

## Presence in Daily Life

The wandering mind, in which we are lost in thought, prevents appreciation. Mentally in one place while physically in another, unawakened people miss out on the opportunity to savor the gift of awareness.

Is it useful to “check in” with the present moment from time to time to appreciate and savor the gift of consciousness, to calm and ground ourselves when aroused, and to regain a sense of perspective and freedom. To be present while living one’s life is called being “still while still moving.” We can start with routine tasks, such as bathing, cooking a meal, doing household chores, or driving to work.

You might also want to use a vibrating wrist reminder. You can set it to vibrate periodically throughout the day to prompt you to “wake up.”

Being present to the experience of Life living through us triggers appreciation. Attending in daily life lets us savor Life’s experiences, whether it be a beautiful sunset or a tuna sandwich. When we attend to the Now, it stops the unconscious tendency of mind to restlessly jump into the next moment.

For daily presence, practice the following:

1. Tune into the breath. It is there 17,000 to 30,000 times a day for you to note. Breathing deeply will trigger calm and relaxation if you are stressed or tense.
2. Repeatedly ask yourself, “What is this?” What is experienced? Sights, sounds, sensations, feelings, thoughts, urges, mental images, beliefs, actions, and reactions. Just notice, moment by moment. This creates the liberating experience of stillness in motion. When you ask, “What is this?” you SEE experience rather than BE experience.
3. Practice looking and listening closely and carefully, as if for the very first or perhaps very last time. Try to see and hear everything freshly and deeply. Look and listen so carefully that thought is suppressed for a moment.

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4. When you eat, for example, just eat. Pay careful attention to the tastes, smells, and textures of your food. Be like a scientist, researching the experience of eating. Again, as in all things, you are repeatedly asking yourself, “What is this?”
5. When you talk to someone, look at them observantly and listen fully to what they are saying. Pay close attention to them.
6. Apply this practice of attending to as many of your waking moments as possible. As much as you can, be present to what you are doing and do all things wholeheartedly.

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