's a part of us that is intensely craving chips. There's a part of us that really wants to continue yelling, and there's a part of us that wants to stay on the internet, because it feels good. There's a self-soothing going on. It's an old pattern. And it feels better to stay in that pattern, even if it's not our ideal action. And we also simultaneously don't want to be doing it. So that's cognitive dissonance. We are in this place where we want it, and we don't want it is that angel in the devil place. So that's part of the experience as well. And of course, it's uncomfortable. And I invite you to be with it anyway, to be conscious in those moments as well. To look into that and to chip back and look around and notice what's going on? Are you in front of the TVs zoning out? Are you working? Were you really hungry? And you didn't have food planned out? Were you bored? Or are you just stressed? When you got sucked into the argument? What were you thinking? Were you thinking that you're so tired of repeating yourself? And, and you're tired of your child not listening? And maybe they're not going to be resilient enough? Or maybe she doesn't understand how to take responsibility? What is it that you're thinking? And what problem are you solving?

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And to truly answer these questions in some form or another. Figure out what it is that you are looking to change in that moment. What were you thinking would make it better in this next moment, if you were to eat the chips, yell at your kid or just go on the internet? And the idea here is that what we are understanding is how we're trying to get out of our present moment and think that the next moment will be better if we take this particular action. We want to get out of the sucky moment and get on to the next one. So, we take a break, we make ourselves feel better with food, or alcohol or shopping. And when you listen carefully here, we even make ourselves feel better with worrying, or thought spinning, or telling stories about how awful things are.

Now, I know that that sounds really crazy. Why would anyone choose to worry on purpose or to be anxious? Or to create anxiety? And the answer is because it's what we know. It's comfortable to stay in our old patterns, we're comfortable. In our old ways, we're comfortable in our thought patterns, we're used to thinking a certain way. And we know that nerve cells that fire together wire together and that the pattern of our thinking and the pattern of our emotions, even if they are negative can actually feel comfortable to us. So being present to that, in the moment being present to those thoughts and those feelings is uncomfortable.

And so, what I want to do is to give you one idea that will help you in those moments. And I have to tell you that this thought was life changing for me. And it comes from a lot of things. But when I was thinking about preparing for this podcast, my mother-in-law came to my mind. And throughout the years, she had this one thing that she would say to me and to people around her heard her say to my children, and the thought was, this is your moment. And she would say it's my daughter in reference, you know, to going on stage or to going to a rehearsal, or if somebody was sharing that they were preparing for a test or an audition, she would say this is your moment. And I actually remember her saying it to me when I started teaching fitness classes and was nervous about it. And going off out the door. I think she was watching my kids. And she said this is your moment, right. And the idea is that this is your opportunity to show the world what is within you. And I love that idea. And I've expanded it over the years, I've expanded it to not only include those special moments, if you will, those big moments. But all moments. This moment, this moment, right now, as you're listening to my voice, this is your moment, this moment, when you are listening to my voice, when you are thinking about what you're going to make for dinner, when you are thinking about what you're going to say at that meeting. This is the moment, this moment right now, when you weigh more than you want to, this moment when you haven't landed the promotion, this moment when you don't have the dollars in your bank account that you want or that project isn't finished, or the relationship isn't the way that you want, or the circumstances aren't the way that you want this exact moment as things are. This is truly the only moment that you really do have.

Eckhart Tolle, he says that your entire life is made up of present moments that there is no past and that there is no future. And I want you to really think about that. The past and the future really only exist as concepts or constructs in your mind. You cannot go back to the past; you cannot relive what happened. You can only think about it in this moment. You can't fast forward to your future. You can only think about it in this moment. And this second right now in this moment is all that we get. And what this moment means is completely 100% dependent on you and what you think about it and how present you are to it. Your future moments are not going to be better than this one. I say that again, your future moments are not going to be better than this one. Even if you have a broken leg right now or you're suffering from COVID or dealing with a certain challenge right now, the future isn't going to be better than this moment when things change. And I know that that can sound extremely mind bendy, but here's why. Because your future moments are created by your thoughts. Not by your external circumstances. Your capacity for joy and peace and fulfillment has nothing to do with your external circumstances. Your joy and your happiness have to do with the stories that you tell yourself about those circumstances right now in this present moment. And if all the thoughts and all the stories are available to you in this moment,

which they absolutely are, then they're also going to be available to you in the next moment. You're not going to have any more capacity for joy in the next moment than you do in this minute.

