

Now: An unrepeatable miracle

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Grab it, exhaust it, drain it, until there is nothing left

Now is a miracle! It is also unrepeatable. But most people spend 58 minutes of every hour living somewhere other than right here, right now. They look backwards and live in the past, regretting lost joys and feeling guilt for things done badly both of which are useless and debilitating activities. Or, they live in the future, which they either long for or dread. In doing so, they miss the miracle of NOW - this minute!

How about you? Missed any miracles lately?

Did you decide not to go swimming, even though you were at the beach, because you just had your hair done?

Did you buy the conservative navy-blue tie rather than the more debonair salmon-colored one because the navy wouldn't show stains?

Did you stay off the dance floor even when the band played your favorite song just because no other couples were dancing?

Did you pout and make it a miserable day for yourself because your presentation at the staff meeting didn't go as well as you hoped?

Did you tell your kids, "Later, I'm busy" and continue brooding about that huge repair bill when they asked you to play with them?

We've all made mistakes like these and failed to live fully when we had the chance. But berating ourselves for it is also a waste of time. Far better to just grab the next moment before we miss that too! And when you grab it, hang on. Exhaust it. Drain it of its juices. Don't give it back until there is nothing left. Otherwise you might create your own version of a very sad story about a young man who was about to be executed for a crime.

At dawn on the day of his execution he stood on the bench in his prison cell, reached for the iron bars across the window and pulled himself up so he could see the countryside. It was spring, and as the sun edged above the horizon he saw his world as if for the first time. He was startled by the brilliant colors of the flowers as they were illuminated by the sunlight. He noticed the lushness of the fields, the rich smell of the freshly tilled soil, and the pleasant sounds of the town stirring to life.

Straining to hold himself up to the window, he continued to stare wide-eyed. Tears rolled down his cheeks. He knew he had missed this miracle countless times before and would no longer be alive to appreciate it. When the jailers came to lead him to the gallows, he was still clinging to the window with all his might, in awe of the sunrise on this spring day. They had to pull him down and drag him away.

The wonder of life had always been there, but he had been preoccupied with regret for the past and dread of the future. Facing death became even more difficult for him now that he realized he had never really lived!

Here's what you can do:

1. Spend a few more minutes of every hour fully living the unrepeatable miracle that is NOW.
2. Work at your work, play at your play, shed your tears, enjoy your laughter. NOW is the time of your life.

3. Avoid looking back or thinking too far ahead **NOW** is the time to focus on.

4. See things in perspective:

- dive into that ocean and forget your hair
- buy that special tie, dress or outfit dance to your song and ignore others
- forget the disappointing presentation you made. Just improve the next one
- take time with each of your children if you have them. From the day they are born, you have only 18 summers before they're
- grown and gone. Think of it! Spend time with them **NOW** and see the miracle daily