

Practical Advice To Be More Present

A great skill to learn is being more present. Being present is simply being focused on your environment and your current task. ***It means that your mind isn't thinking about anything else other than what is right in front of you.***

There are so many great benefits that come from being present in the moment. For example, it's calming, inspiring as well as relaxing! It's about the only time your brain isn't buzzing along thinking about 20 different things. You get to actually live your life, as opposed to either thinking about the past or the future. You will be far more productive.

The following techniques can help you live more fully in the present:

- 1. Pay attention to what is going on around you.** If you're not actively engaged in doing something productive, take a good look at what's going on around you. Suppose you're taking a walk. Notice everything: the cars driving by, the trees blowing in the wind, various animals scurrying around, the clouds, and more. See everything.
 - Listen to everything. What can you hear? How many different sounds can you pick out?
 - What can you feel? The warm air moving across your arm? A sore foot? The ground beneath your feet? Your cold hands?
 - What can you smell?
 - In general, if you're not really doing something then you should be focused on your surroundings. Because, at that moment, that's your life.
- 2. Focus on your current task.** If you're mowing the grass, focus on mowing the grass. If you're writing a report, focus on writing the report. Your mind should stay on task. It takes practice to do it reasonably well, so practice all the time. ***When you start thinking about something else, gently come back to the task and let go of your previous thought.*** You'll get so much more accomplished when you're focused on your task. You'll also eliminate worry and stress. How can you be stressed if you're only thinking about what is in front of you? There's no room for stress.
- 3. If you're having a hard time focusing on your work or environment, focus on your breathing.** Your breath is like a constant in the universe; it's always with you. It also helps to get your brain and body in sync. Focus on your breathing and don't let your mind wander. When it does wander, gently bring it back to your breath. After 10-15 minutes, you should be ready to transition to focusing on something else.
- 4. Practice all the time.** See if you can wash up without thinking one stray thought; even thinking about how glad you'll be when it's done would be a stray thought. Do this with everything that you do, all day long. ***Make a game out of it.***
- 5. At night, focus on your breathing.** Lying in bed is a great opportunity for most people to get themselves all worked up. We think about how horrible work was or about how we have so much to do tomorrow. None of this has ever helped anyone. Focus on your breathing until you fall asleep.

Make the effort to be more present. ***You'll be amazed at how much better you feel and how much more you can get done.*** It's not easy at first. Think of it as exercise for your brain. With practice, you'll get a little better each day. To expand your peripheral vision and awareness use the NOW State and keep at it; the rewards are worth it!