Now, you might be thinking, no, no, no, Traci, I know that I'm happy when I have more money in the bank account. And I'm less stressed, and I feel better. But the truth is, you aren't happier because of the money in your account. You're happier, because of your thoughts about that money. Your reasoning might be that you're safer, or that you're more secure, or that you don't have to stress anymore. But I want you to think about that reasoning, when you go to that future moment, when you are actually there, it isn't the money in your account that actually makes you feel better, it's what you think about that money. It's you are thinking that you're safer, or that you are more secure. And so, then you create your emotions in that moment. And your ability and capacity to do that in the future is no different than your ability and your capacity to do it in the present moment.

And I'll share with you that I was just reading an article by a psychologist who works with the ultra-rich as in mega-mega billionaires who have more money than they could ever spend in their entire lifetime. And the psychologist works with them and was saying how many of them have this new level of stress because of the money, right, most of us would think that they wouldn't be worried at all, they've got no worries in the world. But they are worried they're anxious and depressed and stressed about their relationships. And whether or not the relationships are authentic, and whether people are being kind and nice to them for altruistic reasons, or because they're really trying to get their money. Or they're worried about losing the money and spend every waking hour thinking about the money and what they would do if they lost the money. Or some of them weren't sure of their purpose in life anymore.

So, you can see that the money itself, having the money or not having the money, is not the issue. It's what we think about the money. And no matter what the dollars are in the bank account, we all have the capacity to think the thoughts that we choose. We have the capacity to create joy, and happiness in every moment, if we are aware of it. And this is true also for people who achieve fame or success, or who reached their weight loss goal, or finally find the perfect mate, or who found their dream home. The moment you achieve your ultimate goal, you have this capacity for joy and fulfillment that is no greater than the capacity that you have right now, in this moment,

I want to say that just because we are going for a weight loss goals, or the perfect mate or more dollars or looking for a dream home, just because we are growing and looking to level up in a

variety of ways that doesn't mean that we have to sacrifice our joy of this present moment. It doesn't mean that that moment when we achieve that goal is going to be better than this one. And I have to tell you that this is pretty much a mind-blowing concept and one that I am still practicing. I found myself thinking earlier today actually, when this project is done, then I'll be able to, you know, take a break, and I'll be able to settle down and feel better in the future. Then I'll be at peace, I'll be less stressed. And I had to catch myself and remind myself that that's just a story. And I am noticing when my brain wants to go to those future moments. And what my brain is doing is basically enticing me to get out of this present moment and to basically deny this moment for the sake of the next one. And I want to stay in this moment, and love where I am. And really enjoy this moment. And I know that as I practice doing that, and when I'm really consistent with being present in the moment and recognizing that this moment has all of the joy and all of the fulfillment and happiness available in it, then that is me living my best life. I love that. And there's really nothing more exciting and fun and exhilarating than understanding that I don't know if you can tell that I'm feeling it right now and I want for you to feel it to. To feel it in this moment to know to truly know that this moment has all the joy and happiness that you can muster available to you in this exact moment that you can create peace regardless of your weight and your bank account or how your kids are behaving.

And with this really great quote by James Thurber. And he says, "Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear, but around in awareness". I want you to look around I'm looking around with you need to be aware that there isn't a moment in the future that's better than this one. We can plan to level up and to grow and to do all sorts of things. And those moments are going to be amazing to when they come. But when we practice being in this one, and truly realize that we can be happy here, then guess what, in those future moments, we can do it again and again and again. But just do it right now. In this moment, be aware of your capacity to create joy, and fulfillment and peace and whatever it is that you want in this moment. To be here, and to be present with whatever is going on and to notice it and to be with that as well. If it's not joy or fulfillment. To just be present to it and to practice being present to whatever emotion is there for you. And doing that, in and of itself allows us to live life to its fullest. The full range of emotions, the full spectrum, the full beauty of just being alive.

So, this is your moment, I invite you to be in it to be in it in your fullest way possible. So, thank you guys for being with me in these moments. I know that I love being with you. And I want you to keep creating amazing moments by being in them. So, I invite you to do that today as much as you possibly can. And do it right now. Be in your moment because this is your moment.

Hey there if you are ready to take your Wellbeingness© to the next level. Come visit thewellness.coach where I've got lots of free resources and make sure that you type in thewellness.coach (not .com) and I will see you there.