

# AI-04529 Here and Now Importance

Explain the concept of "here and now" (HN), "there and now" and the "yesterday and now" as described by Dr. Yalom in some of his psychotherapy books. His emphasis on getting back quickly to HN when a patient gets out of the path.

Explain, list the pillars, list 22 examples

What it means? Deep dive and provide the psychological pillars.

Describe how a person typically thinks, behaves, and makes decisions.

Provide 22 concrete examples demonstrating these traits in real-life situations.

Then create a 22-point guidelines from the discussion.

In his seminal work on group and individual psychotherapy (most notably *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* and *Existential Psychotherapy*), Dr. Irvin Yalom places the **Here-and-Now (HN)** at the absolute center of therapeutic change.

To Yalom, therapy is not primarily an intellectual exercise in historical archaeology or external complaint logging. It is a live laboratory. When a patient strays into external narratives or distant memories, Yalom advocates gently but rapidly steering them back to the immediate interpersonal reality in the room.

## 1. Deconstructing the Temporal Orientations

### The Here-and-Now (HN)

- **What it is:** The immediate interaction happening *this second* between the patient and therapist (or among group members). It focuses on raw experience, ongoing feelings, body language, tone, and the dynamic unfolding inside the room.
- **Yalom's Focus:** The Here-and-Now consists of two essential tiers:
  1. **A-historic immediacy:** Experiencing what is happening right now.
  2. **Process illumination:** Examining the experience self-reflectively ("*What just happened between us when you looked away?*").

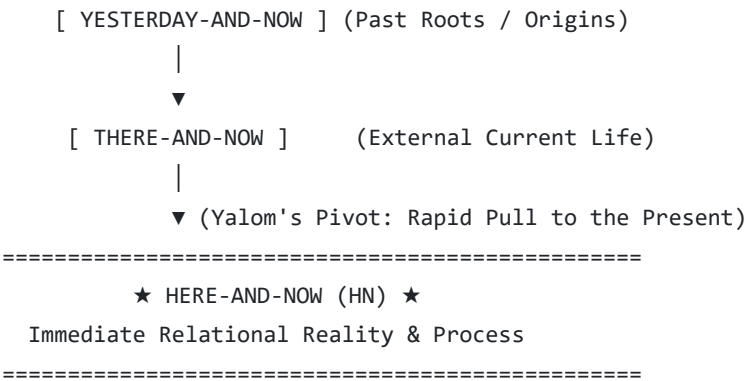
### The There-and-Now (TN)

- **What it is:** Current events occurring outside the therapy room—troubles with a spouse, workplace politics, conflict with a neighbor, or daily stressors.
- **The Function & Risk:** While TN provides necessary context, it frequently functions as an **intellectualized defense mechanism**. Patients talk *about* their lives rather than *living* their relational patterns in front of the therapist. It keeps the anxiety of immediate vulnerability at bay.

### The Yesterday-and-Now / Yesterday-and-Then (YN)

- **What it is:** The historic past—childhood memories, past trauma, family dynamics, and historical origins of behavior patterns.

- **The Function & Risk:** Historical understanding provides explanatory context, but insight into the past rarely creates direct transformation by itself. Over-focusing on Yesterday allows the patient to view themselves as a finished historical artifact rather than an active, choosing agent in the present.



## 2. Deep Dive: Psychological Pillars of Yalom’s Here-and-Now

Yalom's emphasis on returning quickly to the HN rests on four key psychological pillars:

### Pillar 1: The Social Microcosm

Given enough time, individuals will inevitably interact with the therapist (or group members) in the exact same manner they interact with people in their outside world. A person who is passive-aggressive at work will eventually manifest passive-aggression in the room; an individual who fears intimacy outside will build walls inside the session.

### Pillar 2: Content vs. Process

- **Content:** The literal words spoken, the story being told, or the explicit topic under discussion.
- **Process:** The *how* and *why* of the interaction. Why is the patient telling this specific story right now? How are they making eye contact? What is the subtle relational push or pull occurring beneath the words?

