

## The Power of Presence!

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In December I was inspired and challenged by a two-week [Gyrokinesis](#) training in Miami. During the course of the training, I was surrounded by people that have been involved in this work for 10 -20 years. Being around them, seeing them move was like watching liquid bodies in motion. Even more beautiful than the movement, was the dynamic awareness within the movement. Consciousness took form and was expressed through the elegance of the human body in motion. Immersed and engulfed in this very present group of humans, I could not help but explore my own capacity for conscious movement . . . a very revealing exploration that has taken me beyond the confines of the class environment and into my life as a whole. What I found is that I am in the habit of blinking in and out of consciousness, in and out of being present, in and out of my own authority. Beauty lies in my existing capacity for presence. Pure, ongoing, dynamic presence eludes me and compels me to continue exploring this great mystery.

I share this with you not because I now have the answers but because I have a more solid grasp of the questions. What is presence? What is consciousness? What does it mean to be alive in every nook and cranny of my being? What does dynamic mean? How do I open to the full force of that which animates life? How do I allow consciousness to flow freely through me, unobstructed by my day to day worries and fears? How much life is expanded and expressed through my action and inaction? Can I live my life without unnecessary defenses? Can I simply allow the ebb and flow of life without trying to manipulate or control it? Are these even the right questions?

As you can see – all questions, no answers. But that's the beauty of living in the mystery rather than the certainty of life. It's an adventure!

Some of the ways I've been practicing presence are:

- Meditation – it helps to lift the fog of unconsciousness
- Movement – being as fully present and available in my body as possible
- Trust – I am where I am in the landscape of my life
- Notice – without judgment, the ongoing blips in and out of consciousness

Take a look at the next pages to go more deeply into each of these practices. I invite you to embark on your own adventure. Explore your capacity to be fully present and available in your life. What are your questions? How will you practice? How will you contemplate the power of your own presence? However you go about your journey, have fun, enjoy and remember to take yourself lightly.

*"There is a force within  
Which gives you life –  
seek that.  
In your body  
Lies a priceless gem –  
seek that.*

*O wondering Sufi,  
if you want to find  
the greatest treasure  
don't look outside,  
Look inside, and seek that." Rumi*

## Ways to Practice Meditation!

Last week I mentioned a few tools I use to practice being present in my life. Over the next few weeks I will elaborate on each practice, maybe even add a few. Who knows? Let's start with meditation . . .

Meditation is profoundly personal and practiced in many different forms. It's a matter of finding what works for you. What lifts the fog of unconsciousness? What is meaningful to you? What feeds and nourishes your soul?

One major misunderstanding about meditation is that it is a time when you don't think. I have found that to be impossible; after all, the mind is designed to think and does it so well. Meditation is more a time where you are bearing witness to your thoughts without identifying with them – more just watching your thoughts drift by like clouds in the sky. It is a time for your thoughts to take a backseat and have less impact on you, so your spirit has some room to move around.

This is what works for me. I start my morning meditation with 15 minutes of movement. I find that it energizes me so that I am more present in the quiet part of my meditation – it eases my way. I offer a Gyrokinesis Body Prayer class, check the website, [www.rolife.com](http://www.rolife.com) or just contact me if you'd like to learn this movement meditation. Or, you could try the Tibetan Rites, a very popular set of movements for healing, rejuvenation and longevity. You could take a quiet walk, being very aware of your body as you go along. You could do a series of stretches that are meaningful to your body. Whatever you do, you don't want it to feel like a work-out; rather it should feel like a "work-in," or physical prayer.

After my body prayer, I move into the quiet, still part of my meditation. I start by using a short chant, either silently or out loud (sometimes the vibration of my voice in my body settles my whole being). The chant you choose is very personal. It may be a favorite passage from a poem, a sacred text, a favorite author . . . anything that fills your heart, opens your mind and frees your spirit. After a few rounds of chanting, I just sit quietly for another 10 or 15 minutes bearing witness, being present, being simple.

Here are some terms you can use to search on the internet to consider for your practice.

- The Five Tibetan Rites – Movement for healing, rejuvenation and longevity
- Center for Spiritual Awareness – A simple meditation practice
- Eknath Easwaran – Meditation: A Simple 8-Point Program for Translating Spiritual Ideas into Daily Life,
- Thomas Keating – Open Mind Open Heart: The Contemplative Dimension of the Gospel
- Ken Wilbur – One Taste . . . Really, anything by him is a wonderful wealth of information about our true nature. He's a bit heady but there are deep truths in his writing. He is a true source of education and inspiration to me.

See what appeals to you. Trust yourself in knowing where to start or how to rejuvenate your current practice. You will know when you come upon a practice that works for you as you will anticipate, with joy, the next opportunity to sit – it will feel like a very satisfying drink from the well of your spirit.

