

# Creating Presence and Connection with Others

*Tool: Four Steps to the Present*

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## **Topics for Discussion**

Conscious Choice

Energy and Emotions

The Power of Being Present

The Chakra System and the Mind Body Method

Please Note: The special presentation is part of the Mind Body Method Coach Training. This information is shared with you to introduce you to the concepts and theories of the training program and to provide you some new tools to enhance your already existing coaching practice. We recommend additional training programs, provided by Kathy Pike and Pathways to Radiance, to fully integrate the methods that support the concepts presented.

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## Being Present

Webster Dictionary:

Presence *n* 1: the fact or condition of being present 2: the space immediately around a person  
3: the bearing of a person

Being present is a gift... for you and anyone who experiences you as a coach. Being present means that you bring your whole being—body, mind and spirit—to the present moment. You are fully aware of what's going on in and around you, without judgment, and you have the ability to focus your attention where and how you desire.

Being present allows you to coach more effectively and with less effort. It is easier for you to listen, observe and wait patiently as clients discover their truths and greatness. You are able to listen to clients from your heart and thus create a space that promotes a deep connection between two people. They receive the gift of being seen, heard and understood on many levels. You mirror and reflect their spirit and soul, which provides the space for them to drop their borders and boundaries of self-protection. Instead of feeling the need to hide from the truth, they open to their whole being so they can discover who they are and what actions will best serve them. The quality of a coach's presence can be the main factor that invites or repels conversations of a transformational nature.

When you're present you do one thing at a time. You center your whole being and you focus inward, which is a skill that frequently runs counter to the world that we live in. Most of us live in a fast-paced world that is information driven from a number of sources. Most of us have 'to-do' lists that are way too large for us to complete within a typical day. Therefore, we find ourselves spending most of our time focusing outward. We use our eyes and sensing body to see and interpret what is around us, to check for danger, to make sure we're safe and to achieve our goals. For many of us, the business of 'doing' is keeping us from the business of 'being.' Dan Millman once shared at a conference, "If you want to simplify, do one thing at a time." Yet, how many times do we find ourselves trying to achieve three things at once or doing one project and thinking about something else we need to do? The focus of our energy is not only outward; it is outward toward three or more different things. To do all the things we're trying to accomplish, we often become numb to everything that is bombarding our senses and to what our body is telling us. We seldom stop along the path of life to ask ourselves how we are feeling and what we may really want out of life.

Stopping and bringing your awareness inward to your body and the space around your body is what it takes to be present to yourself and to your client.

This level of presence is what creates an environment that invites the clients to discover who they are and what they want. Bringing your focus inward pulls all of your energy close to home, closing the gap to distractions. The outer environment is not excluded in this process, though. It just stops being the primary focus of your attention. Instead, your awareness includes information from both your inner and your outer environment. When you're present, you focus your senses on both worlds. It is, in fact, your ability to flow easily between the two worlds that creates a powerful space and presence for clients.

*"The mind can direct a person's attention either inward or outward, toward the body or toward external objects. In effect, one focuses one's energy either on the self or on the external world. A healthy person can alternate these two points of focus rapidly so that almost at the same time one is aware of one's bodily self and of the environment. Such a person is mindful of what is happening to himself, as well as what is happening to others." Bioenergetics, Alexander Lowen, M.D.*

## **Four Steps to the Present**

### **Ask yourself: "Where am I in my body?"**

When you're present you are fully contained and in your body. The body has numerous and innate ways to sense and inform us about how to best interpret what's going on in the outer world. Bringing your awareness into the body allows you to use those sensing mechanisms, to tap into our body's wisdom and to make powerful choices as a fully integrated human being. If you make decisions based solely on what's presented by the outer world and your inner thinking around it, you will be making decisions with only part of the information that is available for you.

Ask yourself, "Where am I in my body?" and notice the area of your body that first draws your attention. You may notice your stomach, lower back, heart, neck, throat or head. Where your attention goes is where energy is expressing and moving in your body. By coming to know where you're expressing your energy within your body throughout the day, you open yourself to insights on how the outer environment affects your inner feeling-state at any given time. Focusing inward and noticing where you are in your body on a regular basis helps you to become skilled at being fully centered in your body at every moment and fully aware, simultaneously, of your internal and external environment.

### **Ask yourself: "What am I feeling?"**

When you're present you are highly aware of what's going on within you and in your outer world at the same time. This dual focus is an expanded level of self-awareness. Because of circumstances in your life, you may come to a coaching call (or any situation) in an emotional state that might not be conducive to

meeting a client where she or he needs you to be. With little or no awareness of your own feeling state, it will be difficult to become present with a client. By being able to recognize your feeling state, you are in a position to shift your energy to match or accommodate the energy of a client so you can be present for them.

To be able to sense the quality of your energy and shift it, as needed, begin to observe what you are experiencing in your body when your presence is inward. Ask “What am I feeling?” Then notice the sensations you are experiencing in the area that called for your attention. Some of the words that can be used to describe sensations are warmth, expansion, vibration, jitters, whirling, stabbing, hard, jittery, tight, dull, and burning. As you focus your attention fully on the area that is speaking, stay on the edge of your sensations by observing the subtle shifts in your sensations.