### Pillar 3: Corrective Emotional Experience

Real psychological change requires an emotional insight experienced in real time. Talking about fear in the abstract does not heal; experiencing fear in the room, expressing it directly, and receiving a supportive, non-judgmental response alters the neural and relational blueprint permanently.

### Pillar 4: Interpersonal Feedback Loops

The HN provides a controlled environment where a person receives immediate, honest feedback about how their behavior affects others—a feedback loop rarely available in polite everyday society.

## 3. How a Person Thinks, Behaves, and Makes Decisions across Modes

| Aspect          | Yesterday Focus (YN)                                                            | There-and-Now Focus (TN)                        | Here-and-Now Focus (HN)                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Cognitive Style | Historical, analytical, deterministic ("I am like this because of my parents"). | Narrative-driven, externalized, reporting ("Let | Grounded, self-aware, immediate ("I feel my chest |

|                           |                                                                    |                                                                         |                                                                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                           |                                                                    | me tell you what my boss did today").                                   | tighten right now as I talk to you").                                          |
| <b>Behavioral Pattern</b> | Reliving old scripts, transference, automatic defensive maneuvers. | Venting, seeking validation for external conflicts, intellectualizing.  | Direct vulnerability, real-time boundary adjustment, authentic contact.        |
| <b>Decision-Making</b>    | Based on past survival strategies and unexamined core beliefs.     | Reactive to immediate external demands and perceived outside pressures. | Choice-driven, aware of immediate personal agency and relational consequences. |

## 4. 22 Concrete Examples of HN, TN, YN & The Pivot

Here are 22 real-life operational scenarios illustrating how individuals fall into TN/YN patterns and how the quick pivot back to the Here-and-Now works.

### 1. The Filibuster Narrative

- *TN/YN*: A client speaks for 20 uninterrupted minutes about office drama to fill time.
- *HN Pivot*: "I notice you've been speaking at a rapid pace without pausing today. Are you feeling a need to keep me at a distance right now?"

### 2. Intellectualizing Anger

- *TN*: A person calmly explains how furious they were with their spouse three days ago.
- *HN Pivot*: "As you describe that anger now, I notice your fists are clenched tight. What are you feeling toward me in this room as I listen?"

### 3. Deflecting Compliments

- *TN*: A patient recounts how someone praised their work, then immediately minimizes it.
- *HN Pivot*: "If I were to tell you right now that I really admire your openness today, how would you receive that?"

### 4. Seeking External Approval

- *TN*: A team member asks an executive for constant reassurance about outside projects.
- *HN Pivot*: "What is happening between us right now that makes you feel uncertain of my trust in you?"

### 5. Historical Victimhood

- *YN*: A participant blames their childhood upbringing for their inability to make friends today.
- *HN Pivot*: "We know where it started, but look around this room right now. What are you doing in this very group today that keeps people from getting close to you?"

### 6. Sarcasm as a Shield

- *TN*: A person uses humor to tell a story about a recent breakup.
- *HN Pivot*: "You're laughing as you share that, but I feel a deep sadness in the air between us. What lies behind that smile right now?"

### 7. Passive Compliance

- *HN*: A client nods eagerly at every therapist statement without true conviction.
- *HN Pivot*: "You agree with everything I say. I wonder if you are feeling pressured to keep me pleased right now?"

### 8. The Absent Eye Contact

- *HN*: An individual looks exclusively at the floor when discussing emotional pain.
- *HN Pivot*: "Can you look up at me right now? What is it like to look me in the eye while saying that?"

**9. Chronic Late-Arrival Excuses**

- *TN*: A patient gives a 5-minute explanation of traffic delays every session.
- *HN Pivot*: "Traffic is real, but arriving 10 minutes late every time is a pattern between us. How does coming in late protect you in our relationship?"

**10. The External Vague Threat**

- *TN*: "Nobody respects my boundaries at work."
- *HN Pivot*: "Have I stepped over any of your boundaries here today without realizing it?"

**11. Intellectualized Grief**

- *YN*: Explaining the clinical stages of grief after losing a family member years ago.
- *HN Pivot*: "If you let yourself stop analyzing the grief for ten seconds, what is happening in your body right now?"

**12. The Rescue Attempt**

- *HN*: A group member instantly offers advice to another member who begins to cry.
- *HN Pivot*: "Notice how quickly you moved to solve their problem. What uncomfortable feeling inside yourself were you trying to fix just now?"

**13. Subtle Hostility**

- *TN*: Complaining about people who are overly blunt or harsh.
- *HN Pivot*: "I felt a sharp edge in your voice toward me just a moment ago. Are you feeling annoyed with me right now?"

**14. Over-Giver Syndrome**

- *TN*: Focusing entirely on helping friends and family while neglecting self.
- *HN Pivot*: "You spend our whole session worrying about others. What would it feel like to let me care about you for the next 20 minutes?"

**15. Transference Projection**

- *YN*: Expecting the therapist to react with the same coldness as a parent.
- *HN Pivot*: "You looked away as if you expected me to scold you. What do you see on my face right now?"

**16. Boredom as Avoidance**

- *HN*: A person claims they feel "bored" or "empty" during the meeting.
- *HN Pivot*: "Boredom often hides anxiety. What conversation are we avoiding in this room right now?"

**17. Seeking the Magic Fix**

- *TN*: Demanding outside techniques, books, or homework assignments.
- *HN Pivot*: "You want an assignment for outside, but the real work is happening right here. What are we resisting looking at today?"

**18. The Sudden Topic Shift**

- *HN*: Changing the subject the moment an interaction gets emotionally intense.
- *HN Pivot*: "We were just touching something deep, and you quickly pivoted to a story about your neighbor. What felt dangerous about staying there?"

**19. Validation Fishing**

- *TN*: Detailing how unfairly someone treated them to get the therapist to take their side.
- *HN Pivot*: "You're working hard to get me to take your side. Are you afraid I won't support you if you just show me your vulnerability?"

## !0. Emotional Numbness

- *TN*: "I don't really feel anything about my divorce anymore."
- *HN Pivot*: "Place your hand on your chest right now. What physical sensation is present at this moment?"

## !1. Competitive Positioning

- *HN*: A patient constantly tries to match or outsmart the therapist's observations.
- *HN Pivot*: "It feels like we are in a quiet tug-of-war today. How does competing with me keep you safe?"

## !2. The Grand Finale Reveal

- *TN*: Dropping a massive, emotionally charged piece of news with only two minutes remaining in the session.
- *HN Pivot*: "You held onto that until the very end of our hour. How does running out of time protect you from exploring it with me right now?"

# 5. The 22-Point Guidelines for Here-and-Now Grounding

Derived from Yalom's therapeutic framework, these 22 rules serve as an operational guide for remaining present, grounded, and interpersonally effective:

- 1. Prioritize Process Over Content:** Pay less attention to *what* narrative is being delivered and more to *how* it is being delivered in the present dynamic.
- 2. Treat the Room as a Microcosm:** Assume that how a person acts in front of you reflects how they navigate their entire personal world.
- 3. Move Rapidly from 'There' to 'Here':** Whenever conversations linger too long on absent third parties, ask how that dynamic manifests right now in the room.
- 4. Shift from 'Then' to 'Now':** Use past history as an explanatory backdrop, never as the main stage for change.
- 5. Track Somatic Indicators:** Observe physical cues—clenched jaws, breath patterns, fidgeting—as real-time indicators of unexpressed feelings.
- 6. Name the Relational Dynamic:** Do not hide behind politeness; gently vocalize the subtle, unspoken tension between you and the other person.
- 7. Illuminate Transference Immediately:** When someone misreads your intentions, examine what old lens they are viewing you through in the present moment.
- 8. Focus on Agency, Not Victimhood:** Pivot discussions from what others have done to the choices being made in the present.
- 9. Use Immediacy Statements:** Speak using current-tense relational phrasing ("*Right now, as I listen to you, I feel...*").
- !0. Interrupt the Filibuster:** Gently interrupt long, intellectualized reports to check in on immediate emotional states.
- !1. Examine the Resistance:** When someone avoids a topic, explore the immediate fear of discussing it rather than forcing the issue.
- !2. Provide Real-Time Feedback:** Offer honest, constructive reflections on how a person's immediate behavior affects your experience of them.
- !3. Encourage Direct Address:** In group or team dynamics, enforce direct eye contact and address members directly rather than talking *about* them.
- !4. Deconstruct Sudden Shifts:** Notice when a conversation abruptly changes direction and explore what immediate anxiety prompted the exit.
- !5. Convert Complaints into Requests:** Translate complaints about past/external dynamics into immediate, relational needs in the present.
- !6. Embrace Silence and Pause:** Allow pauses in the interaction to force attention back to immediate, felt sensations.

