



## DO WHAT YOU DO, BE WHERE YOU ARE

You've seen those late-night ads for fantastic gizmos that slice, dice, grind, chop, blend, and do everything except change the oil in your car. Those ads tout a product or service that promises to transform the quality of your life—all for just \$19.95 plus handling charges.

Well, imagine that the article you're reading now is an ad for a skill that really *could* transform the quality of your life.

Also imagine that this skill is both inexpensive and free. In fact, imagine that it's a potential you've always had.

Well, this ability *is* already yours. It's a skill that you can develop even more without paying postage or C.O.D. charges.

This too-good-to-be-true offer is about something that's commonplace and extraordinary at the same time—your ability to focus your awareness.

### **Focused awareness benefits anything we do**

Your ability to “be here now”—to focus your awareness—can boost the power and quality of all your activities. *Anything* you do benefits from receiving your full attention.

For instance, when you take a walk, you can just take a walk. You do not have to worry about making the rent or mortgage payment, or buying your child's next pair of shoes, or those unfinished projects at work.

Or when you eat your favorite food—say, pizza—you can pour all of your attention into that mouth-watering concoction of cheese, tomato sauce, and freshly baked bread. You don't have to think about adding transmission fluid to your car, or that cutting remark your boss made a year ago, or any of the million other things that could distract you from the present moment. You can just eat that pizza, savoring every bite as if it were the first piece you'd ever eaten.

In summary, you could really start showing up for life. You could be where you are *when* you're there. You could do what you're doing *when* you're doing it. You could melt into the fullness and completeness of the present moment. Whenever this happens to us—while fishing, lying on the beach, cleaning house, working at our jobs, or listening to our favorite music—we feel fulfilled and complete.

The marvelous thing about focusing awareness is that we can do it any time, any place. Every second that we're awake, we can wake up and pay attention.

Consider this: Everything that's present in your life right now—your job, your relationships, your possessions, your home—results from where you've placed your attention in the past. You took focused action to gain these things, and to take any action at all you had to focus your awareness.

Perhaps the overall quality of your life is just a reflection of your ability to focus your awareness.

## Just “be here now”

You’ve probably seen ads for self-help courses that promise to reveal the secret to great romance. Here’s a shorter path to that goal: Focus your awareness.

Romance begins with the simple things: Noticing what our partners wear. Listening carefully to what they say. Seeing the kind things they do and offering thanks. All these actions require paying attention.

Marriages flounder when one or both partners say, “She hasn’t heard a thing I’ve said for the last ten years,” or “He never admits how hard I work.” Long before problems reach this point, we can take preventive action. We can give our partners the gift of focused awareness.

You can use the same strategy to get something that many people say they want—a long-term, loving relationship that maintains sexual excitement. If you want to create new sparks, particularly in bed, then just be there in every single moment, with every single stroke, with every single look, every single smell, every single taste. Then you’ll be with somebody new in every moment—the person right there in front of you, not some memory of who that person was in the past.

What works for great lovers also works for great performers and great athletes. They’re present in the moment when they play music or dance or make a free throw—not thinking about something else.

The practice is to just “be here now” with each activity. Be here now while working ... while reading ... while talking ... while listening ... while doing anything at all.

Inevitably our minds will wander. Seeing this, we can gently bring them back again ... and again ... and again. Though we may find this difficult to do at first, we’ll also find that our ability improves with practice. With patience and forgiveness, we can return our awareness to the present moment now ... and now ... and now.