The ability to watch and witness your internal quality of energy increases your ability to be present and aware in the moment. It also grants you the choice to create the feeling state that you wish to experience. It is difficult to shift any situation if there is no awareness.

The more often you ask the question, “What am I feeling?” the sooner you will connect your body sensations connect to feelings and emotions (i.e., tension, happiness, peacefulness or stress). Simply notice where your emotions and feelings play out in your body and what they feel like when expressed. Feelings are energy in expression, and your energy may be warm and expansive when you feel love and joy and they may be tight and contracted when you are feel frustrated or angry. Whatever way your body expresses your feelings and emotions, noticing what’s going on within you moves you into being present. The more you develop the ability to track your energy and to notice the quality of it, the easier it is to remain in the physical body and to stay physically and energetically present. Practicing this level of awareness will bring to light any existing feeling patterns in your life. Feeling patterns are qualities of feeling you experience on a consistent basis.

**Ask yourself: “What am I thinking?”**

The previous three questions help you to be present in your body by tracking and observing sensations within yourself. Being present in your body can be powerful. Yet, it is not the only element that is involved when you're fully present to clients. Your mind is also open and free of mental chatter or clutter. It is open to experiencing whatever is happening right now in the moment with a client, without distractions or agendas. If your mind is thinking about what you are going to say or do next, then it cannot be present. If your mind is sizing up and judging a situation, it cannot be present. To be present in the mind is to have expansiveness and spaciousness in your thoughts.

Once you have asked yourself the questions discussed above (i.e., “Where am I in my body?” and “What is the quality of my energy?”) and you're fully aware of how your body and energy is expressing itself, it is time to bring your awareness to your mind and notice what it is doing and thinking. To become aware of what's going on in your mind ask “What am I thinking?” and observe the thoughts that you are having.

Observing and tracking the activity and thought processes of your mind deepens your awareness of how your ego operates, what motivates you to take action and how your thoughts may sabotage you in certain situations. Checking in with yourself in this way throughout the day allows you to see if you are focused and present to what is happening in the moment or if your thoughts pull you into the future or back into the past. Once you have awareness of where your thoughts are at any given moment, you can make a conscious and intentional choice to redirect your focus to what is happening in the present moment, if needed. This present focus allows you to live with conscious intention. Continually asking yourself what you are thinking helps you to discipline your mind and brings you into a very high level of awareness on a regular basis.

**Ask yourself: “What is the quality of my breath?”**

When you're present your awareness can dance between the outer world and the inner world. Going inward in order to have a deep sense of your 'self', based on your energy (emotions) and body, is a greater challenge, however, than going outward. The world in which we currently live is very stimulating to the senses. Daily life is filled with messages through television, radio, cell phones, computer screens and sound systems. There is always something in the outer world to grab our attention and focus. These distractions seem very exciting and can frequently take us away from what is going on within us.

Bringing awareness inward requires intention and something to focus on. One of the simplest ways to bring your awareness inward is to focus on your breath. The breath is a powerful force that connects the outer world to the inner world. To follow one's breath is to follow the flow of air from the outer world into the inner world—your body. The more you are connected to and aware of your

breath, the easier it is to begin to move inward and feel the presence of your own physical and energetic being.

Each time you wish to become more present, begin by directing your focus inward with the breath and ask “What is the quality of my breath?” Take one or two breaths and focus on how your body responds to these breaths. Are your breaths smooth, rich and expansive or are they hesitant, raspy, shallow or thin? Each time you track the breath, your focus remains inward and you have the opportunity to drop further into the body and further into being fully present. Focusing on your breath and answering the question “What is the quality of my breath?” begins the journey toward being present and making choices based on being fully present.

## **Conclusion**

Asking yourself the four questions mentioned above may be incorporated into your life at any time. Practicing the process of asking yourself these questions over and over will help you quickly assess how your whole being shows up in the world. The more your awareness of yourself grows, the more you can make conscious choices because you recognize how your body, feeling state and mind work together to create your reality.

Asking these four questions of yourself any time during the day will make the process of being present something that is second nature to you. Ask them when you’re standing in the grocery store, bank or post office line. Ask them when you are driving your car, listening to music, working out or outside in nature. The more environments you use to do your exploration, the more conscious you will become to how your whole being responds to the world and to others. You increase your ability to stay centered and grounded. You are able to make conscious and integrated choices and live with intention as you create your daily experiences and life.

## **Four Steps to the Present**

- Where am I in my **BODY**?
- What am I **FEELING**?
- What am I **THINKING**?
- What is the quality of my **BREATH**?

## **Review Questions**

What are the benefits of being present? What does an 'outward focus' refer to? 'Inward focus?' Is your focus inward or outward when being present? Why? What are the four steps or questions to become more present? Name one way that each of these four-steps help to facilitate a higher level of presence? How do these four steps shift the dynamic of a coaching session? How does a person's thoughts affect their ability to be present? When are the most appropriate times to ask yourself the four-steps to becoming present questions? What does your client have to gain by practicing these steps? How does this four step process help you to become more conscious?

## **Notes**