



RESOLVING CHALLENGES WITH PRESENCE

* This exercise builds on the ‘Balance and Presence’ exercises on my [website](#).

Overview

- What is Presence?
- Exercise: Presence in a Professional Challenge

Presence *is being here now, in the moment, with full attention on and fully engaging in the present environment regardless of what that environment is.* Presence develops from choosing to be in a primary relationship with the stillness within us, and then interacting in the world from that life force.

Presence increases our awareness, stability, mental and emotional functions, choice, positive self-image, authenticity, inclusiveness, and true leadership. It is the cornerstone of self empowerment.

In Presence, we are

- In a state of deep listening, with awareness beyond our preconceptions and habitual ways of thinking and acting
- Breathing, focusing on the center point in our body (about 2” below the navel, known in Chinese philosophy as the *tan tien*) with heart and mind open, quiet, and alert.
- Here now, in the present moment, aware of and not engaged in the past or future
- In relationship with the stillness, the Infinite Knowing within and around us, and demonstrating that Love in *how* we do whatever we do.
- Open to the deeper, larger patterns and intentions of Life
- Available to all of our senses, and to the natural course of action that arises from the larger Field of Knowing



All the significant breakthroughs were breaks with old ways of thinking.

Thomas Kuhn – American Physicist 1922 - 1996

Exercise: Presence in a Professional Challenge

Purpose

- Increase the depth and breadth of your resources to resolves challenges
- Notice the body is a vehicle of communication and wisdom beyond conscious knowledge
- Notice how Presence can transform challenges into our greatest teachers

Introduction

Let's now apply what you learned in the 'Balance and Presence' exercises, and add the dimension of focusing on physical sensations as a resource for insight beyond your current knowledge.

Think of the body in its healthiest state as the free flowing energy of Essence. That free flow of Essence (love, compassion, curiosity, flexibility, generosity. . .) makes it possible for us to access more than we now know. What or how much we access and act upon depends on our developing the willingness, presence and skills to do so. There's lots to say about energy, consciousness, and choice, but for now, let it suffice to say that the body inherently knows what is happening to us, what is causing it, and what to do about it. All we have to do is ask.

Here's a simple example of body-based wisdom: You have a splitting headache, hives, or a heart attack. When the body knows something is 'out of balance', it raises a 'flag' (which in our example we call headaches, hives or heart attack) and says, "Help! Pay attention! Something is out of balance!" That the body knows when something is out of balance, suggest it also knows what balance is, and how to return to it. All we have to do is be present, receptive, and act upon the body's inherent wisdom to resolve the difficulty. Sometimes the body is asking to resolve the cause of the difficulty *and* its symptoms. Sometimes it's asking us to simply change our relationship to the symptom. Either way, when the symptom *or* our relationship with it changes, we no longer have the same difficulty.

In this exercise, notice that challenging thoughts and emotions are actually experienced as physical sensations, sensations which are often uncomfortable. Notice that in simply being present with the uncomfortable physical sensations, they often relax and open you to your inherent inner wisdom, your gut level instinct. Notice the body is a vehicle of wisdom and communication, and that our greatest challenges are also often our greatest teachers.

Individuals

1. Think of one of your current professional challenges – financial, relational; something significant.
2. Experience the situation in your body, noticing all your related thoughts, emotions and associated physical sensations.

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3. Stay present with and *focused on* your *physical sensations*. Simply ‘Be with’ your sensations – aware and receptive, with nothing to do, and nothing to prove. Take your time. As you do so, what do you notice?
4. As your physical sensations transform, often into a more relaxed sensation, ask your body-based wisdom what it would like you to be aware of regarding your challenge. (You are tapping into that gut level instinctual part of you that simply “knows”, even if you don’t know how you know.) Listen to what your body shares with you. It might come in words, pictures, feelings, sounds. Just be receptive. Remember or write down whatever comes.
5. Now expand your awareness and observe your professional challenge and your experience of it from a larger perspective, observing you and your organization as part of a whole in this.
6. In ‘being with’ your challenge *and* seeing it from a larger perspective, what are you now aware of?
7. How does this inform your next steps?



Be patient with yourself. Self-growth is tender; it's holy ground.

There is no greater investment.

Stephen Covey – Author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*