

# The power of Presence in our lives

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When I reflect on the ICF Core Competencies, the one that resonates most to me is the power of presence. This is the one I focus on, and I try to improve everyday.

There are several ways to define presence. For me, presence is about the ability to remain attentive, aware and fully in the moment, without judgment. In the ICF Core Competencies, I would particularly like to zoom in on the part of the definition that says, "Is present and flexible during the coaching process, dancing in the moment."

Nowadays, our lives are full of "stimuli." I find that I can be easily distracted.

Internally, it is easy for my mind to wander on its own. Even with active listening, from time to time, thoughts come into my mind, mostly relevant to the conversation, sometimes irrelevant. I've found what works for me is to write the thought down on a Post-It and let it go. It is then easier to refocus on being 100 percent present, as I know the thought is captured already.

There are so many external "stimuli" that it is difficult to live 100 percent in the moment. Think about how often we look at our phones, we feel an urge to access our messages, to stay connected. How often have you seen groups of teenagers, on their mobile devices, surfing the net, probably texting one another, or sharing pictures on Instagram? I am sure you have seen couples in restaurants, each of them on their own mobile devices, instead of talking to one another. In the younger generations, this behavior is aggravated by the fear of missing out. Teenagers are always feeling the urge to find out what they are missing while they're actually missing the opportunity to live in the moment; it feels like they live their life "by proxy."





I encourage each of us to discover what distracts us in our daily life. Recently, I did a little experiment. When I traveled to the ICF global board meeting in June, I did not take my watch. In the meetings, I was not distracted; it forced me to focus, to be in the flow and to contribute more fully. And as I was dancing in the moment, I can say that time did fly.

The power of presence is valid in all the roles we play in our life.

In our life as a coach, we need to create deep connections. This is a special moment, a mental space where we are here for our coachee, where we are able to empty ourselves and dance with the flow. We can only do this effectively if we are able to focus our attention and are living 100 percent in the moment.

This is also relevant for executives. To be a "steward" leader, we have to focus and take out the clutter surrounding us. With active listening, we will be here fully for the other person(s), offering direction and support.

In our life as parents, when we are at home with the family, it is easy to have the TV on, to multitask and to miss opportunities to connect with one another in the moment. Being present is what makes for "quality" parenting. I am sure you know it when you experience it, and you can easily see and feel the difference.

I hope you would agree that being in the moment is all the more critical in the 21st century, as we are continuously surrounded by distractions.

I hope this article acts as a good trigger to make each of us reflect on what prevents us from being in the moment and that it is a good reminder of the power of presence in our busy lives.

**I would like to finish with this quote: "Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why it is called present."**