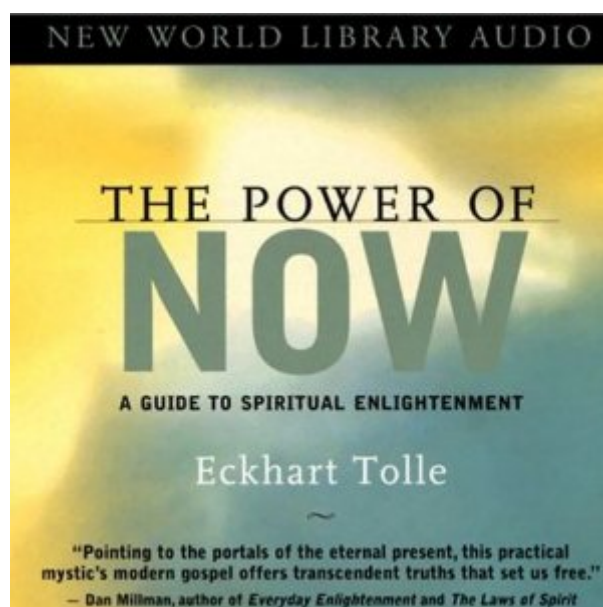


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# The Power Of Now



## Synopsis

Eckhart Tolle is emerging as one of today's most inspiring teachers. In *The Power of Now*, already a word-of-mouth bestseller in Canada, the author describes his transition from despair to self-realization soon after his 29th birthday. Tolle took another ten years to understand this transformation, during which time he evolved a philosophy that has parallels in Buddhism, relaxation techniques, and meditation theory but is also eminently practical. In *The Power of Now* he shows readers how to recognize themselves as the creators of their own pain, and how to have a pain-free existence by living fully in the present. Accessing the deepest self, the true self, can be learned, he says, by freeing ourselves from the conflicting, unreasonable demands of the mind and living present, fully, and intensely, in the Now. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have refrained from writing a review of this book for nearly a year and a half, being content to simply practice what Tolle has expressed so simply - remain in the present moment for that is all we have. After nearly three decades of practicing meditation to become enlightened (some day) I found it disheartening to conclude that I wasn't really getting anywhere, yet I was reluctant to give up the effort. Then Tolle popped into my life like a much needed life preserver, showed me who I really am, and put an end to my thrashing about in self-created whirlpools of despair - when you discover you are the ocean itself the whirlpools peter out in embarrassment. Don't read this book in order to feed your mind, stroke your ego or validate your beliefs. Read it in order to learn to free yourself from

pain and delusion. It is obvious when reading certain reviews that some people are looking to add mind stuff to their inventory and then to demonstrate what a fine mind they have with an erudite and academic rebuff. They will have to remain content with a mind dominated life, always looking for something outside themselves to give validation and meaning. At some point, however, if they are lucky they may tire of that and take the opportunity to practice living in the now. It takes courage to jump into the unknown and discover the freedom and joy in living life moment to moment. Perhaps you are ripe for this book like I was. Even so it was not always easy to let go of cherished beliefs and practices, but ultimately it is the only thing you can do if you really want freedom. Tolle shows how conditioned we have become in a gentle and easy manner, leading you by the hand all the way to the door of freedom. But it is up to each one of us to open that door.

... I do in fact like this book, despite the rating I gave it. I agree with basic teaching in Tolle's book. Enlightenment can be found in releasing attachment to the mind and by experiencing life directly in the moment. By letting go of the past and the future, we abide in the present, until even that fades into a luminous emptiness. My problems with the book do not stem from the lessons so much as with how they are presented. First of all, Tolle presents the material as if he has pulled out all of these amazing tools for enlightenment out of a hat, like some kind of magician's rabbit. In my opinion, that is just a little dishonest. Instead of just suggesting "watching the watcher" so offhandedly as if he had just made it up on the spot, it would have been nice for him to acknowledge the use of such a method existing in India for thousands of years. Or when he teaches the method of bringing attention to the "inner body," as he calls it, he could have at least brought up the mozhao and shikantaza methods of meditation in China and Japan respectively which do just exactly that. Also, Tolle has this really terrible habit of making simple mindfulness much more mystical than it actually is. It's a little misleading. And he makes the mind sound Evil with a capital "E." He should have emphasized more strongly that it is not our thoughts and emotions, but our relationship to them that is the problem. There is no "pain body," only bad habits learned over a lifetime. Why the need to make it so mysterious and magical? Why the need to disassociate our learned behavior and neuroses and make them into some parasite inside you with an agenda of its own? Much better to teach that thoughts are simply thoughts.

I picked up "The Power of Now" in the "New Age" section of the bookstore. I was determined to make the reading about "spirituality" a short episode in my life... and I was probably right, as far as the reading goes, that is. I got the book and continued reading at home, and, as I often do with study

guides and textbooks, started underlining what seemed most important. Soon it became harder to separate the important from the unimportant, because it all seemed important! Then, I stopped, put down the pencil and said: "Wow!" Where did this book come from? Why aren't we hearing about it on CNN? Reading it felt strange at first, as it demanded my total attention: either I was drawn deep into it, or not at all. Do you like to eat while reading? Well, this book will make you feel ridiculous if you try to eat and read at the same time! The book showed me that I have a pretty thick mold of the mind to break through, and it took me very far on the first day, even farther after that. The message went beyond what I would probably recognize on my own. After all, I was (and still am but to a lesser degree) one of those constant thinkers who mistakenly believe that it's good to think all the time but almost never stop to see, hear and feel the essence of being. Although the message in the book seems familiar and simple, in the end it provided exhaustive answers to the few questions that I had and also those that I wouldn't have thought of before. Amazingly, it also managed not to raise new ones. What it did was grab me by lapels and put me into the present moment. Over and over again, it told me what it means, how to enter it, offered a few different methods, and suggested that with practice many opportunities exist to enter it.

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