

Why Presence In Practice?

In a world where we are driven by personal, familial and organizational pressures to produce and succeed, the natural question that arises is, how do we, access the capacities and capabilities to accomplish our goals, while maintaining a sense of meaning and purpose in our lives? It is clear that if we are to survive a transition from an unsustainable self-oriented, materialistic culture, to one in which our humanity and the good of the whole are held as integral and imperative, a powerful shift in perspective is needed. How and why we show up and do our work must change.

Until now we have been taught that success invariably involves competition. It has an “us vs them”, and a “win at all costs” motivation woven into it. Although on a surface level this might seem to work, it also takes a heavy toll on our health as individuals, and on the health of our businesses and organizations, and the people who keep them running. When we work in a context of opposition it has a way of filtering into everything we do. This ‘othering’ of people has us fighting our way to the top, incurring major casualties all along the way. Our mental, emotional and physical well-being are all subject to the stresses and negativity that go along with this old way of doing business.

We, at Evolve Now, are here to tell you the solutions to this state of affairs CAN and be simply and concretely achieved in a way that not only improves positive outcomes for individuals but also creates more motivation, cohesion and commitment in the pursuit of organizational goals as well.

It’s the essence of a win-win-win. You win, the other wins and those not even directly involved win as well because we have learned to include the whole in how we work and live. This is what we are able to realize in our work and it’s not as difficult as we are convinced it might be.

From the Supervisor of a team of Alberta social workers

“Presence in Practice goes far beyond offering concepts and strategies. Evolve has integrated its knowledge into a way of living and relating in the world. It is offered, not as information to be filed away, but as a direct experience that is sure to ignite inspiration and understanding. Evolve’s invitation for deep introspection and reflection, and its movement into form, is at the heart of true ethical practice.”

~ Eugena Rempel-Witten, RSW

The Theory

It's easier than ever to start a business or organization, but harder than ever to grow and maintain one. The main difficulty is in the area of relationships and the well-being of your most precious resources as an owner or manager, the human ones. As we know, human resource concerns make up the main challenges faced by businesses and organizations.

The multitude and complexity of challenges we face in our personal and professional life can often seem unresolvable. The fact of the matter is that if we don't have the right people in place and we don't have a way of engaging with and relating to them that keeps them satisfied and empowered there is no way we can take care of the day to day tasks and responsibilities required to succeed as an organization. When we do have the right people in place and they are collectively on board with their whole hearts, as an organization, we can take on any challenge and manifest nearly any goal!

One of the primary concerns of HR professionals and managers of organizations alike is the physical and mental wellbeing of their staff teams. Personal difficulties such as physical illness, obesity, anxiety, depression, addictions and other mental health issues, are at epidemic levels across the world. We keep trying to 'fix' the problem, but the whole paradigm of fixing or changing the apparent problems only serves to reinforce the underlying misunderstandings that has them manifesting in the first place. In the face of such massive and complex challenges we tend to feel helpless, and resort to superficial, reflexive solutions or harsh consequences in a vain effort to address situations that have much deeper, simpler solutions.

Unfortunately we live in a world where many people have become uninspired, cynical and apathetic in the life they are living. There is a predominant belief that work, and the time spent there, is something to cope with, or survive, until we make it to the weekend.

So how to make a real difference in lives of those who have given so much of their time and energy to work for us?

The answers we are seeking can be found by turning our attention first, not to problems at hand but, toward the source of our power to make real change happen; our awareness and care of this precious present moment. And, this turn to present oriented awareness starts with a turning our attention to our inner space, our thoughts, feelings and experiences and what happens there. From this place we can begin to address the very heart of what is in the way or keeping us stuck. When we are present, when we are tuned into the precious and empowering flow of life itself, we begin to learn how to harness our own natural ability to connect meaningfully, bring out the best in each other and meet any challenge we might face, together.

The prerequisite for this often illusive shift lies in our own inner awareness and knowledge of ourselves. Now, for the first time since the industrial revolution methods such as Mindfulness and meditation are coming forward as worthwhile tools to be learned and used, not just for peace of mind and heart but as a vehicle to bring out the very best that is possible for us as individuals and as teams. These techniques are being incorporated into the curriculum of educational institutions, hospitals, law enforcement and of course, in programs and infrastructure in forward-thinking businesses and organizations.

And, while self-awareness, and the flow of understanding that follows, is a vital cornerstone for creating solutions and doing business in the world, it is actually the most important step or what we at Evolve call the “active Ingredient”. From there the key to unlocking the power and value

of our potential as human beings, is in learning how to bring our own presence and awareness to each moment of each day. These moments of presence, added together, begin to create a gravity and momentum that can create massive change in our world.

Just look at individuals who moved with a slow and steady walk but catalyzed enourous change in our world, Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King. What began as the movement of one became the wave of many. All this is made possible by the depth and quality of presence being accessed and cultivated in any worldly endeavor we might be pursuing.

This is where Presence In Practice comes in. PIP provides access to an often invisible bridge across the gap between what we know in our own quietest clearest moment and the hustle and bustle of present day living. In its unique version, it evokes experiences found in the timeless traditions of mindfulness and self-inquiry. It adds to them with a ground breaking and unique approach, that facilitates people’s ability to bring clarity, understanding and creativity into their practical day to day living, learning, and working. It enables our ability to meet life with presence and clarity in any circumstance.