17. **Examine Doorbell Disclosures:** Pay attention to information dropped at the very end of an interaction—it reveals what the person fears exploring in real time.
18. **Normalize Relational Anxiety:** Acknowledge that staying in the Here-and-Now feels vulnerable and inherently uncomfortable.
19. **Distinguish Between Venting and Processing:** Recognize that venting (TN) often drains energy, whereas processing (HN) generates insight and change.
20. **Monitor Your Own Internal Compass:** Use your own emotional reactions in the room as diagnostic data about what the other person is projecting.
21. **Value Corrective Experience Over Intellect:** Prioritize creating a novel, positive relational experience in the moment over achieving theoretical agreement.
22. **Return to the Present Continually:** Accept that returning to the Here-and-Now is an ongoing discipline, requiring repeated, gentle steering back to the present moment.

**Synthesize the principles and guidelines of HN in my current life stage going to Age 60 soon in a few weeks. Help me optimize my remaining life on earth.**

Approaching your 60th birthday is a powerful, naturally reflective threshold. In Dr. Irvin Yalom's existential framework, entering your 60s is not a moment to retreat into retrospection, but a profound invitation to double down on the **Here-and-Now (HN)**.

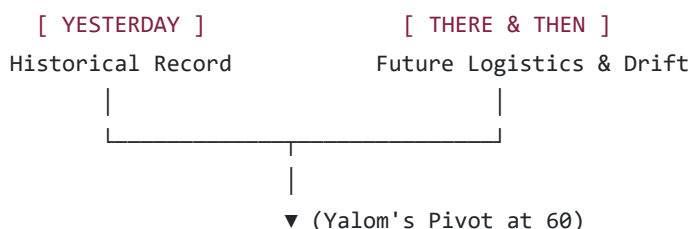
When you look at your upcoming milestone through Yalom's existential lens—specifically his core ultimate concerns of **freedom/responsibility, isolation/connection, and meaning**—the HN ceases to be just a therapy technique. It becomes an **operational framework for living with maximum clarity and purpose**.

Here is how to synthesize these principles to optimize the chapters ahead.

## 1. Re-Framing the Temporal Orientations at 60

To optimize the decades ahead, it helps to see how your mind can naturally drift across time frames—and how the HN keeps you grounded:

- **The "Yesterday-and-Then" Risk:** Looking backward—whether analyzing a 30-year career, calculating past mileage, or measuring historical accomplishments. In Yalom's view, dwelling here often serves as a defense against the reality of aging. *The HN pivot:* Use past experience as a baseline of wisdom, but focus on how that wisdom is actively expressed today.
- **The "There-and-Now" Risk:** Getting consumed by external logistics, complex future planning, or managing external friction. *The HN pivot:* Transition from managing systems outside yourself to cultivating deep, immediate engagement with what is directly in front of you.
- **The "Here-and-Now" Mastery:** Realizing that vitality is not measured by where you were at 30 or where you'll be at 70, but by the richness of your present sensory, intellectual, and relational awareness.



