

Presence is a Gift

Written by Shelley Lowther

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The best gift you can ever give yourself is presence. Whether you think this is a quote from your favorite yogi, or from Yogi Berra, there is truth in that statement. Presence can make a profound difference in every aspect of your life.

It is so easy to get lost in the digital world we live in. We are constantly distracted. How are we supposed to stay present when everything around us is pointing to something else?

In the last week, I have added a daily meditation practice to my physical asana practice. While this was at first a bit of a chore, I have realized that taking 5, 10 or even 15 minutes out of the beginning and end of each day is actually giving me more time throughout my day. By taking time to calm and relax my constantly working brain, I am becoming more present in my daily activities. My presence is allowing me to accomplish and experience more.

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Are you ever talking to your spouse, and drifting off to the “to do” list in your head? Do you really listen to your kids, or are you thinking about the next place you need to be? Do you take time for yourself, to just relax and be, or are you reaching for something else? Can you let go of something, somewhere, anywhere?

As my meditation practice takes root, I have realized that I am often so focused on my “to do” list that I am not present for what is going on in my life. Sometimes that list, the board meeting in my head, is keeping me from the experiences happening around me. I am using meditation to train my brain to shut that list off. I want to live in the here and now. The past is gone, and the future is ahead of me – it is NOW that matters. What happened before or what comes next have no bearing at all on the present moment.

Presence is indeed a gift. We must stop the carousel from time to time, and just be. Smell the flowers. Breathe in the fresh salt air. Take in the beauty that surrounds us. Be present. It is the best gift you can give yourself and your family.

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