

5 Steps to focus on the present when the past cannot be erased

Often, we cling to our past without realizing that we are limiting our present. Some people live trapped in a past that can no longer be changed, preventing them from seeing their dreams and goals fulfilled. But how can we focus on the present when the past cannot be erased? For some, it would be wonderful if there were a “time machine” to travel back and erase experiences where unpleasant, traumatic, or wrong moments were lived. However, that is not an option, even in the technological world we live in. This means that the life experiences we have had remain within us. It is impossible to run from what we have lived, but that does not mean it is impossible to overcome the past.

How can I overcome the past?

So, how can I overcome the past? The only way is by accepting that there is no going back to what happened to us. It may seem obvious,

but in our human nature there exists an irrational and insistent world that dominates over the rational. This causes us to remain lamenting what we’ve lived and insisting on changing

it, leading us into the abyss of depression. Staying stuck in what has happened only leads us to live in regret, sadness, agony, guilt, and disappointment.

Living attached to “what if” leads us to a world of self-punishment, where we flog ourselves with our thoughts and actions.

MEET OUR EXPERT

Dr. Ana M. González Luna is a dedicated clinical psychologist and founder of the “Despierta Tu Pasión” project, focused on enhancing quality of life through emotional well-being and personal growth. With extensive experience in individual and couples psychotherapy, Dr. González Luna specializes in addressing anxiety, grief, and chronic conditions. She combines her clinical expertise with psychoeducation, offering seminars, workshops, and training sessions for organizations, schools, and companies.

Her mission is to provide hope, empowerment, and practical tools for those seeking meaningful change, helping individuals break free from routines, fears, and emotional dependencies to rediscover what truly inspires them. Through her work, Dr.

González Luna creates spaces for education, emotional management, and motivation, supporting her clients on their journey toward a more fulfilling and passionate life.



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EXPERT

CORNER

We believe that our current unhappiness is the consequence of our past. Our past has an impact on our life, but it doesn't have to define our present, much less our future. The past has already happened, but my present is current. This means that my present is valid, valuable, active, and in use. So this means I can do something in this time.

How do I start to erase my past?

Accepting the past:

The word "accept" means to receive without opposition what is given to us. This means we must be aware that what happened was something life gave us. Now, why did life give us that past? Every experience lived has a purpose. It's the way life teaches us lessons that prepare us to become who we want to be. But instead of learning from these lessons, we remain lamenting and nullifying the wonderful being that life wants us to become. Accepting our past requires courage and conviction. Enough courage to face those experiences and not allow them to keep taking over our present; and enough conviction to know that it's time to focus on those things that demand our attention.

Learning:

Every life experience has a lesson, and your past is no exception. Your past has mapped out what you need to change, what you shouldn't do again, what you should avoid, and the attitude with which you should face similar situations. The best way to grow, evolve, and strengthen ourselves is through our experiences and mistakes. So instead of focusing on what happened, evaluate what you can learn from it.

Forgiving:

We come to the most complicated step for some; but I must inform you that it's the most important. Forgiving is the act of excusing, not holding grudges or punishing for an act. It doesn't mean we think what happened was okay or that it didn't happen. Rather, even knowing it wasn't right, we choose not to punish, blame, or penalize. It means we choose an act of healing and self-love. It's about stopping the anger to make way for peace with ourselves and those around us. The act of forgiving must begin with ourselves. We must start by forgiving ourselves for what happened and recognizing that at that moment, the decisions we made were the ones we thought were best. Only in this way can we free ourselves from a past that binds us and doesn't let us move on.

Letting Go:

How can you grab a gift if your hands are full? The only way is by letting go of what you're holding, otherwise you miss the opportunity to receive it. The same happens with us; life is full of beautiful gifts meant for you. But how will you grab them if you keep carrying your past? When I talk about letting go, I don't mean ignoring, erasing, dismissing, or sacrificing. When I talk about letting go, I mean making the decision that your past will not control your time or your life. It's an act of gratitude for what you've learned and an act of trust for what's to come.

Grab your gift:

Hold tightly to all those blessings that already have your name on it and are waiting for you to open them. They're designed for you. You just have to allow yourself to dream, love, live, believe, and be happy.

Final Words...

So, even though you can't erase the past, you have the ability to do something about the present and future before you.

Today is a good moment to take away the power from your past and empower yourself in your present.