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Right Now

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Right Now

When someone says "I want this, right now," the words convey a sense of immediacy and also of demand. In a different context, such as when we enjoy fine company in a relaxed environment, we might recognize that our pleasure is very much in the present, "right now." The quality of each experience of "right now" determines for us whether we judge it as being positive or not.

Many of us are at times oppressed by thoughts that almost everything we think of doing must be done right now. If we move from one task to another without pause in response to the insistent thoughts, we will grow not only tired, as will anyone who is busy with many occupations, but we will become spiritually dry, moving ever farther from having an abiding sense of peace. We are capable of accomplishing many undertakings in one day, but when we accompany each of them successively with even the briefest acknowledgment of our purpose, every one of them is experienced appropriately as being "right now" while we are involved in it. Rather than conforming to strident thoughts that distort all that we are doing into one continual rush to completion, we engage many separate events with our personal motivation and with our own reasons for engaging in whatever occupations we accept as our responsibilities. In this latter mode, we are fully invested peacefully in each enterprise. We will grow tired, but with a sense of fulfillment rather than spiritual weariness.

The kind of thoughts that seem to demand that everything be done immediately, actually lead us away from living in the present, since we do not bring any of our toils to an acknowledged completion. In a true paradox, when everything must be done "right now," we are continually driven towards some undefined future when all the tasks we falsely believe are of uniform importance will supposedly be completed as a whole. Rather, when we treat each particular undertaking as something to which we give our full attention until we bring it to a conclusion before moving on to the next, we truly live in the present. "Right now" is the gift of the present, not the future. But to appreciate the gift, we need to allow ourselves a moment's reflection before moving from one task to another.

If we are so occupied with our daily occupations that we do not pause to differentiate one aspect from another, we will help ourselves greatly by separating out the many aspects of our day in a later time of reflection, perhaps 10 to 15 minutes at the end of the day or some other time of our choosing. In such a privileged environment for mind and heart together, we can invite or allow at least some of the discrete incidents of our day to appear as they were - each with a beginning and an end with its own sense

of completion. We create an opportunity to recognize, for example, that we wrote one email message before composing another, each a complete act, and perhaps with different degrees of satisfaction. We will, in this present spiritual exercise of gratitude, make contact with the graced realities of the many "right now" experiences we recently had.

Each and every day, if we choose to pause and reflect, "right now" will become a great friend, not a taskmaster.