

Living “Just Now” May Ease Feelings of Loss

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In one of the meditations on aging in her book, “Living With Purpose in a Worn-Out Body,” Missy Buchanan begins with these words:

Just here. That’s how I feel today.

I’m just here. Stalled out.

Little more than taking up space.

It’s a sentiment that many of us can, at times, identify as our own. We can especially identify with it as we age and feel like we can’t do “anything,” or as we begin to recognize the limitations that often come with age. There is no denying that most of us cannot do all the things we used to do—the things we often wish we could still do. The feeling is understandable and honest. But it is not the only appropriate response to aging. In fact, it may be the least appropriate and the least faithful response.

As I read the meditation and reflected it on, it I wondered how I might have written about the same thought. It occurred to me that I might have changed the opening words from “Just here” to “Just now.” And with that beginning, I proceeded to explore what it might mean if I truly lived in the moment, in the just now. How would my sentiment change if I let go of what I used to be able to do, if I stopped worrying about what I might someday not be able to do, and simply reflected on what I can do just now? How would my attitude change if I did what I could in the moment and assumed that nothing else was expected of me?

What if I showed someone an unexpected kindness just now?

What if I wrote a note to someone who could use it just now?

What if I took extra time to read to a grandchild or a neighbor child whose parents are too busy just now?

What if I did the very best I could just now?

Our older adults often need to be reminded that we are called to live in the moment. What if those who minister with and to older adults consciously challenged them as a matter of faith to live just now?