

Wherever You Are, Be There

By: Roger Ingbretsen

Many years ago I first heard the words “Wherever you are, be there” spoken by the man many consider America's foremost business philosopher, Jim Rohn. He was talking to a rather large gathering of business executives mainly from the world of high tech. His speech was centered on learning to really be wherever you are and learn to focus on the current moment. I found his remarks unique because as business leaders we were living in a world of multitasking, which was just the opposite of his message.

For the better part of my life I have had jobs and been in positions, which relied heavily on thinking and acting on many different things at once, but found that I was most effective when I fully concentrated on one thing at a time. As I have grown older I try to focus more on the moment, to savor and absorb the good, and work through and deal with the bad. I have found that when I take this approach, life seems to go much better. That doesn't say my life is stress free, but when I focus in the moment it seems easier to deal with a stressful situation.

When I am working I become fully focused on what I am doing and don't think about projects or problems at home or outside of the office. When on the golf course or fishing I am very much there enjoying the moment and not thinking of work. I often take the time to stop and watch the beauty of a sunrise or sunset. I tend to be fully engaged when watching a good movie, listening to a great concert or watching a TV program that interests me.

When I am engaged in a serious conversation I try to fully listen, not just hearing the words but trying to absorb the message. I try to listen to learn. I must admit I am not there yet when it comes to casual conversations, but that's something, which is still a work in progress. I personally find it difficult to carry on a good conversation when attempting to think about or accomplish another task. As an example, I am not a good conversationalist when driving a car because I continually focus on the road.

I am a very sound sleeper. I believe this is because I don't think of or try to relive the past and although I plan for tomorrow, I don't worry about tomorrow. I do enjoy thinking about the good times in the past but the past is gone and cannot be changed and the future can best be approached after a good nights sleep. Again, I am focused on the present...a good nights rest.

I believe that most if not all truly successful people are people who are intensely engaged in the present. That doesn't mean they don't learn from the past or plan for the future, because they absolutely do, but they are driven and focused on maximizing the moment. To them it's all about execution. Can you think of any great athlete playing any sport who is not focused on the moment?

I find it interesting that some people will be texting, and on their computer during meetings and then complain they got nothing from the meeting. These are typically the same people who show up late leave early and are constantly on their cell phone. Being busy or looking busy seems to have replaced being engaged in the process.

I believe that focusing more on past experiences or future possibilities or problems robs us from simply living in the present. When you are everywhere except in the present it's hard to give your full attention to the present and capture or experience the moment. Other people, especially those close to you, need you to be there, not miles away.

Quoting Jim Rohn "Until we learn to be there, we will never master the art of living well."