

Embracing true 'new' in life allows for better times in 'now'

Question: I recently heard you speak in Ontario, Canada, and you referenced our present time in history as being the "Now Age" as opposed to the "New Age." I happen to identify strongly with this myth of civilization's renewal — could you expand my perspective?

Recently, as I was whizzing through the colorful streets of Greenwich Village in New York City, having yet another fearsome taxi ride, one of my traveling companions blithely exclaimed, "Well, one thing's for sure, the New Age is definitely over."

After I stopped laughing, I realized that the sentiment she expressed was a direct reference to a perceived failure, not just of 21st century utopian ideals, but the absurdity of any age or epoch which philosophically promises redemption. The idea that the New Age was "now over" struck a chord in me. My word choice of "now" versus "new" is a play on words aimed straight at the absurd human penchant for affixing dramatic, glorifying labels upon this brief breathing time we have on earth. This new and improved age portrays human destiny as being mysteriously aided by the unlikely and preferential motions of planets or stars, and even benevolent, celestial entities. This concept bears a conspicuous scent of rescue!

The trouble with pronouncing the dawn of a New Age, of course, is that by necessity, you also introduce the flip side of the conceptual coin, which never lags too far behind — Old Age. I wonder how welcome that age would be? Maybe our current age is not old or new. Maybe it is just the only one we will ever have. Referencing it as "now" means we understand that our destinies are presently self-contained within our own hearts and hands. I feel now, more than ever, that we need to rouse ourselves from bewildered passivity and childish desires for celestial rescue.

My teacher Sun Bear used to say, "If you do not like the world you're living in, create the world you like." I endorse this proactive attitude, and it seems I am not the only one. Some of the more imaginative and hopeful souls among us got tired of waiting for the aliens to show up and assume the colossal task of global reinvention.

The irony here is that the newness of the New Age seems to be wearing off our collective belief system. When we cease to wait for celestial salvation, we can then get busy creating our future through a sober acceptance that this is the only lifetime we will ever experientially "know." In all actuality, now is all we have. There is no other relevant point in which any actions or realizations can occur.

A "Now Age" is not only auspicious, it is also immediate and sufficient. This could be our chance to potentially live unrestrained by conceptual calendars.

Human systems always appear suspect in their deservedness to be renewed. Perhaps they should be re-invented in a broader plane of conception, rather than sticking with the great minds of yesteryear, whose shortsightedness failed to imagine a future with six billion souls inhabiting this small planet possessed of finite resources. I feel renewal can happen, but only when people are brave enough to carry the law in their own hearts and actualize their own individual, yet very powerful, part in the bigger story. Even though our lives are habitually perceived through the lens of consecutive fleeting moments, it seems a healthy, natural instinct to be more trusting of the pregnant possibility in each immediate present, rather than dwell in the poetic rumor we call the future or the unalterable memory we call the past. Any real now is definitely also new. However, it is only experientially new, not conceptually new. The truly new is perennially refreshing, in that it always brings us back to the now.

Oddly, living from the moment turns out to be practical too! Driving down the highway while keeping your eyes fixed upon the rear view mirror could have obvious, disastrous consequences. A good look behind is always helpful orientation, as long as you return your main bead of attention to the road unwinding before you. If you feel inclined, allow yourself to fully and experientially embrace a present moment. It will shine a little brighter because your actions and expressions spring from the updated version of you, not the you that existed two years ago, or even two days ago. However we stylize periods of human history, your individual ground of being will always be seated in the present.

For a conscious being, to exist is to change, and changing is to ultimately evolve by creating oneself, endlessly. Take heart dear readers — consider these words in the gospel according to Van Morrison: "Give me my rapture today!"

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