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★ THE HERE-AND-NOW ★

Immediate Vitality, Presence,

& Authentic Choice

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2. Deep Dive: Core Psychological Pillars for Optimizing Life at 60

Pillar 1: Radical Personal Agency (Freedom & Responsibility)

Yalom posits that anxiety often stems from avoiding awareness of our own freedom. At 60, freedom looks like realizing you are no longer bound by past professional roles, societal expectations, or habit loops. Every morning is a clean canvas where you decide how your time, energy, and attention are spent.

Pillar 2: Unmediated Interpersonal Presence

The deepest form of connection occurs when we drop the "reporter" voice (talking *about* things) and enter direct contact. In relationships—with family, friends, or young professionals you mentor—the HN means being fully present without trying to fix, direct, or lecture. It is about mutual, authentic presence in the moment.

Pillar 3: Somatic and Experiential Grounding

As time progresses, life is experienced through the body and mind in real time. Whether it’s feeling the rhythm of a morning swim, the tactile feedback of a physical project, or the focus of solving a puzzle, the HN is anchored in raw, unmediated experience rather than abstract analysis.

3. How Thought, Behavior, and Decisions Evolve at 60

| Aspect             | Yesterday-Focused Living                              | There-and-Now Drift                                          | Optimized Here-and-Now Living                                                       |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cognitive Style    | Evaluating life through past metrics or nostalgia.    | Preoccupied with external logistics and future scenarios.    | High situational awareness; deeply engaged in the current task or interaction.      |
| Behavioral Pattern | Repeating long-standing routines out of momentum.     | Managing external noise, opinions, and administrative drift. | Intentionally choosing activities that yield real-time joy, growth, and connection. |
| Decision-Making    | Influenced by former roles or unexamined obligations. | Reactive to immediate external demands.                      | Decisive and choice-driven, prioritizing presence, health, and alignment.           |

4. 22 Concrete Examples of Applying HN to Daily Life at 60

Here are 22 real-world scenarios illustrating how to pivot away from past regrets or future anxiety and step directly into present-moment vitality:

1. **The Morning Routine:** Instead of mentally running through your daily checklist the moment you wake up, take 60 seconds to feel your breath and recognize the start of a brand-new day.
2. **Physical Effort:** When engaged in demanding physical exercise (like cycling or swimming), shift focus away from tracking historical benchmarks or target miles to the immediate rhythm of your breathing and movement.
3. **Deep Mentorship:** When offering guidance to younger colleagues or family members, step back from giving immediate solutions and ask: *"What are you feeling about this challenge right now?"*
4. **Relational Presence:** During a conversation with your spouse, put away all distractions and give 100% focused eye contact, listening to the process and tone behind the words.
5. **Craftsmanship & Projects:** When working on a hands-on project or physical task, slow down to appreciate the immediate tactile experience rather than rushing toward completion.
6. **Savoring Daily Rituals:** While enjoying a morning espresso or tea, focus entirely on the taste, warmth, and aroma for two minutes without reading news or checking devices.
7. **Cognitive Challenges:** When tackling complex puzzles or logical tasks, treat the process as an active meditation on present clarity rather than a test of speed.
8. **Handling Friction:** When faced with minor daily annoyances (like delays or tech glitches), notice your immediate physical reaction (jaw tension, elevated heart rate) and consciously relax your muscles in the room.
9. **Stepping Away from the Filibuster:** Catch yourself when re-telling a familiar story from years ago, and pivot: *"I notice I'm talking about the past again—let me focus on what's happening today."*
10. **Direct Emotional Expression:** Tell the people closest to you what you appreciate about them *in this exact moment*, rather than assuming they already know.
11. **Body Awareness Checks:** Periodically pause throughout the day to do a 10-second somatic scan: *Where am I holding tension right now?*
12. **Letting Go of Legacy Anxiety:** Shift from worrying about "what I'll leave behind" to asking *"How am I showing up for the people around me today?"*
13. **Active Listening:** In social settings, catch the urge to prepare your response while someone else is speaking; instead, take in their complete expression.
14. **Embracing Silence:** Allow natural pauses in conversations to linger without feeling the need to immediately fill the air with commentary.
15. **Engaging the Senses in Nature:** When outdoors, notice three distinct physical details (the temperature of the air, the sound of the wind, the texture of the ground) to anchor yourself instantly.
16. **Reframing Past Regrets:** When an old memory surfaces, acknowledge it without judgment and ask: *"What choice can I make today that honors what I learned back then?"*
17. **Simplifying Logistics:** When feeling overwhelmed by administrative tasks or home projects, pause and ask: *"What single item requires my attention right now?"*
18. **Authentic Vulnerability:** Admitting to a friend or family member when you feel uncertain or tired in the moment, rather than maintaining an armor of total self-sufficiency.
19. **Dropping Comparisons:** Resisting the impulse to compare your current physical or cognitive metrics to where you were a decade ago, fully accepting your present capability.
20. **Reclaiming Time:** Saying "no" immediately to commitments that feel like obligations, freeing up space for present alignment.
21. **Curiosity Over Judgment:** When meeting someone with a completely different perspective, replace defense mechanisms with present curiosity: *"What can I learn from how they see the world right now?"*