*"The mystics ask you to take nothing on mere belief. Rather, they give you a set of experiments to test in your own awareness and experience. The laboratory is your own mind, the experiment is meditation." Ken Wilber*

*"Meditation is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit." Jeremy Taylor*

*"Some people think that meditation takes time away from physical accomplishment. Taken to extremes, of course, that's true. Most people, however, find that meditation creates more time than it takes." Peter McWilliams*

## Ways to Practice: Body Awareness!

One of the primary ways to become conscious and present in your body is to choose to be so! Sounds simple, doesn't it? But because the body is often viewed as a burden, we tend to ignore it rather than pay attention and allow our body to serve our quest for a fully lived life: a life that encompasses our full dimensionality – body, mind and spirit. If we foster an attitude of respect and appreciation for the body as integral to the scope of our human experience, then we are more readily able to choose to be fully present with and through it. To open to the rich experience of being present in your body, try this:

- When you first wake up, actually before you are fully awake, take a moment to simply witness your body. Notice, without reaction, how your body is feeling. Is it stiff, achy, ready to get going, sluggish, energized? Just notice – the tricky part of this practice is to simply bear witness, be neutral about the sensations you become aware of. Let go of any reaction you are having to this information (oh yay! or oh ick!) and just observe.
- Dead or alive? Still in your half-awake state, scan your body. Notice where you can and cannot feel energy. Are there areas that have a lack of feeling or sensation? These are pockets of unconsciousness in your body. Without force or will, simply breathe into these areas inviting them to wake up and join the party.
- As you go through your day, continue to bear witness and wake up the unconsciousness in your body. In practicing this, I've noticed that different areas blink in and out of consciousness at different points in my day, depending on what I'm doing. Sometimes it feels as though my whole system has gone unconscious. If that happens for you, don't judge or criticize – that is a waste of time. Just breathe and do what you can to come back.

For me, being conscious and appreciative of my body helps me stay present in all aspects of my being. So often, I find that when I lose focus, get crabby or stressed out, if I take a moment to really get present in my body, I am instantly more present in my mind and my spirit. See if this practice contributes to the dynamic power of being fully present in your life.

*“All the pirouettes in the world, all the spectacular feats cannot impress me as much as a simple movement that originates from a deep feeling of aliveness and understanding of the miracle of the human body.”* Frances Becker

## Ways to Practice: Radical Trust!

As I've moved along my path, seeking freedom and truth, I have gone through some very difficult and challenging times. These times took me to the depths, and beyond, of what I thought I had the capacity to handle. I have been humbled and sometimes shattered by this quest. I have also had intense moments of ecstatic freedom and connection to source – all worth the arduous journey to freedom.

Whenever we seek freedom, we are shown the many ways we are NOT free. Whenever we seek truth, we are inherently confronted with everything that is NOT true. It is often painful to have our self-made limits pointed out and our lies revealed through the circumstances of our lives. So, what does all this have to do with radical trust?

It takes radical trust and absolute faith to know that life is a benevolent, albeit fierce teacher; that every challenge is an opportunity to move closer to the truth and undo the ties that bind. If we allow it, if we seek it, life demands that we cease hiding from the wonder of who we are and live from the source of our being. A tall order that requires deep surrender, a letting go of who we think we are in order to be who we truly are. It is the empty handed leap into the mystery of the true self, unshackled and unburdened by the confines of our own pre-determined ideas and beliefs.

It feels a bit odd to suggest ways to practice radical trust. As a highly personal, very intimate exploration – what is significant to me may not be to you. So, I leave you to reflect on what radical trust means to you in your life. How will you explore? What calls to you in your quest?

Here are resources that have been meaningful to me:

Stephen Levine is a prolific writer and healer. Many years ago I read, "Who Dies? An Investigation into Conscious Living and Conscious Dying." This was a life-altering book for me as it helped me understand what is constant and eternal and what is temporary.

Gangaji has also written many books on discovering your true radiance. Her message is absolutely clear and wonderfully confusing. It helps undo some of our certainty of who we think we are. Right now I'm reading "The Diamond in Your Pocket."

Once again, I have to mention Ken Wilber. He has the same effect on me as Gangaji. When I read his work, I feel enlivened and quite confused. It's great to shake up the mind to make space for a new way of being. My current favorite book of his is, "One Taste."

Author of "The Power of Now," Eckhart Tolle, is also very articulate on the subject of our true nature.

In closing . . . even though I speak about this journey as being arduous, in truth, it does not have to be. Your liberated radiant self is alive and well and living within you right here and right now. You have only to trust your open heart, to follow your soul's longing,

to feel the power of your presence, to actually STOP seeking and live in your undiluted truth.

Speaking about the true self: *“Anger, resentment, regret, grievances, anxiety, guilt, etc, which are all inseparable from the egoic state of consciousness, no longer arise. And when you no longer create suffering for yourself, you no longer create suffering for others. You have deep empathy, not only with other human beings, but also with nature and all life forms. You see all life forms as manifestations of the one formless and eternal Life, which is what you are in essence, and you can sense that essence not only in yourself, but in all beings. In other words, everywhere you encounter yourself.”* Eckhart Tolle