

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, MD, page 211.



The Mandala of Being

by Richard Moss, MD ^{1a}

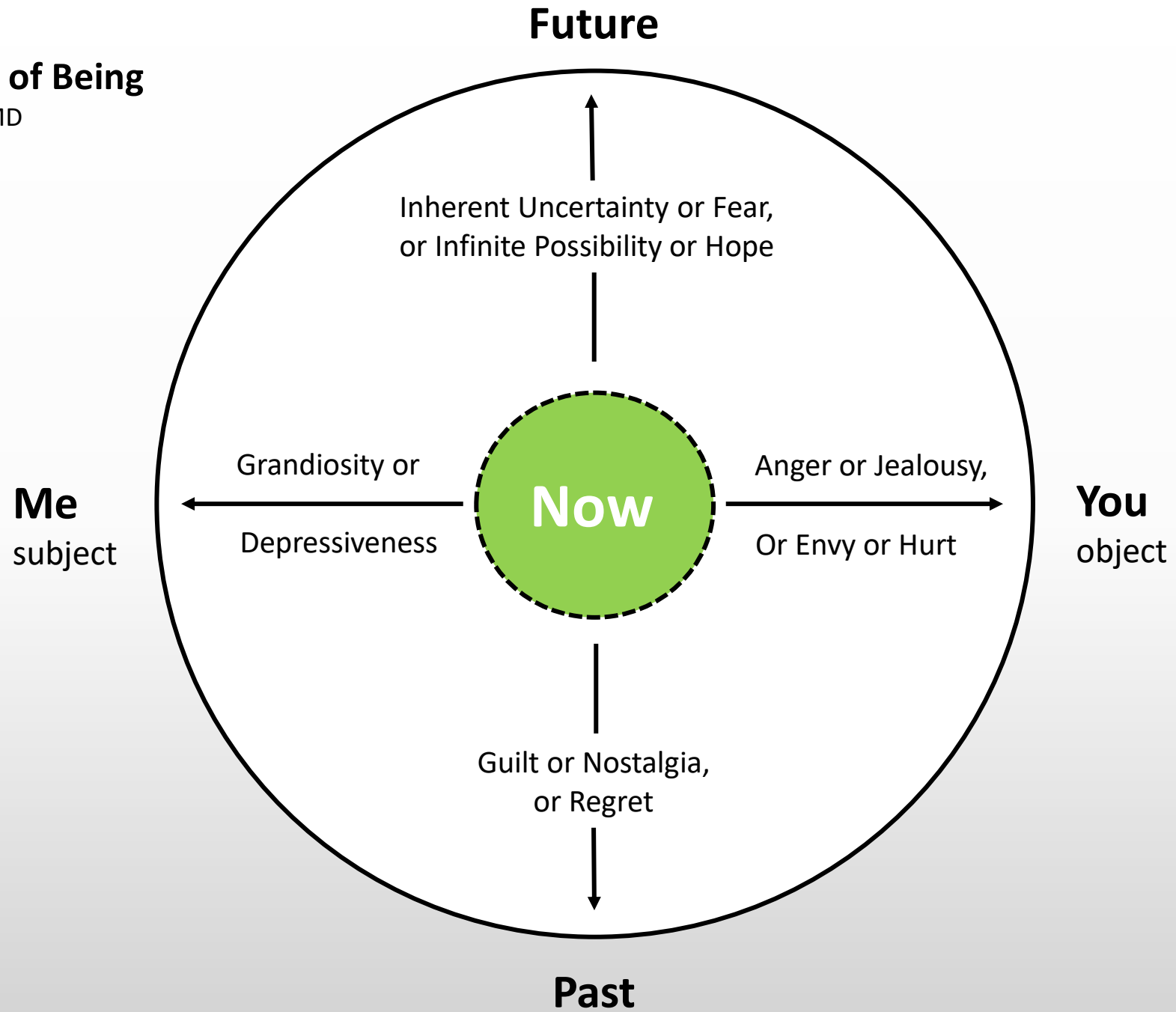
“Ask yourself, ‘When I am not right here, right now in the simple fullness and presence of my being, where have I gone?’ ...you will see that there are only four possible directions your mind can carry you at the instant you leave the and now of yourself.”

“The Past, Future, Subject (Me), and Object (You) – are the four directions our minds are drawn in when leaving the Now.”

“The Mandala of Being provides a model for self-inquiry into the specific emotional dynamics that govern our lives at each of the four outer positions. At the same time, it provides a practice of Self-remembering, reorienting us towards the Now, where we can live as our authentic and spontaneous selves.”

