

The Road to Freedom

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Yesterday has no power over today or tomorrow. The past has no power over how we live our life in the present or in the future. The past appears to have power only because we give it power. The power does not come from the past, because the past does not exist in reality. The past exists only as memory and memory exists only as reference. Memory has intrinsic utilities, but no inherent power. Without memory we lose the sense of temporal continuity and of temporal self-identity. Also, we use our memory to guide our present action. Yet, memory in itself has no power to dictate or determine our present action. We are in truth free to begin our life anew right now. And to know this is the beginning of freedom.

Authentic freedom is not a static condition which, once achieved, can be retained but a dynamic state which must be attained ever anew. The locus in which we attain freedom is always and only the now, which is never a part of time. The now in which we attain freedom is not a moment in time but the *momentum* arising in the eternal that produces reaction *past* and resultant *future* in the apparent flow of time. Thus, to be free is to be in the now—the atemporal and eternal now.

The question arises: How can we be in the now and be free? The answer is simple: We can be in the now and be free if we remain an agent of responsibility. Responsibility is the ability “to promise” or to make a commitment (*spond*) “anew” (*re-*). Responsibility thus implies the ability to create a future anew through making and acting from a new commitment. A new commitment here means a commitment that is made anew at every successive moment in time until a situation arises wherein an entirely new commitment is called for. Responsibility arises as intention not in time but in the now as the momentum of the eternal. Responsibility is the felt-intentionality that transforms being into existence and potentiality into actuality. In responsibility, we stand alone on the leading-edge of creation and emergence as a participant in the creation and a catalyst in the emergence.

When we are not responsible, we react. When we react, our life becomes a repetitive extension or karmic reenactment of our past. Reactivity is of time, while responsibility is not. Reactivity arises as a momentum in time, while responsibility arises as a momentum of the timeless. The reactive mode of being is the basic mode of victimhood in which one perceives oneself to be helplessly swept away by the external forces of nature, society, or history. A victim is he who, having forfeited his innate responsibility, sees himself not responsible for his lot in life. A victim is first a victim of his past which, he thinks, has inevitably led him to where he is for which he claims no responsibility. A sense of being a victim, or victim consciousness, is rooted in the deep recesses of our psyche because we presume that the past determines the future while we know that we cannot change the past. Yes, it is true that we cannot change the past, but it is not true that the past determines the future.

The state of being an agent of responsibility is termed “agency.” Agency is the opposite of victimhood. The unpaved road to freedom is the upward path of transformation from victimhood to agency. If you find yourself powerless and unfree in some areas of your life, it is a sign that you are prevailed over by some victim consciousness. Regardless of the situation, so long as we perceive ourselves to be a victim, we are relinquishing our power to change the situation and to move forward with our lives. When we attain the state of agency, we become an agent of change. Even if nothing external can be changed in a certain situation, we can still be totally free, because when we are responsible, we can intend the situation to be exactly the way it is. We thus become the master, no longer the slave, of the situation. When we

intend a situation or our life as such to be exactly the way it is, we become filled with gratitude for all that is given to us and bestowed upon us. Then, we become completely reconciled and at peace with the whole of existence.

The most spiritually powerful expression of responsibility is the act of forgiveness. Forgiveness means to *give light for darkness*, to *give love for hatred*, and to *give awareness for ignorance*. To forgive means to *give truth for falsehood*, to *give goodness for evil*, and to *give beauty for ugliness*. It means to *give goodwill for ill-will*, to *give generosity for miserliness*, and to *give joy for misery*. Through forgiveness, we responsibly disrupt the chain reactions of darkness and hatred and intentionally transform them into evolving circles of love and light. Because forgiveness is an act of responsibility, the moment you forgive, you become free. You receive freedom, as it were, as a gift for all that you give in your forgiving. This is freedom as grace.

The road *to* freedom is the road *of* freedom. It is unpaved because it is a roadless road created only in and through your journey. Because of the nature of freedom wherein creativity essentially inheres, the road of freedom is the road you construct along your journey. You are fully responsible for creating your road to freedom. Freedom is thus conditional and you must earn it, even as grace, through your responsibility. If you claim full responsibility for the entirety of your life, right now you will be free to begin your life anew. And if we each claim full responsibility for the entirety of human life on this planet, right now we will be free to begin a new human history.