

## Introduction

A good place to start is to ask the question “What is Presence?” Keep that question in mind, as you are about to read a book which will point you towards the answer. Only you can make the connection, as the answer can be known, but not explained. You can ask me how it feels to bathe in the sea, and I can describe the temperature of the water, the sensation of the waves crashing against my body and the beauty found within the reflections from the sun. You can only know how this feels if you wade in and experience it for yourself. Even then our experience will be different every time because both the sea and us are constantly changing.

Being Present means connecting to something formless and unchangeable. However, the way we become Present is changeable, leading to a unique journey every time. The word “form” is used throughout this book. It includes everything within the universe, including thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and anything that can enter the senses. Form represents everything that we can describe, down to individual particles within atoms. Formlessness or emptiness, on the other hand, is what cannot be described, only known or pointed towards.

You may have already discovered Presence. If you have, wonderful! You can use this book to deepen and increase the frequency of your experience. If not, reading this book may help you discover it. Experiencing even a brief flash of Presence is enough to allow you to reconnect with it again and again.

### Characteristics of Presence

I will explain what Presence means to me in the form of six characteristics. This personal account is provided in the hope that my words point you in the right direction and may help you recall times when you have felt it for yourself. Your experiences of Presence, which may be described differently, connect to the same source. It is absolutely fine if you do not resonate with or understand the characteristics at this stage. Allow them to wash over you. They will become clearer as the book progresses.

The first characteristic is a still and quiet mind with no discursive thought. Discursive thought is the kind of thought that rambles around our minds in an uncontrolled way, without us being aware of it. When we are Present, we may be aware of odd thoughts coming to mind, which soon pass. The same is true of feelings such as excitement, anxiety, envy, happiness, sadness and so on. Occasionally a feeling will present itself and then pass. For example, we may experience a feeling of happiness. We can be directly aware of the components that make up the feeling of happiness, which may be certain bodily sensations and a smile, but there will be no discursive thought to accompany it. If we were lost in thought rather than being Present, we may be asking questions such as, “Why am I happy?”, “How do I remain happy?” or “What will those people over there think about me being happy?” With Presence, we are simply aware and accepting of our direct experience with no discursive thought or questioning.

Freedom from discursive thought creates freedom from suffering. Suffering is different to physical pain. Physical pain is associated with the body and suffering is associated with our thoughts. The two are often connected. Physical pain can trigger suffering and suffering can trigger physical pain. Presence creates freedom from suffering and the opposite of suffering is peace. Suffering is created through craving. This is one of the central teachings of Buddhism. Whenever we get lost in discursive thought, there will always be craving towards pleasure or away from pain. These cravings operate using the realm of time and not the present moment, which is timeless. When we crave, our minds resist how things are in the present. Things are a certain way, which we cannot change now because they are, but we want them to be different. They cannot be different at this point in time. Thinking we can make them different now through thought and creating some fantasy in our minds is delusional and unhelpful. Presence on the other hand, which means being aligned with the present moment, accepts everything as it is at this point in time. This aligns us to how things really are and allows us to be peaceful and content. Once we understand these truths, the goal is to train the mind so that we can stay Present where thinking only occurs when we consciously enable it for practical purposes.

The second characteristic is connectivity to a transcendental source, allowing us to access peace, love and wisdom. This is a profound and powerful experience in which we feel greater than our egoic self. I am referring to the mind-made self or ego. This is the self that is lost in thought. This self temporarily disappears and is transcended by something much greater to

which we feel simultaneously connected and a part of. An intrinsic part of this transcendental experience is receiving love and providing love. Regardless of where we are, what we are doing and whom we are with, we feel loved and held by something that we cannot experience with the usual senses. This is then reciprocated with an unconditional love for everything and everybody. It is a gentle and beautiful experience.

I use the word “love” throughout this book. Unless stated otherwise, love is the form that is expressed without wanting or conditions attached to it. It is not a romantic or conditional love, as conditional love is needy and always wants something in return for giving. The love referenced throughout this book is unconditional love or pure love. You may also hear this referred to by Buddhists as Metta or Loving Kindness. This beautiful and boundless love can be felt inside and outside of us when we are Present.

The third characteristic is a wise and loving creativity that can manifest in any form. For example, we might connect with a friend, perform an act of generosity or decide to stop doing something harmful. We may also create something physical that others can enjoy and make use of. It may not result in any speech or action and could simply present itself in the form of wise thoughts that serve some purpose in the future.

The fourth characteristic is a loving appreciation of beauty, which may be found in anything, including people, animals and objects. This is accompanied by a sense of oneness and connectedness. When we are Present, our sense of self is transcended, as is all separateness from form. The subject and object relationship we often experience with things is removed. It is no longer ourself and the rest of the universe, but the universe as a whole with a tiny fragment of that universe coming together for a moment, creating an illusion for others that there is something fixed about us. With Presence, we become awake and enjoy a much richer experience.

The fifth characteristic is skilfulness. My definition of skilfulness is, “The action that manifests from a state of Presence, including thought, speech, physical acts or stillness” Skilful action aligns us to give the universe what it needs for the totality to become more conscious. Another way of framing this is that we are wise enough to act from a place of love in the spiritual interest of ourself and others. It is impossible to determine through thought what skilful action is as our minds would need to understand the totality of the universe and the infinite stream of effects that our actions create. The human mind is sophisticated, but not that sophisticated. This is why skilful action can only originate out of Presence.

There are useful religious lists we can refer to, including Buddhist precepts and Christian commandments, pointing us broadly towards what is skilful. Occasionally these lists lead to opinions and distortion to suit personal or religious agendas. True skilfulness is like Presence in that it can be known, but never defined adequately by some list or manual. So our only option, if we want to be consistently and wholly skilful, is to surrender and allow the whole and complete intelligence to lead the way.

The sixth characteristic is fearlessness. