

Developing Personal Presence

Many of the people I coach express a wish to develop more 'presence' – that magical quality that some people seem to have that means you almost know they have entered the building way before they enter your meeting room. It's as if their aura of power radiates in front of them, signalling to the world just how impressive and influential they are.

People like this tend to impress everyone they come into contact with, and who wouldn't want some of that?!

So, how do they get that thing called 'presence' – and how can you get some too? Well the clue (as is often the case) is in the language.

Have you ever been in the company of someone who paid you their attention totally? Someone who, no matter what else may have been going on for them in their life, no matter how many demands were being placed on their time, spent their entire energy on being focused on and understanding you – and only you?

Yes? And how did it feel? - Awesome would be my guess.

Finding yourself in the presence of someone who is sourcing their strength from their authenticity, and being present – totally present – with you is, in my experience, exceptionally rare. When someone does honour you with their absolute attention, energy flows in both directions, and the sense of connection – what I believe we sense as 'Presence' – multiplies.

So what does paying attention mean, and what does it take?

It takes first and foremost the will to rise above your ego – that part of you that is constantly comparing you to everything and everyone in order to be reassured you are important or good enough (and of course most of us live a life thinking we are not in some way). It then requires you to be **genuinely** and almost obsessively interested in other people – at least as much as you are interested in yourself - preferably more.

It also requires a real and genuine intention to connect in order to understand. Yes to **understand**. Not to win over, manipulate, influence or persuade – because these are needs of the ego.

Without a high level of sensory acuity; the ability to spot the tiny clues or 'tells' that signal how someone is feeling – their energy level, their skin tone, their fleeting and subtle facial expressions, the words they use and how they are spoken, and so much more, it will be difficult to attune accurately in order to connect deeply. All of this is insider information about the way the world is for the person you are paying attention to.

And finally, it requires you to tune into and trust the powerful unconscious ability you have to dance the dance of communication.

None of this will be available to you if you are not 'present' – if your mind is on what to say next, or worse, what you will be doing later in the day or what happened yesterday.

I believe that having 'presence' – is the by-product of 'being'. Of 'being present'.

But exactly who you are when you are present is important too. Our incessant desire to be a 'somebody' can drive us to be less than authentic in our relationships at home and at work. If people are to sense YOUR presence, it's important that that it's the real you showing up! Your reason for being where you are, your role or contribution there, your self image in that place, your values, your whole belief system, your skills and knowledge, your thinking and

choices in the moment, your intention, the experience you want people to have of you, are all aligned to serve each other.

It is impossible to achieve this if you are concerned about what others will think of you, if you feel a need to impress, if your thinking is anywhere other than in the moment, or your mind is full of the chaotic noise of rush, rush, rush! It is the absence of these which is often associated with people who seem 'sorted', and who often, strangely, also have 'presence'!

So in essence, having presence means being fully who you really are at your core, being focused in the moment, not on the past or future, and allowing the energy that comes from that to be attuned to the person, matter or decision in hand.

Practice this state regularly, and before long others will be commenting on how much presence you have.

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