

QC0064 - The Power of Now

If you get depressed about the past, or anxious about the future, then you need to pay attention to today's episode of Quick Counsel as we look at the Power of Now.

I don't know if I've mentioned this in previous episodes, but one of my favorite movies is one that might be considered a "chick flick." It's called "Under the Tuscan Sun." (Yeah, I know...I'll probably lose my man card for this.) If you've not seen it, I encourage you to, and I want to give you a spoiler alert before you go any further in this podcast.

In the movie, Diane Lane discovers her husband's infidelities, and winds up unexpectedly divorced and devastated. And all this happens in the first 3 minutes of the movie. Distraught, she takes a trip to Tuscany and winds up buying a villa there, but she's unable to get past what she's lost and what she doesn't have. Unable to shake her sadness and her stalled life, she sets it aside and throws herself into renovating the villa. And by the end of the movie, she suddenly realizes that she had not only rebuilt a villa...she had rebuilt her life.

That is the power of now.

It's deceptively easy to get sucked into the vortex of the past; rehearsing unwanted pains, or mourning lost glory days. It's also foolishly tempting to be consumed by fears of a future that will fall painfully short of our hopes and dreams.

But these are time zones over which we have no control. You can't change a past that's already happened, and you can't control a future that hasn't happened yet. All you can do is take charge of your present.

By taking charge of your present, you will redeem your past and prepare for your future. This is the power of now.

So with that in mind, I gleaned a few principles from the movie that will help you and I seize **the power of now**.

Focus on what's in front of you.

The past is gone and the future isn't here yet. The only life you really have is the moment right in front of us. And though not everything in front of you may be welcomed, the present moment is still rich with little blessings and opportunities.

The smile of a child, a sunny day, a deep breath, raindrops on a window, the opportunity to contribute, etc. Don't let grieving the past or worrying about the future cause you to miss out on what's right in front of you.

Focusing on what's in front of you will lead you to the next way to seize **the power of now**

Be grateful for what you have.

We spend way too much time complaining about what we don't have, than being grateful for what we do have. It's amazing how practicing gratitude can put our negativity into remission. There's an old hymn that tells us to count our blessings. When you're grateful for what you have, you slowly begin to see you have more to be grateful for than you thought. And gratitude for all the good things that are in front of you will eventually help you have to be grateful for the not-so-good things in front of you.

Do the best with what you have.

Once you're grateful for what you have, It's easier to do your best with what you have. This is one of the best ways to seize **the power of now**. You may not have everything you want, but you can make the best of what you have. Whether its a small chore or a big project, give it your very best. It doesn't have to be perfect...just your best. This will not only keep you focused on the present moment, it will increase your sense of satisfaction and make your present moment even better.

And when you do these three things...focus on what's in front of you, be grateful for what you have, and do the best with what you have...it will lead you to do the fourth principle of **the power of now**...

Leave things better than you found them.

This is something we often tell our children..."Leave things better than you found them." It not only is about taking pride in what you're doing, it's about thinking about those who will follow you. We forget that all we have, we eventually will pass on to others. Whether it's something small like cleaning up the kitchen, or something big like a relationship or a business, leaving something better than you found it is being willing to work and sacrifice in the present...not

just for a better present, but also for a better future. This is not only **the power of now**, but it will feed the power of later.

These are the principles of the power of now that I gleaned from the movie “Under the Tuscan Sun,” as well as some very smart mentors.

A FINAL WORD....

Both the past and the future are out of reach, but the power of now is always at your disposal, and it can make a great impact on you. The power of now can give you clarity, focus, fulfillment, and even enjoyment. It can fight against the depression of focusing on the past and the anxiety of focusing on the future. And it can give you more control over your life than you ever dreamed possible.

So, give it a try. Practice the power of now by...

- Focusing on what’s in front of you.
- Being grateful for what you have.
- Do the best with what you have.
- Leave things better than you found them.

It may not make your life into a movie, but it will give your life a better story.