

Mantras For Being Present – I Walk & I Trust In The Now

BY LUISE JORGENSEN

Have you ever been somewhere amazing, but in reality, you were busy thinking about the future?

I know I have.

Three days into walking El Camino de Santiago -- 800km across Northern Spain -- I was climbing a mountain and realized that in my mind I was going through the motions of the day. I was thinking: *walk, walk, walk, find a resting spot, grab a coffee, walk more, find a place to stay for the night, massage feet, rest and nap, wash clothes, eat dinner, go to sleep. Start over.*

When I noticed that, it dawned on me that I was not experiencing the actual experience.

Being on a pilgrimage is interesting – on one hand, everything is out of the ordinary, which means you can really listen to yourself, open up, and get clear on what matters to you. On the other hand, your habits and automatic modes of being become very visible. You are taken out of context, but you soon realize that you as a person are still there. With none of the normal frameworks present, it's a lot harder to hide or blame anything on the circumstances.

In that exact moment when I was climbing the mountain, it dawned on me that I do it all the time – mentally go through the motions of life and somehow expect that the next step will be the one that fulfills me. But that's actually never going to happen. This is it! This exact moment is all there is.

I started repeating "This is it" as a mantra to remind myself

to actually experience the experience.

If you don't experience what you are in now, then when you reach some desired destination, you'll already be mentally busy with a future step and miss out. It's kind of sad, when you think about it, but it doesn't have to be like that. This is it.

On another level, a pilgrimage is like a microcosm of life. There's a start, a journey ahead, and an end. How fast or slow you walk, where you stop, whom you meet, if you choose to walk alone or not -- these can all vary -- sometimes you feel like you have choice and power, at other times it doesn't feel like that.

I had one experience that triggered a fear of having missed a person, it felt like he was someone special and I missed my chance. I do think there are certain times where it's all about seizing the opportunity and that we might miss out on something.

But during the pilgrimage, I saw how perceived missed opportunities many times led to other greater opportunities that I might not have been able to plan or envision in the first place. So whenever I felt a fear of missing out or worried about doing the wrong thing, I said to myself, "I walk and I trust".

The mantra "I walk and I trust" includes both action and surrender, which feels like the two crucial elements in navigating life. Encompassing the male and female qualities we can enter a life with flow.

I walk and I trust.

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