



The Power of Today... of NOW

by Matt T.

“When I am anxious, it is because I am living in the future. When I am depressed, it is because I am living in the past.”

— Author unknown

That quote hits close to home for me. It reminds me how easy it is to drift into the past or race ahead into the future — and miss the only time I actually have: **right now**.

There’s an old Senegalese proverb that says, “If you wait for tomorrow, tomorrow comes. If you don’t wait for tomorrow, tomorrow comes.” Either way, tomorrow shows up — so why not focus on today? Or as the Chinese proverb puts it, “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best is now.”

Abraham Maslow even said, “The ability to be in the present moment is a major component of mental wellness.” I’ve found that to be deeply true in my own life. When I root myself in today, I’m calmer, clearer, and better able to handle whatever comes.

The Trap of Intention

“We are always getting ready to live, but never living.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Do or do not... there is no try.”

— Yoda

Those words sting a bit, because they’re so accurate. I’ve often confused **intending** to do something with actually **doing** it. But intention without action is just a comforting illusion.

It’s like this: some people intended to come to this retreat, maybe even talked about it or meant to sign up. But only those who actually registered and showed up got the benefit. It’s the same with my recovery. I don’t make progress by meaning to work a step, call someone, or attend a meeting. Thinking about it, wanting it, planning it — none of that is recovery.

When I don’t follow through, it’s almost always fear. Fear of doing something new, fear of failing, fear of the unknown. I’ve learned the best way to convert an intention into an action is to just **do it as soon as possible — often before I feel ready**.

Establishing Positive Daily Habits

“You will never find time for anything. If you want time you must make it.”

— Charles Buxton

That quote is a powerful truth. If I wait for time to magically appear, I'll be waiting forever. I have to create it.

So what does that look like? For me, it means building small, steady daily habits that keep me emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually healthy. Here are some examples:

- **Taking my daily “pulse.”** Spending time in quiet, journaling, checking in with myself.
- **Practicing gratitude.** Not forgetting the little things: waking up, breathing, a warm bed, food on the table.
- **Staying connected to my recovery community.** Making calls, going to meetings, sharing honestly, listening deeply. Isolation is never my friend.
- **Remembering I'm human.** I need food, exercise, downtime, and sleep. That 10:30pm solo movie might not be worth it.
- **Letting go of harsh self-measurement.** I try not to judge outcomes or obsess over progress. Recovery often sneaks up on me, and I only see how far I've come by looking back. So I just keep doing the next right thing.

There are countless other daily habits I know would benefit me. So why not start **today**?