

Discovering the Present Moment when Our Mind is Thinking about Our Future

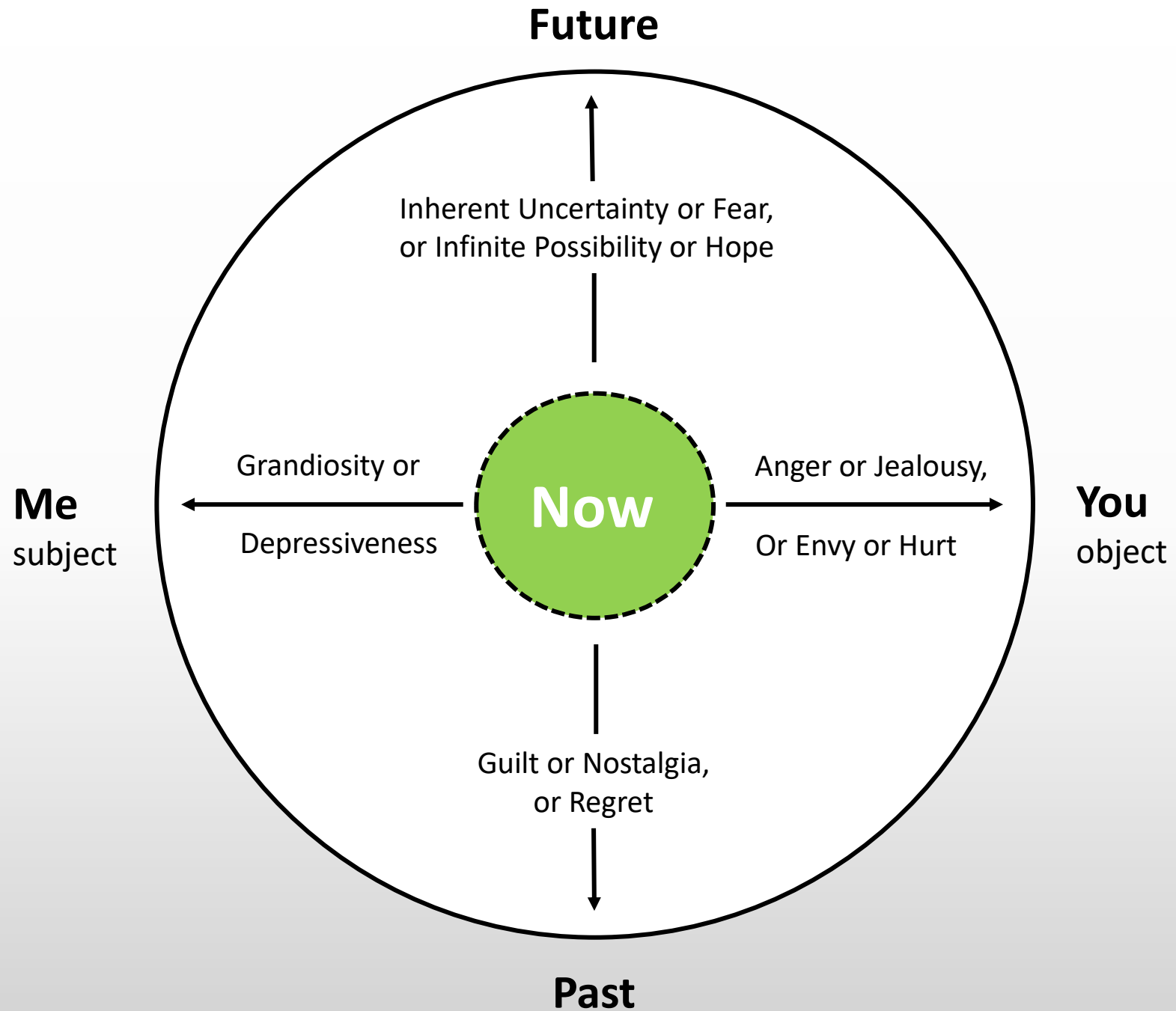
by David Tillman – January 6, 2021 – www.lifesjourney.us



“None of us can control the future, and trying to do so only creates distress. If we cannot enjoy life now, how do we imagine we would enjoy ourselves even if should attain our goals? When self-avoidance becomes habitual, we delude ourselves into thinking that this will cease in some make-believe future.”

(The Mandala of Being, by Richard Moss, page 211).





The Mandala of Being ¹

- Now:
 - Beginning of Ourselves:
 - Moments of grace
 - A sense of wonder, gratitude and love
 - Deep joy and contentment
 - This is our natural state
 - Now moment: “a place of pure awareness or pure being”
- “When I am not right here, right now, in the simple fullness and presence of my being, where have I gone?”
- “The further we move from the center (now), the less adapted we are to be present and the more we actually contract into an unshakable identification with our own separateness.”



[being present in the moment - Bing images](#)

The Past ²



- The beliefs or stories we have about the our past, or the past in general.
- Stories of anger, regret, blame, feel guilty about, feel ashamed of, feel nostalgic about, or feel proud of
- These stories become the emotional basis for interpreting the present.
- Often, we project the past into the future, at the expense of diminishing living in the present moment.

The Future ³



- Stories we imagine about the future
- Our hopes, dreams, plans, fears, and worries about the future
- “Many of tend to primarily identify with the future.”
 - “We use the energy of hope or fear to rationalize our choices.”
 - “It is actually the way we sustain the basic survival orientation” of our emotional self.

