

The Mirror-like Nature of Past and Future

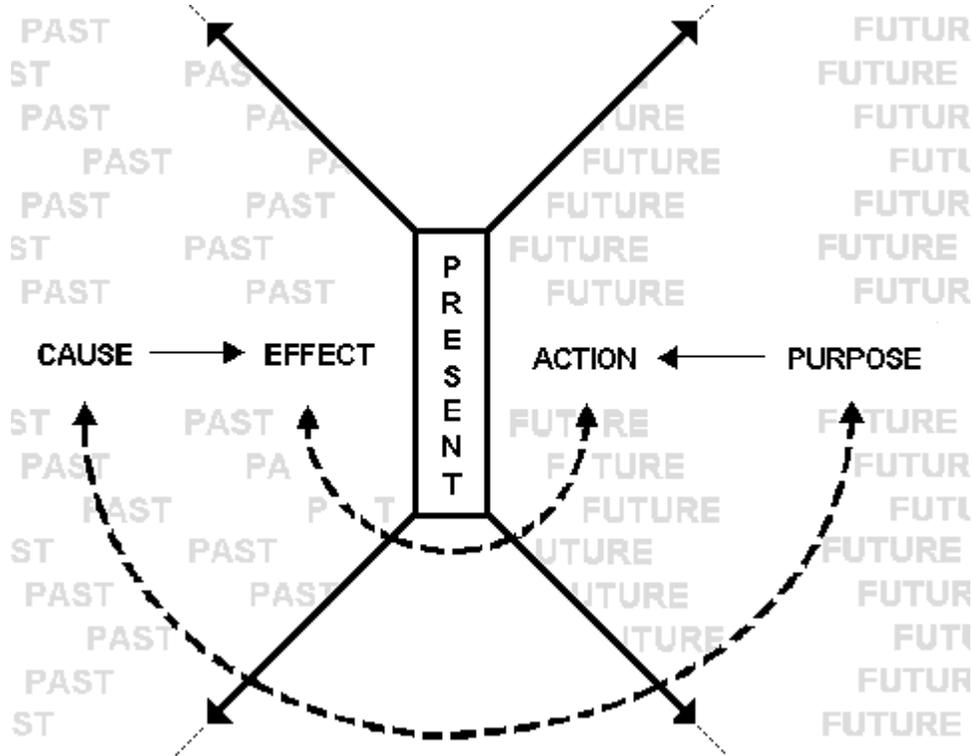
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The Present is created by the act of perceiving; while time is a concept created by our intellect used to organize our information and knowledge (see [The Nature of Knowledge](#)). As infants we eat when we perceive hunger pangs. Later, after much training, we learn the concept of eating lunch at noon.

The concept of time is based upon spacial position. We first measured days by the position of the sun in the sky; months by the phase of the moon, and years by the position of the rising and setting sun. Our clocks have progressed from dripping buckets, hourglasses, and pendulums to vibrating crystals and cesium atomic clocks. However, our most sophisticated physical theories have returned us to the inherent relationship between time and position with the concept of the "space-time continuum" (see Dimensionality for more discussion of the relationship between space and time).

If the Present is perception, what are the Past and the Future? One important aspect of these concepts is they are mirror images on one another. We use the Past to organize our memories and the Future to organize our visions. The figure below demonstrates the mirror relationship between past and future.



In organizing historical information we principally use a "cause and effect" relationship. We describe initial events as causing effects seen in later events. In organizing future information, we speak of goals, reasons, and purposes for doing things. The purpose is something which we wish to occur at a later time by doing something now. We speak of implementing actions today because we wish to achieve a purpose tomorrow. In this respect, the purpose causes the action. Purpose is the mirror image of Cause; Action is the mirror image of Effect.

In no way does the mirror concept of Past and Future result in a violation of the cause-effect relationship. For example, this year a man might say he is saving his money for the purpose of buying a boat. Several years from now, the same man might say he was able to buy a boat because he saved his money.

Western science is based upon observation and corrolation. Search for and describe cause-effect relationships. Using this knowledge, we project and forecast future events. This is the Historical Perspective. We look from the Past into the Future. Accepting the mirror concept of Past and Future, one sees that an alternative perspective is available. This alternative is to look from the Future into the Past. This is the Future Perspective. For example, consider the man wishing to buy a boat. He accepts the premise that he will have a boat in the future and clearly determines that he must begin saving his money.

Neither the Historical Perspective nor the Future Perspective is inherently more correct than the other. They are equally legitimate tools for developing understanding of Reality.

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<http://neoperceptions.com/futureperspective/futpers.htm>