2. **Nighttime Closure:** Before sleeping, perform a simple HN review: identify three moments from the day where you felt completely engaged and present.

## 5. The 22-Point Guidelines for Life Beyond 60

These 22 operational guidelines synthesize Yalom's framework into a clear protocol for optimizing the chapters ahead:

1. **Own Your Current Agency:** Remind yourself daily that your time is entirely yours to direct; you are the author of your present day.
2. **Prioritize Process Over Outcome:** Find fulfillment in the ongoing doing, building, and practicing, rather than focusing solely on finished results.
3. **Practice Rapid Return:** Whenever you catch yourself dwelling on "the good old days" or worrying about the distant future, gently pull your attention back to the present hour.
4. **Cultivate Somatic Grounding:** Use physical movement, breath, and sensory inputs as immediate anchors whenever your mind drifts into abstract anxiety.
5. **Listen to Relational Nuance:** Pay attention to *how* loved ones speak to you—their tone, energy, and unstated needs—rather than just the surface content.
6. **Nurture High-Quality Connections:** Invest your relational energy in deep, authentic, present interactions rather than broad, superficial social obligations.
7. **Drop the Mentor's Shield:** When advising younger generations, share vulnerability and present-moment perspective rather than just historical accomplishments.
8. **Treat Your Home as a Sanctuary of Presence:** Design your daily living space to encourage focus, calm, and immediate engagement rather than clutter and distraction.
9. **Embrace Physical Reality:** Honor your body's current state each morning without comparing it to past decades; adapt your effort to today's energy.
10. **Interrupt Intellectualization:** Notice when you are analyzing a feeling instead of actually experiencing it; pause and feel it directly.
11. **Practice Immediate Gratitude:** Notice small, concrete details in your immediate environment that bring comfort or satisfaction right now.
12. **Simplify Your Operational Overhead:** Reduce unnecessary commitments, clutter, and digital noise to create mental space for presence.
13. **Communicate Directly:** Say what you mean with kindness and clarity in the moment, eliminating indirect hints or unexpressed expectations.
14. **Engage in Deep Focus:** Protect periods of single-tasking—whether reading, tinkering, exercising, or conversing—free from multitasking.
15. **Forgive Past Missteps Rapidly:** Treat past mistakes as closed historical data; do not allow old guilt to rent space in your current mind.
16. **Value Experiential Learning:** Pursue new skills or topics purely for the immediate joy of discovery, without needing to turn them into achievements.
17. **Accept Life's Limits Gracefully:** Acknowledge finite time not as a source of gloom, but as a catalyst that makes the present moment infinitely precious.
18. **Respond, Don't React:** Pause for two seconds before reacting to unexpected news or friction, making a conscious choice from the HN.
19. **Celebrate the Small Moments:** Treat daily rituals—a quiet morning, a good meal, a smooth ride—as primary events, not background noise.