ME – the subject ⁴



- Ways we objectify ourselves
- “In the Now-moment, we are as we are, and nothing can be said about who we ultimately are.”
- “Any **me** that we can think of is always elsewhere.”
- “Anything we can think about ourselves is just a story or belief about who we are.”
- “**Me** stories always falls into two basic categories:
 - Depressive, we berate or negate ourselves
 - Grandiose, we praise and inflate ourselves.”

You – the object ⁵



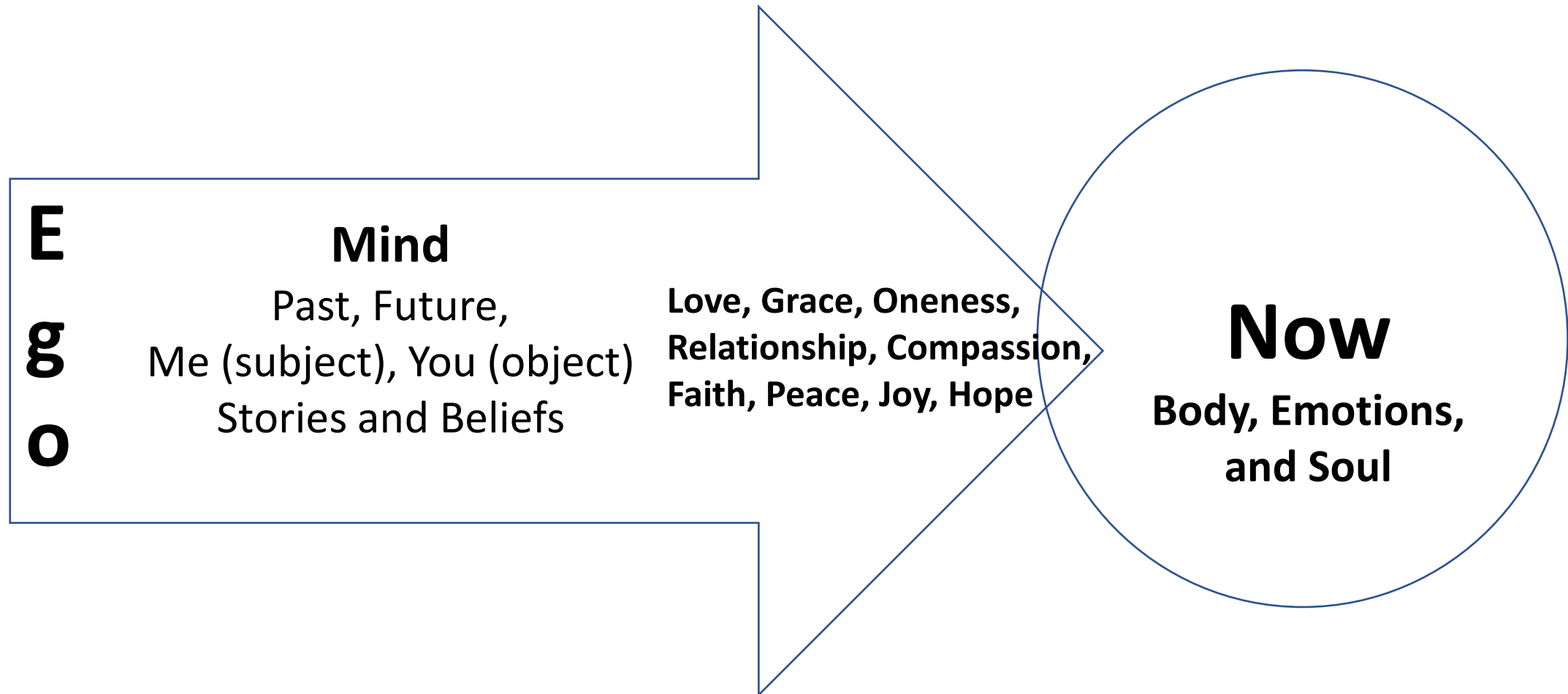
- “You can be anything we perceive as being elsewhere.”
- “Money and God are among the most powerful **you** stories.”
- “Generally, and most significantly, **you** tends to be other people.”
- “The You position contains our beliefs about how others should or shouldn’t be, and particularly our beliefs about how they are that angers or hurts us.”
- “Every **you** story injects a particular emotional quality into the present moment – anger, sadness, happiness.”

Moving Towards the Now ⁵

- “Fear tends to rule us as we move further into the four positions.”
- “Love becomes our deeper understanding as we return to the center.”
- “Negative emotions are not the problem, but are signals of the manner or direction in which our mind have left the present.”
- “Instead of remaining victims of these emotions, or fearing them, or feeling ashamed of them, we can begin to appreciate that their onset reflects our degree of adaptation to the present, and that offers us the opportunity to return our attention to the Now. The moment we do, most often these emotions quickly dissolve, or at least we can face them directly in a creative and transformative manner.”

Moving Towards the Now ⁵

Moving From Our Ego to Now, the Present Moment



Moving Towards the Now ⁵

- Meditation, prayer, mindfulness – practicing being in the Now
- Listening to others - letting go of tending to your own stories/beliefs
- Telling our stories to others and hearing them tell our story back to us
- Spending time in nature; hug a tree, view a sunset, listen to nature
- Relationships with family, friends, co-workers, community
- Involvement with organizations, groups, and life-supporting causes
- Aging – we get wiser as we age
- Expand worldview: travel, language, awareness of others
- Caring for others; care and support with time, talents, and money
- Reaching out with love and compassion to a person who has angered you

Questions on Thoughts about Your Future:

1. When I think about my future, it is.....? (exciting, distressing, scary...)
2. What do I frequently tell myself about the future?
3. How has worrying about the future served me and those I love?
4. As a child, how did your parents talk about the future?