Evolve Now’s simple yet powerful techniques and principles point us, unfailingly, to our own wisdom, inspiration and to the natural expression of that. As it unlocks and directs our potential, we are able to create and produce at higher rates and with higher quality. We are more relaxed in our own skins, become self-motivated and responsive, and able to work seamlessly with others, with fluidity and kindness. We become more productive collectively than we ever dreamed possible on our own because the meaning we have infused our lives with makes excellence a goal we naturally pursue.

How Presence in Practice works to achieve such amazing results

- It creates a safe and inviting environment leading to honest self-discovery
- It provides profound and insightful dialogue inclusive of all points of view
- It offers simple, yet powerful experiential processes and reflection exercises
- It introduces communication practices that are natural and easy to implement
- It gives hands on, facilitated support in how to bring Presence in Practice into life
- Evolve facilitators model and live the principles and practices that they teach

Presence in Practice enables and develops each individual's capacity to live and communicate in a way that is deeply authentic, compassionate and relationship centred.

The Context for Presence in Practice

Our Vision

Evolve Human Development Service's Vision is to support and facilitate a re-orientation of focus, from one of self-gratification and a paradigm of opposition, to one sourced in connectedness, cooperation and love. In doing so, we create new and living concepts of success and well-being, which act to include each participant, in any venture or relationship.

How Presence in Practice can help you?

With the access to knowledge and information, and the accelerated evolution of human understanding, we are coming to a watershed opportunity for change. Spring is coming to our global human community, and if you are reading and responding to what we are saying here, you are already part of this long awaited shift.

Presence in Practice reconnects participants to their own essential and authentic purpose and re-energizes their deepest reason for being active in the world. As practices like meditation, yoga and mindfulness become more mainstream and their benefits become more recognized there is more and more need for services that bridge the gap between the clarity and calm that these practices enable and the practical living of that deeper wisdom in our day to day living. Imagine a program that has all the benefits of mindfulness based stress reduction and the added benefit of how to practically apply these new mindfulness capacities into people's work and personal lives.

Take a moment to think of someone in your life, a family member, teacher or supervisor, who was a role model for you; someone who had a profound impact on your way of thinking and doing, and on your life. What was it about them that affected you so deeply and had such a lasting impact? When we think of people like this we naturally think of their qualities as human beings. Those qualities, even more than their exceptional abilities, is often what made them so meaningful to us. These attributes are what create real and meaningful change in the people and places in which we live and work.

Imagine for a moment if you could instill in your staff, the qualities and energy of that amazing person you just thought of from your life. What if instead of that outstanding quality was the rule instead of the exception in your organization? Imagine if you had a team of people that functioned from a place of presence, passion and inspiration?

Of course every manager or business owner wants this. The question becomes how to become make this happen and to become a person who attracts and cultivates these qualities in others. There is no better way to attract and develop something than being it first. Here are some attributes we see as linked to people becoming the source of change and growth in themselves and others.

People who inspire and empower others are able to:

- Be present and available regardless of the circumstances
- Have a fire and passion for the work they do
- Are generous and benevolent with their energy
- Value seeing and hearing the people they work with
- Focus on solutions and opportunities rather than problems
- Stay connected to deepest values when things on the surface become challenging
- Have high emotional IQ and an ability to process and integrate difficult emotions
- Maintain perspective in the midst of conflict and difficult situation

Presence In Practice Outcomes include:

- Increased self-awareness and self-esteem
- A distinct increase in emotional intelligence and understanding
- Freedom and satisfaction in self expression
- Confidence in having the ability to navigate and communicate in delicate or uncomfortable situations
- Restfulness that comes from no longer needing to perform for others
- Dissolved or diminished anxiety in dealing with challenging circumstances or people
- Access to more energy, inspiring creativity and productivity
- A new and playful attitude that attracts opportunities and people
- Profound authenticity even in the midst of vulnerability and big emotion

Conclusion

Our world is so concerned with, so utterly occupied with how things look and feel that we have almost completely forgone the simplicity and intelligence of presence. It is to our detriment as this way of being with the present moment without first needing to do anything with it lies at the root of all truly loving and creative acts. In its absence we become addicted to control and to the ability to fabricate comfort and avoid discomfort. It leaves us easily disturbed and even more easily manipulated. The way to become more grounded in this presence is to participate in environments and with people who put presence first.

In the west we tend to find this in meditation classes or courses or yoga studios or perhaps in a personal growth seminar. It remains relegated to the periphery or as a side note in our lives. What we are strongly advocating for is to make this most essential human capacity, one that has become almost extinct on our busy technologically dominated world, central in our living. Not by doing it when we can find a dark quiet space or escape the chaos of our busy urban lives but by discovering and following through on our ability to be present in every corner of our lives.

This is at the core of what Presence In Practice is and what it looks to do in the world. Through it we will create more open, honest, compassionate and loving individuals deeply connected to their purpose and inspired to fulfill it.