



## CHRIS EVANS

### BE PRESENT!

<https://youtu.be/Jye58Lh-UDO>

Hi everyone, Chris Evans here. How you doing? I'm answering a few questions today for my dear, dear friend, Lindsey McKeon. She has a blog. She's a wildly intelligent person, one of my favorite people. And she had a few questions for me and I'm happy to answer them for her. So, let's dive in.

What thought process gets you through the ups and downs associated with life? What thought process? For me, it's trying to stay present. You know, I think, Lindsey as you know, Lindsey and I met when I was 17 and we both had a very similar spiritual belief system. And mine was a little more rooted in, a little bit more of a noisy brain. You know, I had certain beliefs and desires and I wanted to be a certain type of person, but a lot of my thoughts were kind of, I guess rooted in the ego, you know. And when I say the ego, I don't necessarily mean arrogance.

I just mean the part of your brain that says I, the thinker, and that part of your brain is very self-serving and it's very, it lives in a world of comparisons and time, and none of these things are helpful. And it just kind of would consistently take me out of a positive place. You know, the man I wanted to be, or the man I thought I should be, or, you know, thinking you know how you should be doing things or what you should be doing, but then not executing those things leaves you in this kind of spiral of disappointment. But again, all that thinking is based on time, you're basing who you are and what you think you should be, on who you'll be tomorrow and who you were yesterday.

So, for me, the most effective tool I've adopted is just trying to stay present. When you're in the moment, it's not like you've satisfied the part of your brain that thinks in terms of time, it's that the part of your brain that thinks in terms of time just gets quiet, kind of doesn't exist anymore. So, a lot of my old hurdles have kind of become far more manageable by just staying present. All you really have in life, I think is just now, a series of nows. And I think when you can kind of surrender to that, you can't lose. So, for me, getting through the struggles that are associated with day-to-day life, it's just be present. Don't think about tomorrow. Don't think about the next minute. Just where are you right now? Don't miss right now, be here now. And a nice sense of calm just kind of washes over.

When did you start to think this way and where do you believe the thoughts originated from? I probably started thinking this way when I was, you know, maybe 15, 16 years old. And, they say you don't really wake up from dreams, you wake up from nightmares. And not to say my childhood was a nightmare at all, by any means. But I certainly started to see a pattern where, whatever my struggles or challenges were at that age, if they were ever kind of met or satisfied, I started to see how the next day, my brain found new

struggles and challenges to be at odds with. And you start to realize how amazingly resilient that part of your brain is, that that can just create conflict and truly be at odds with what is.

And I started to worry that no matter what happened or where I went in my life, will that always be that way. What's preventing me from being truly happy or truly peaceful or present? What is the thing that's creating this conflict? And you start to realize a lot of it, you know, when you take, it's not those individual things. Well, that girl didn't like me, or well that guy is smarter than me. That's not it. It's the part of your brain that is driving this machine, the I, that ego. It's a very self-serving animal. And it lives in a world of comparison.

And a lot of Eastern philosophies, whether it's Buddhism or Taoism, Hinduism, they all kind of share a similar awareness of that brain noise and it's, you know, potential pitfalls. And at that age, I just kind of, that's the one thing that just made the most sense to me. That's the one thing that I saw as it just made sense to the treadmill that I saw myself running on. That was the one thing that I said, yeah, that's exactly, that's what's going on here. This is just this brain that just, no matter what I do, it's going to find new things, scared me and that worried me. And that's what kind of made me want to pursue a little bit more exploration into that way of thinking.

What teachings have helped you shape your journey along the way? Well, I'm a big fan of reading, big fan of Eckhart Tolle. That guy is it. The Power of Now is a fantastic book. A New Earth is a fantastic book, Stillness Speaks. First book I read that really turned me on to all that was Siddhartha. Siddhartha is phenomenal book about a guy who was a Brahman, educated man, but still felt that something was missing, goes to the woods, even meets Buddha, decides he can't even follow Buddha. You know, he still just kind of feels that any type of education given to him by someone else is still just going to be filtered through that kind of egoic I. And his goal was really to try and strip away. He ends up going down a very different path, but comes out on the other side a changed man.

