

Where “Be Here Now” Came From

Ever wonder where the statement “Be Here Now” came from? It came from the book **Be Here Now** by Ram Dass. Here's an excerpt from the book. In this section of the book, he is talking about coming across a fellow whose name was Bhagwan Dass in his travels across India.

“I see that he's very powerful, so extraordinarily powerful—he's got an ectara, a one-stringed instrument, and I've got a little Tibetan drum, and we go around to the villages and people rush out and they touch our feet because we're holy men, which is embarrassing to me because I'm not a holy man—I'm obviously who I am—a sort of overage hippie, western explorer, and I feel very embarrassed when they do that and they give us food. And he plays and sings and the Hindu people love him and revere him. And he's giving away all my money. . .

But I'm clinging tight to my passport and my return ticket to America, and a traveler's check that I'll need to get me to Delhi. Those things I'm going to hold on to. And my bottle of LSD, in case I should find something interesting.

And during these travels he's starting to train me in a most interesting way. We'd be sitting somewhere and I'd say,

“Did I ever tell you about the time that Tim and I . . .”

And he'd say, “Don't think about the past. Just be here now.”

Silence.

And I'd say, “How long do you think we're going to be on this trip?”

And he'd say, “Don't think about the future. Just be here now.”

I'd say, “You know, I really feel crumby, my hips are hurting . . .”

“Emotions are like waves. Watch them disappear in the distance on the vast calm ocean.”

He had just sort of wiped out my whole game. That was it—that was my whole trip—emotions, and past experiences, and future plans. I was, after all, a great story teller.

So we were silent. There was nothing to say.

He'd say, “You eat this.” or, “Now you sleep here.” And all the rest of the time we sang holy songs. That was all there was to do.

Or he would teach me Asanas—Hatha Yoga postures.

But there was no conversation. I didn't know anything about his life. He didn't know anything about my life. He wasn't the least bit interested in all of the extraordinary dramas that I had collected . . . He was the first person I couldn't seduce into being interested in all this. He just didn't care.

And yet, I never felt so profound an intimacy with another being. It was as if he were inside of my heart. And what started to blow my mind was that everywhere we went, he was at home.”