The Mandala of Being

By Richard Moss, MD



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



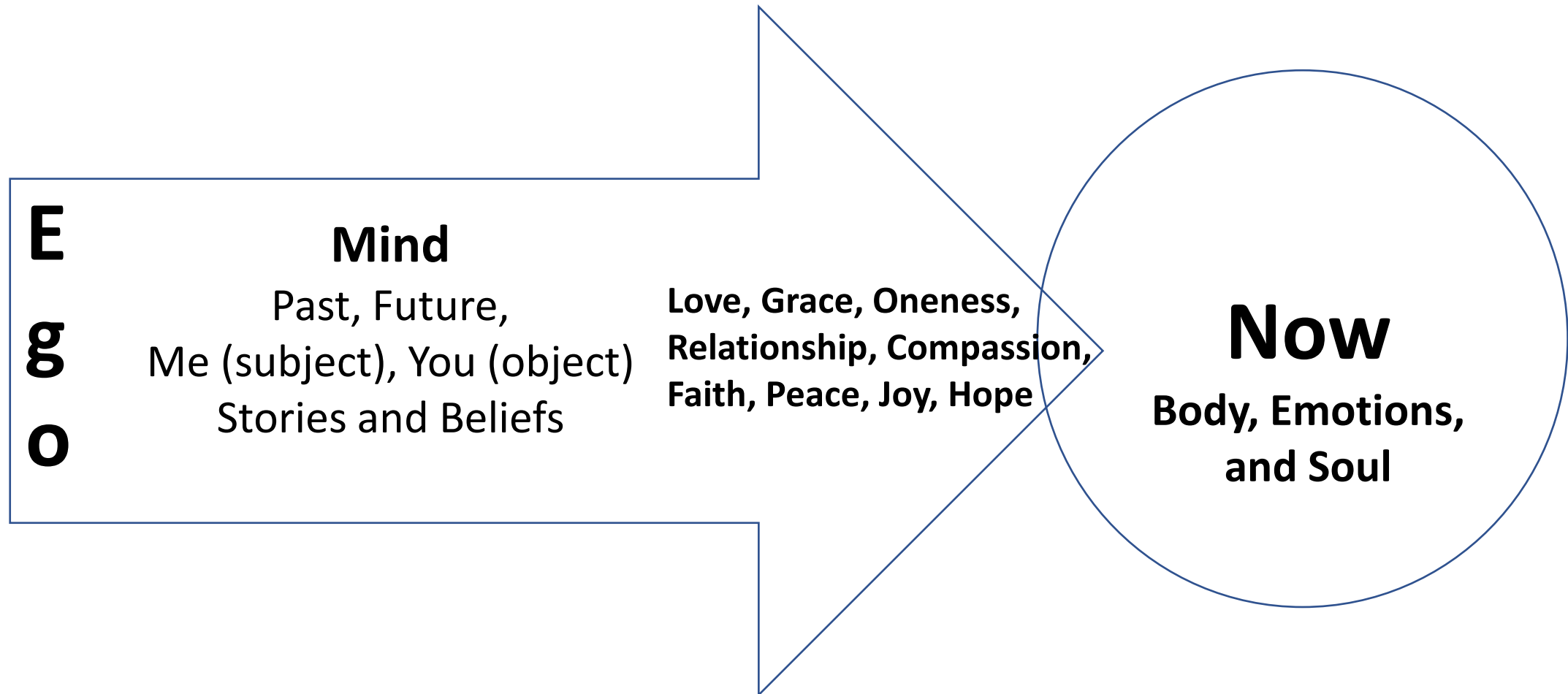
- “You can be anything we perceive as being elsewhere.”
- “Money and God are among the most powerful **you** stories.”
- “Generally, and most significantly, **you** tends to be other people.”
- “The You position contains our beliefs about how others should or shouldn’t be, and particularly our beliefs 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 ⁶

- 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 often get wiser as we age
- Expand your worldview: travel, learn a language, more 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

Moving Towards the Now – Exercise ⁷

“What we know only in our heads is easily overridden by the first feeling that takes us out of the Now and sends us into our stories. But when we actually have the experience of presence, our stories simply have no power.”

“In my (Richard Moss) seminars, I divide the group into pairs and have each pair work together with a Mandala arranged on the floor...use four pieces of paper or cardboard as position markers, labeling them.”
(Now, Past, Future, Me, You)

Moving Towards the Now - Exercise ⁸

“Each member of the pair takes a turn walking around the Mandala and speaks his or her stories aloud in each position.”

“The other partner takes notes so the person doing the inquiry can refer back to them later. The scribe can also provide additional support by repeating back the specific questions that help to focus the inquiry.”

“When I am facilitating people in the Mandala work, I always repeat their basic stories back to them using their own word and intonation...Hearing what they have just said seems to assist them in staying connected to the stories they are working with, because it keeps the mind from jumping away.”

Moving Towards the Now - Exercise ⁹

“Grasping the potential to return the mind to the Now is the key to the Mandala work, It is the starting point, and the ending point, of every inquiry. It is crucial that we remember again and again; who we really are always begins Now.”

“By doing this work you have the “opportunity to realize that everything you think about yourself, others, the past, and the future is just a story.”

“You must actually feel the effect of each story in the present and accept responsibility for the emotional environment you have created within by believing and repeating these stories to yourself. You are the creator of this environment, no one else.

More Information on The Mandala of Being

In his book, *The Mandala of Being*, Richard Moss outlines a detailed process with reflections and questions. This process will be helpful as you begin to share your stories, and listen to other's stories, from the Mandala of Being positions of Now, Past, Future, Me and You.

The Mandala of Being – Discovering the Power of Awareness, by Richard Moss, MD (New World Library, Novato CA, 2007).

For more information go to:

[Richard Moss | Awakening Essential Transformation](#)

Small group, with a partner, or by yourself:

Questions about Your Future: 10

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?