So, those books all had a lot of impact on me. Again, I'll say anything by Eckhart Tolle. To me, that's kind of like, it's like my Bible. Any day I'm having a rough time, or I can't seem to change the channel, I can pick up any one of his books and just read any chapter and it just resonates. And it's a nice feeling to know that you're not the only one thinking this way or going through these struggles or hurdles. And it just kind of exercises that muscle and works out that part of the brain really well.

What do you do or practice in order to continue your growth? It's a good question. I think the key word there is practice. I try to look at it as practice, you know, my biggest struggle in my early twenties was believing I understood a concept or a certain philosophy that I subscribe to, but then consistently not living that way and not executing those beliefs and struggling and being depressed or, you know, disappointed in life. And that's, I knew better, but I wasn't living that way. And that's really frustrating. And the problem is that's all just ego, that's ego sneaking in the back door. That's you kind of, the part of your brain that thinks about the story of Chris wants to see that story in a certain light, but that's just the ego. That's, you know, that's not real either.

So, for me, it's a matter of being perfectly okay, exactly where I am and practicing. It's like if I was going to try and pick up a sport, you know, I'm not going to be amazing tomorrow. Today, I just have to dribble. I just got to dribble the ball. And if the ball gets away from me today, it's okay. Get it back and just dribble again, even if it takes all of my focus and energy, just to dribble this ball, maybe tomorrow, it won't. And it won't be as, you know, consuming. But it's okay to be where I am. I don't have to wake up tomorrow and

be a pro. And I think that mentality has gone a long way for me in terms of just surrendering to the moment, surrendering to where I am and surrendering, even in my failures.

So, you know, your failures are okay too. I used to really be very hard on myself if I thought I wasn't accomplishing something or reaching a certain level. But, you know, be with your failures. They're just as educational and just as opening to the process as the success is. And eventually if you're, I would hope, you know, the notion of success and failure will begin to dilute as well. So, yeah, just practice.

What about the entire experience inspires you? So many things. It's tough to narrow it down. I suppose the most impactful one is just being able to do something that I love. You know, I love being creative. I love the business that I'm in. It's absolutely who I was as a child. You know, you try and always think, well, what did you do on a Sunday morning when you were a kid?

What were you doing when you weren't doing for anything? You know, when you were just waking up trying to have fun, what were you doing? That's what you should probably be doing with your life. And luckily I was, you know, putting on shows and doing theater and, you know, playing pretend. So, I'm very lucky in a sense that my profession is also something that is deeply connected to the part of my life when my brain wasn't so noisy and I wasn't fueled by ego or an accomplishment or this kind of story that we're trying to tell ourselves. I was just doing it because it felt fun. So, for me, it's inspiring. It's exciting. It's fulfilling to know that I get to go to work every day and get paid to do something that I consider to be extremely pure, and real and beautiful.

What terrifies you? This could be a long one. But that's tricky, you know, because, this is tough because I think, you know, 10 years ago, I would've said I don't want to be scared by anything. And I mean, the whole notion of being scared obviously means that I'm not fully present because if I were fully present, then I wouldn't be scared. And I would end up getting lost in this spiral of disappointment because I do have fears. And that obviously means I haven't achieved what I want to achieve because my brain still operates from an egoic manner and the brain noise would get the best of me.

So, I think I'm a little more confident now saying that I'm scared of stuff and that's okay. I'm scared that I won't get where I think I want to get. I'm scared that I won't know true happiness. I'm scared that I won't know, you know, true beauty or love, you know. But I'm okay having those fears, but I also know at the same time that that's, those aren't real fears. I really, really believe that's just, that's the ego talking. And that's okay. Because my ego has been trained to speak for 34 years. I can't expect all of a sudden to delete it from the map today. All I gotta do is when those fears come up, recognize that those are ego-based fears. I'm totally okay with those things popping up on the radar because they're going to, and that's okay too. So, I guess I have plenty of fears, but I don't think any of them are real.

