Be Here Now

Have you ever felt like the husband in the cartoon below? Have you ever behaved like the wife? How effective is that behavior in our relationships?

“Honey, I’m home.”

Drawing by M. Stevens; ©1988 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

Most of us realize that a continuous dose of not Being Here Now is fodder for very disappointing relationships. But what role does Be Here Now have in the world of getting results?

We increase productivity and quality when we are fully present because:

- We avoid distractions, so our efforts are more focused and we can reach our highest levels of performance.
- People perform better in an environment of rapport.
- We tend to get our best ideas, so we are more creative in our problem-solving and decision-making.
- We are able to Be Here Now at home so that we are refreshed and more effective when we go back to work.
Given these benefits, why is it still so easy to be distracted? The diagram on the next page illustrates what often gets in the way of Being Here Now.

The center of the rectangle is where we are most effective. We are performing at our best; we are responding from an inner wisdom that is accessible to all of us. The distractions shown outside the rectangle are what pull us out of that state: the past, the future, ego, multi-tasking and outside influences such as:

- Regrets about the past or worry about the future
- Judgments about self or others
- Preconceived notions about people or events
- Thinking about too many things at once
- Closing your mind to other points of view
- Needing to be right and look perfect
- Self-doubts and insecurity

The secret to spending more time in the state of Be Here Now is to first understand your typical distractions and recognize that they get in the way of optimum performance. Second, recognize that as human beings,
we will go in and out of Being Here Now. No one can be there 100% of the time. But increasing your time there by even a small amount can have a dramatic impact on your quality of life as well as results. Reminders often help.

Be Here Now Reminders

Many people place Be Here Now signs in visible spots as reminders. One executive placed a sign in his garage so that every time he returned home, he would be reminded to leave the office in the car.

J.W. Metcalf, in his educational video entitled *Humor, Risk and Change*, talks about a technique he calls “draw the line,” which involves creating a ceremony or ritual that formally reminds you to leave work behind when you go home. One example in the video is a man who makes a list of all the work-related issues he might think about when he gets home. He then puts the list in a drawer in his desk, closes the drawer and locks it. As he backs out of his office, he points at the drawer and shouts, “Stay!”

Another example is a woman who listens to different comedy recordings in her car on the way home. It’s her way of reminding herself to forget about work and shift gears to home life.

Come up with at least two techniques you could use to “draw the line” between work and home.
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