

Stuck in the Past and the Future

When occupied by a task, the mind of most of us is often stuck where it does the least good for us. We are focused on the imagined disappointments of what could have been or should have been or we are practicing the error of having expectations of what should lie ahead. Truly we are spending our time making judgments of how the world and others ought to be.

How can we be happy or on the road to happiness with such mind games. We are occupied judging everything by our reactions. All of this is not wrong because classification helps us determine who we are and to set boundaries for our behavior. For example: If you judge lying to be harmful, then you will refrain from telling little white lies or great big whoppers. However, if you find yourself in the act of having an idea ready in mind to use as your yardstick of goodness, then you set yourself up for unhappiness. For example: If you focused on the best meal you ever had, each time that you sit down to eat, how many meals would you enjoy in the present?

Do we really need to go to that extreme? After all, how many meals have you found inedible? Have you lost the ability to just be thankful that you are not starving and that the meal is good tasting and fulfilling?

What if we were to focus our thoughts on gratitude? What if we were to review the lessons learned from our experience? What if we were just observers of the causes and effects of events? What if we were to have quiet minds? Which of these would make us feel happiness? Hopefully, you have chosen thoughts of gratitude or the quiet mind.

How do we quiet that cacophony of expectations and judgments that goes on in our minds? Truly we can be happy most, if not all, of the day.

We are rarely without an audience except for the time we spend in the bathroom. There have been those who have jokingly pictured The Thinker sitting on the toilet. What if he was just clearing his mind? Could we each find time to quiet and clear our minds. do we need to be orchestrating the days ahead or musing on past unfulfilled expectations?

How about those non-HOV commutes out there? Could they use their seemingly endless hour in traffic to quiet their minds? If the traffic is not moving what a great time to clear the mind.

However, many of us do not know how to quiet our minds. Could it really be just as simple as saying the word "clear." What if the world were to try it for a day or a week? How long would it take for peace to reign on earth?

Christmas is the time of year when thoughts of peace and love supposedly occupy our thoughts but how many would call the Christmas anything other than stressful. Maybe if we spread the word by next Christmas we can all practice a day of peace. Or, maybe we can aim for an easier day for all to remember: New Years Day. What a way to welcome the new year - with inner peace.