Is there anything in life you still believe you're striving to attain or wanting to become more aware of? Yes, a lot. There's a lot. I'm trying to, it's almost like, the first couple of times I tried meditating. Very hard because my brain is so noisy and you know, maybe you get a second, two-three seconds tops of sustained still breathing and presence. And then very quickly, you know, your brain asks, well, am I doing this? Am I thinking, I'm thinking thoughts right now. And you know, you kind of lose it, but that's okay. And you go right back to trying to focus again. And, you know, the more you do it, hopefully the shorter intervals of brain noise will happen. And the longer periods of time where you are truly present begin to bloom a little bit.

So, I think the thing that I'm looking for in life is just longer periods of blooming presence. Blooming presence, I like that. Just kind of, you know, on a daily basis, my brain is still noisy. It's still, you know, it still is fear-based and still egoic, egoically fueled, I suppose. But like I said, I'm working on trying to shining a light on that ego when you see it arise and then hopefully letting it melt away. And hopefully the older I get and the better I get practicing that technique, there'll be less and less and less brain noise, and more and more and more moments of presence, where ultimately maybe I won't have to focus on it so much to achieve it, hopefully that will kind of become the neutral state.

Stop the process because, you know, we're talking about, we're trying to understand things with our minds, but the place I'm trying to get to is something that the mind can't comprehend. It wants to, it really wants to, but it can't, it's different language. So, I guess this is a tricky question to answer, because what I'm saying I want is something I can't explain, or process with the mind I'm using to give this interview. But I felt pieces of it and I know it's good and I'm chasing it and it's worth it. So, whatever that is, I guess I'm working to kind of have longer moments of that. Trying to translate that.

Is there any one piece of wisdom you've managed to integrate fully into your own life that you can share? Sure. It's my favorite. It's my favorite. I did a little, with Lindsey actually, I went to India. We did this retreat few years back. And one of the guys, our guru on the trip, is a man named Anand, brilliant, brilliant, brilliant man. And he would lecture every day. And there were just so many times where I had questions and I would just raise my hand and he kind of just kept telling me to shush, and it was so frustrating because I just had, I felt I had good questions and I just, if you just give me an answer, I'll be quiet. And he kept telling me to be quiet, and it really bothered me and it made me doubt. But what he was, it was a very effective tool because the truth is the part of my brain that needed that answer, that wanted that answer is the part of the brain that I don't need.

It's kind of this, I needed it to get me to India. There's a great quote I read, you know, you need the boat to cross the river. But once you cross the river, you don't need the boat. So, I needed my confusion and my ego and my struggle to wake me up to the fact that I don't need it. And I think the part of my brain that wanted all those answers in India was the part of my brain that he was telling me just to be quiet. Just be quiet, shush, just be present.

And if you really, shush, really be quiet, like I said, it's not like the part of your brain that wants the questions gets an answer. It's that the part of your brain that wants to question just kind of disciplines. There's no more need for an answer because there was really no need for a question. So, for me, it's just, you know, very noisy brain. Shush, shush, shush.

That's not quitting, that's not giving up, that's not forfeiting. It's surrendering, which I like to, it's you know, when you use the word surrender, you remember that there was a fight going on. There was a fight in my brain, an unnecessary battle that I'm fighting with myself. So, just kind of shush, just kind of surrender a little bit and you'll have a flash of something real nice, and then your brain will quickly try and understand it. And it'll never be able to, and it'll be this horrible cycle. But you'll feel it and you'll want it again.

**Download our FREE eBooks!**

Check it out here <https://www.englishspeecheschannel.com/free-english-ebooks>

