



Insights December 2023 The Importance of a Future Tense

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Let me make sense of a future tense. Note the cute rhyme 😊 We all live in three tenses- past, present, and future. The past is our memories, our biography, and our history, Visit someone with Alzheimer's and you see how important the past is, Past events shape your development and influence your personality. The present is right now. Much of meditation emphasizes *in being in the here and now and in the moment*. What I am talking about is the value of having a future and how important that is in your life.

Look at an example of how no future changes everything. If you ever had a chance to visit a family member or friend in a Hospice Unit, this will make sense. Then and there you will discover how much of life and conversation revolves around the things happening in the future. They include plans for the weekend, holidays, vacations, events, and trips. Suddenly, on that visit, you will be discussing things what did you have for lunch or how do you feel?

Here is yet another way to appreciate how much of life is wrapped up in the future. Before the era of robots building cars, there was an interesting question. Which day of the week produces the best automobiles? And the answer is, may I have the envelope vole, please? It is Wednesday. The reason is that on Monday and Tuesday, workers are talking about their last weekend. On Thursday and Friday, they are discussing what they will do next weekend. Thus, only on Wednesday does full production occur. This can be applied to many other work settings.

What I am saying is that having a future, something to plan for, and an event you look forward to is integral to your life. You go to school to get into college; you attend grad school for a future better job. You work long hours for a great vacation. You look forward to your children's graduations and marriages. You work all your life so you can retire. We go toward the light at the end of the tunnel. As a psychiatrist, I want to know that the patient will be there for the next session. Life without a future can be very painful and bleak.

Yes, appreciate your past and celebrate today. But have things in your future!