

## THE MOMENT LOG

(*"What am I feeling right now?"*)



The MOMENT LOG is that part of the journal that is somewhat like a diary but different in certain respects. We often think of a diary as a record of something that we did during a particular day. It is generally written at the end of a day and reflects on the day's activities and events. The focus of journal work is a bit different. Journal work is more of an expression of your *present* experience or what is happening *now*, in the moment. That is why it is valuable to carry your journal with you as a tool for acknowledging your internal awareness in particular situations. It is a fact that we are always feeling or thinking something every moment of our waking day but to what extent are we really aware of what we are thinking or feeling? It is often easier to "look back" and identify what was happening in a previous time and how we felt but if we take the time to pause we can contact our feelings and internal conversation *right now*. By being more aware we are increasing our freedom to *be*, and be *ourselves*, in the world.

The MOMENT LOG is like taking a snapshot of your inner world at any given moment of time in any given place. You are always some *where* and some *time* in your daily life. The place that you always are is right *here* and the time that you always are is right *now*. And in any given time and place you are always experiencing *something*. What am I experiencing *right now*? What am I aware of *right now*? What am I *present to*, *right now*. These are the questions that you want to respond to in this exercise.

In any given moment there are many things that are going on both inside of you and outside of you that you are not in touch with. As you read these words, you are mostly in touch with the words. But there are also many things going on simultaneously that you are not in touch with. If you take a moment to pause, you can probably hear some sounds in your environment, feel the pressure of your body against the chair, sense your breathing, notice your posture and feel a twinge of a certain emotion. If you pay attention further to your inner world, there are momentary images flashing through your mind, thoughts that you are telling yourself and subtle body sensations. The images that flash through your mind might be flashes of a recent memory or an image of what you will do next. The thoughts that you are telling yourself may have something to do with your understanding of the words you are reading.

The point is that there are many aspects of reality—what is going on right here and now both in your internal world and in your external world—which you are not aware of. And the degree to which you block out certain aspects of reality will limit your freedom to be and the choices that you make.

It is valuable to realize that the only thing that keeps you limited in life is your thoughts and beliefs. Thoughts and beliefs are nothing more than what you *tell yourself* over and over. Thinking is nothing more than an "internal conversation". If this is true, then what is it that blocks our awareness of our thoughts? If we are in

fact thinking something every moment of the day, how come we cannot “hear” ourselves or “see” our images and memories? The simple answer is, it is where you live.

Instead of “hearing” your thinking or “seeing” your images you live *in* your thoughts and images. When you live inside something you cannot see what it is. It becomes your world. A fish in water cannot see that it lives in water. The water is its world. One cannot see the forest through the trees when one is in the middle of the forest. One cannot get a perspective on a situation when one is *in* the situation. But if you can take a moment to “step outside” of whatever it is you are in, *then* you can see it. In this exercise you are learning to “step outside” of your thoughts and observe the workings of your own mind. You are coming to therapy because you have a problem but you do not see what the problem is. The problem is, is that you live in your thoughts. The degree to which you live in your thoughts, is the degree to which you have imprisoned yourself. And when you are in prison you are not free. But it is also important to see that your prison is of your own making.

Journal writing is helping you to step outside of your own mind. When you are writing out your thoughts and then reading them to yourself, you can clearly see what they are. And you have stepped outside of your prison if at least for the moment.

There are many ways to begin writing out your moment log. You can start with a thought, you can start with a feeling, or you can simply start with a blank slate. You may be preoccupied with something that just happened, you may be preoccupied with a certain feeling or you may be going back in memory to a distant time. The important thing is to start with “where you are” in this particular moment. As you do this exercise on a consistent basis, you will get better and better at observing your inner world.

The material that comes out of this exercise will be the grist, which you will use the exercises that follow....

Some useful questions to prompt you are...

- Where am I *now* in this moment?
- What is happening in this present situation?
- What is going on with me *right now?*
- What am I feeling *right now?*
- What am I doing *right now?*
- What do I seem to be thinking *right now?*
- What am I wanting *right now?*
- What am I telling myself *right now?*
- What am I fantasizing *right now?*