

The One Thing

*An essay by Eckhart Tolle, author
of The Power of Now*



In the Gospel story of Mary and Martha, Jesus says to Martha, “You are anxious and troubled about many things, but only one thing is needful.” (Luke 10:41)

As I was writing *A New Earth*, people would sometimes ask me, “What is the new book about?” And invariably, my answer would be, “I only ever write or speak about one thing.”

What is that one thing?

Spiritual awakening.

Can a person be awakened spiritually by a book?

Yes, if three conditions are met:

Firstly, there must be a readiness on the part of the reader, an openness, a receptivity to spiritual truth, which is to say, a readiness to awaken. For the first time in the history of humanity, large numbers of people have reached that point of readiness, which explains why millions have responded so deeply to *The Power of Now*.

Secondly, the text must have transformative power. This means the words must have come out of the awakened consciousness rather than the accumulated knowledge of a person’s mind. Only then will a text be charged with that power, a power that goes far beyond the informational value of the words. That is why such a book can be read again and again and lose none of its aliveness.

Thirdly, the terminology used needs to be as neutral as possible so that it transcends the confines of any one culture, religion, or spiritual tradition. Only then will it be accessible to a broad range of readers world-wide, regardless of cultural background.

All these conditions were met in *The Power of Now*, which is why the book has had such an impact on the collective consciousness.

Why write another book?

Since the publication of *The Power of Now*, I have given hundreds of talks and teaching sessions all over the world, and in the course of those seven years, the teaching evolved. While the essence remained the same (The Truth is timeless.), new perspectives arose, new signposts, alternative approaches to the Truth, as well as an added sense of urgency. *A New Earth* reflects this evolution and this urgency.

If *The Power of Now* worked for you and changed your life – as it did for countless people all over the world – there is no *need* for you to read *A New Earth* (although you may enjoy reading it and may find some of it helpful in recognizing the ego and thus sustaining the state of Presence).

My feeling is that *A New Earth* will make the teaching (the one thing) accessible to an even wider audience, including people who perhaps would not have dreamt of reading a “spiritual” book but have within them a hitherto unrecognized longing for spiritual awakening.

A New Earth will also be extremely helpful for those who read *The Power of Now*, found it interesting, but somehow missed the essence of it. It presents them with new perspectives on the same truth, new signposts, pointers towards Presence. Different pointers work for different people.

Millions are now ready to awaken because spiritual awakening is not an option anymore, but a necessity if humanity and the planet are to survive. Everything is speeding up – the madness, the collective egoic dysfunction, as well as the arising of the new consciousness, the awakening.

We are running out of time. From the perspective of the ego, that’s bad news and will give rise to fear. From a higher perspective, the *running out of time* is exactly what is needed for the new consciousness to come into this world.