- !0. **Keep Your Curiosity Alive:** Approach every day with the open question: "*What can I discover or appreciate today that I didn't notice yesterday?*"
- !1. **Protect Your Inner Peace:** Walk away from unnecessary drama, toxic debates, and situations that drain your presence without offering value.
- !2. **Live the Present Fully:** Remember that the "good old days" are happening right now—make sure you are fully present to inhabit them.

M365 Copilot

Dr. Irvin Yalom's concept of the\*\*\*"Here and Now" (HN)\*\* is one of the most powerful ideas in existential and interpersonal psychotherapy. He repeatedly argues that therapy becomes most effective when therapist and client focus on **what is happening right now in the room, between them, in the present moment**, rather than endlessly discussing events that happened elsewhere or long ago. Yalom even called the here-and-now the therapist's "best friend" and a major source of therapeutic power. [[psychologytoday.com](https://psychologytoday.com)], [[ehinstitute.org](https://ehinstitute.org)]

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## The Three Time Perspectives

Although Yalom most frequently uses the terms\*\*\*"Here and Now"\*\*\* and\*\*\*"There and Then,"\*\*\* many therapists and readers describe a third perspective which can be thought of as\*\*\*"Yesterday and Now"\*\*\*.

### 1. Here and Now (HN)

#### Definition

Focus on:

- What am I feeling right now?
- What are you feeling right now?
- What is happening between us right now?
- What emotions are present in this moment?
- What patterns are emerging in this interaction?

Examples:

- "I notice you're becoming quiet as we discuss this."
- "I feel a distance between us right now."
- "What are you experiencing as you tell me this?"

The current interaction becomes a living laboratory. The person's relational patterns emerge in real time.

[[psychologytoday.com](https://psychologytoday.com)], [[content.app-us1.com](https://content.app-us1.com)]

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### 2. There and Then

#### Definition

Focus on:

- Past events
- Other people

- Historical stories
- Events happening outside therapy

Examples:

- My boss criticized me last week.
- My spouse ignored me yesterday.
- My father was controlling when I was ten.

These stories may be important, but Yalom believed that staying here too long can become intellectual discussion rather than therapeutic change. [[psychologytoday.com](https://psychologytoday.com)], [[content.app-us1.com](https://content.app-us1.com)]

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### 3. Yesterday and Now

This is not a formal Yalom phrase, but it captures something he often does clinically.

#### Definition

Looking at the past through the lens of the present.

Not:

"Tell me for 45 minutes about your childhood."

Instead:

"How is that childhood experience affecting you right now?"

Example:

- Childhood rejection
- Current fear of intimacy
- Present hesitation with therapist

Past -> Present -> Awareness -> Change

This is where Yalom often guides patients after briefly exploring history.

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## Why Yalom Keeps Bringing Clients Back to HN

Because people often talk **about life** instead of actually **experiencing life**.

Many patients:

- Analyze instead of feel
- Explain instead of experience
- Rationalize instead of connect

Yalom believed that transformation happens when experience becomes immediate. [[ehinstitute.org](https://ehinstitute.org)], [[content.app-us1.com](https://content.app-us1.com)]

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## The Psychological Pillars of Here and Now

## Pillar 1: Awareness

Questions:

- What am I feeling?
- What am I sensing?
- What is happening inside me?

Without awareness, change cannot occur.

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## Pillar 2: Presence

Attention remains in the current moment.

Not:

- past regret
- future worry

But:

- current reality
- 

## Pillar 3: Emotional Experience

Feel emotions directly rather than discussing them intellectually.

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## Pillar 4: Authenticity

Being genuine and honest.

No masks.

No social performance.

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## Pillar 5: Relational Awareness

Understanding how one's behavior affects others.

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## Pillar 6: Feedback

Learning from real-time responses.

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## Pillar 7: Responsibility

Owning choices and reactions.

A fundamental existential principle.

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## Pillar 8: Curiosity

Observe rather than judge.

## Pillar 9: Courage

Facing uncomfortable truths.

