

# WHAT CONDITION IS YOUR MENTAL MOTORCYCLING CONDITION IN?

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Initially, last month when I discussed my safety tip of what we can do in the non-riding months to improve our riding skills, I was limited in scope to looking at stop gap things to plug in what we do during the rest of our riding year. Therefore, I wasn't "AWARE" of our need to see what condition is our mental motorcycling condition in. We've heard of the term, "Mindfulness" or where our mind is in the present or at the moment. The awareness we are looking for is called, "in the moment awareness" or in real time as opposed to "historical awareness" which means you understand yourself and how you've reacted to certain situations in the past.

Other types of mindful conditions we need to be cognizant of as motorcyclists is when we say you are "in your head" or "in your body". In your head means you are thinking, remembering, analyzing, daydreaming or mentally wandering here and there. It means you are preoccupied with other important issues and are disconnected from your body and your senses and from your bike. "In your body" means your senses, seeing, smelling and notice what is happening in real time. You are connected to your bike, the driving surface, the conditions, and what is happening around you. You will be able to anticipate hazards and situations that arise and overall be in control of your riding experience.

But our awareness does not come automatically every time you get on your bike. Many things block awareness such as emotions, reaction to life events, physical illness, anxiety, being preoccupied and fear. These all dampen your ability to be in the moment. To be in the moment means we cannot think of things in the past as well as things in the future. We cannot think what we have to do next, or later that day, or next month. These things will lose touch with our senses and lose touch with awareness of the present. When we think of things in the past and in the future and come back to the "in the moment awareness", we are not 100% in the moment. There is a residual where we are not fully paying attention to our body, bike, or the road. We are not hearing or seeing critical changes in our riding experience and cannot make the proper adjustments.

The bottom line is we need a sharp mental focus and awareness when riding a motorcycle. Riding demands constant concentration and to filter out distractions and stay focused on the road ahead. Skilled motorcyclists need to mentally rehearse maneuvers in their mind before executing them.

Remember, mental preparation is just as crucial as physical skills when it comes to mastering the art of motorcycling. Do you know what condition your mental motorcycling condition is? (Based on the 1967 song by the First Edition, "Just dropped in to see what condition my condition was in").