



Presence

**“Being in the moment...the now rather than a year from now.
Not a moment before. Not a moment after. Just in the now.”**

Our Presence

Our presence when we are with others can be one of our most powerful tools! Most interactions in a culture of gentleness cost nothing. They are momentary such as a smile, a name enunciated, a touch on the shoulder, a kiss thrown, an occasional embrace, stopping for a moment to console the sorrowful or withdrawn, and any number of other acts of love.

These create a sense of peace, self-esteem, community, and are at the heart of who we are and who we must be. A culture of gentleness is dozens upon dozens of simply accidental encounters during the day. A few people need enriched support; however, everyone can be nurtured by these chance encounters interspersed with frequent and intentionally longer encounters that are more focused on safe and loved.

As caregivers we need to look at our personal and collective encounters and how we might maximize these as brief structured opportunities to teach companionship and community. We should also find ways to structure more intentional time for face-to-face encounters of longer duration.

Remembering Our Practice

We must remember that even a minute or two a day can help fade old memories. This intentional and purposeful time can take various forms, such as:

- Accidental encounters—brief moments in passing, like a wave, a wink, a smile, a name, a thumbs-up, or perhaps a hug if time allows. Sometimes, it's as simple as whispering, “You are so good.”
- Intentional encounters, on the other hand, are more planned. The caregiver dedicates a specific amount of time—a few minutes, half an hour, or more—depending on the day. The goal is to create a memory of safety when people are with us. Giving our undivided attention for 2, 5, 10, or 20 minutes, as often as each caregiver is able, repeating ourselves throughout the day.

What Did John Say?

“His caregivers must enter his space—softly, slowly, almost invisibly, with no rush and no pressure. The caregivers’ presence must be tranquil and warm with no sense of any demand, not even a slight one. Indeed, the initial demand is our mere presence. Caregivers must figure out their own way to present themselves without any pushiness. The caregiver’s words initially have to be whispered, sweet, and empathic recognizing his sorrow, promising everything will be good, and ensuring him that no one is going to make him do anything. Our mere presence can be frightening enough. In time, our narrative of the person’s goodness grows, and each momentary experience becomes longer and longer.”

Q1

How does it feel when someone gives their full presence?

What does it look like for you to offer someone your full presence? Do you find this to be an easy or difficult practice?

Q2

Q3

Consider, what are tangible moments that you can provide a person with your full presence, with no distractions?

Connecting to Our Purpose

Our 'Central Purpose' in the lives of others is to Nurture, Teach & Sustain the experiences of Connectedness, Companionship & Community

- Presence fosters a sense of connectedness, making every encounter an opportunity to strengthen relationships.
- Focused, intentional presence reinforces our central purpose of nurturing emotional bonds and shared experiences.
- By being present, we create and sustain experiences of companionship, providing reassurance and trust.

Our Challenge

- Commit to giving each person you support your full presence, every time.
- Give away your Presence. Can you do it for 5 minutes? How about 10.... maybe 30!
- Repeat this focused and purposeful time several times per day!

The key is the stay in the moment. Joy is found in the moment.