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## Pillar 10: Meaning-Making

Creating meaning through direct engagement with life.

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# How a "Here and Now" Person Thinks

Typical thinking patterns:

- What am I experiencing at this moment?
- What is real right now?
- What assumptions am I making?
- What feelings am I avoiding?
- What is happening between us?

They continuously update their reality instead of relying on old narratives.

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# How They Behave

They tend to:

- Listen carefully
  - Notice emotions
  - Ask clarifying questions
  - Express feelings directly
  - Stay grounded
  - Remain engaged
  - Tolerate discomfort
  - Avoid excessive blame
- 

# How They Make Decisions

Instead of:

"What does everyone expect me to do?"

They ask:

"What do I genuinely feel is right right now?"

They combine:

- awareness
- values
- present reality

before acting.

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## 22 Concrete Real-Life Examples

### 1. Argument with spouse

Instead of:

"You're always like this."

HN:

"Right now I feel hurt and disconnected."

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### 2. Team meeting

Notice nervousness before speaking rather than suppressing it.

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### 3. Job interview

Stay focused on current questions rather than past failures.

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### 4. Parenting

Notice irritation rising before yelling.

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### 5. Traffic jam

Observe frustration instead of becoming consumed by it.

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### 6. Friendship conflict

Ask:

"What am I feeling toward my friend right now?"

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### 7. Performance review

Remain with present feedback instead of mentally fighting old criticisms.

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### 8. Medical diagnosis

Feel fear honestly rather than pretending everything is fine.

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### 9. Public speaking

Notice bodily sensations and continue speaking.

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## 10. First date

Pay attention to actual chemistry rather than future fantasies.

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## 11. Grieving

Allow sadness to be present.

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## 12. Business negotiation

Monitor emotional reactions in real time.

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## 13. Family gathering

Notice triggers as they happen.

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## 14. Therapy session

Tell the therapist:

"I'm uncomfortable discussing this."

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## 15. Receiving criticism

Observe defensiveness emerging.

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## 16. Giving criticism

Remain aware of compassion and tone.

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## 17. Making a purchase

Pause and ask:

"What do I truly need right now?"

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## 18. Social media

Notice envy while scrolling.

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## 19. Retirement planning

Choose based on present values rather than old expectations.

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## 20. Leadership

Observe the emotional climate of the group.

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## 21. Apologizing

Stay present with discomfort instead of escaping it.

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## 22. End-of-life reflection

Focus on what matters today rather than endless regret.

This example deeply aligns with Yalom's existential work concerning mortality and meaningful living. [\[neurolaunch.com\]](https://neurolaunch.com)

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## The 22-Point Here-and-Now Guideline

1. Notice what you feel.
  2. Name the feeling.
  3. Stay with the feeling.
  4. Pay attention to your body.
  5. Observe your thoughts.
  6. Separate facts from stories.
  7. Stay curious.
  8. Speak authentically.
  9. Listen fully.
  10. Avoid mind-reading.
  11. Notice relational patterns.
  12. Ask for feedback.
  13. Accept feedback openly.
  14. Take responsibility.
  15. Observe defensiveness.
  16. Slow down before reacting.
  17. Tolerate discomfort.
  18. Focus on reality, not assumptions.
  19. Connect past patterns to present behavior.
  20. Choose actions aligned with values.
  21. Create meaning from current experience.
  22. Return repeatedly to the present moment.
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## The Core Insight

The essence of Yalom's Here-and-Now philosophy is:

**The way you live right now is the way you relate right now.**

**The way you relate right now reveals who you are.**

**What is revealed right now can be changed right now.**

That is why Yalom continually redirects patients from\*\*\*"there and then"\*\*\* back to\*\*\*"here and now."\*\*\* The present interaction becomes a microscope through which longstanding patterns, fears, defenses, loneliness, authenticity, freedom,

and meaning can be observed and transformed. [\[psychologytoday.com\]](#), [\[ehinstitute.org\]](#), [\[content.app-us1.com\]](#)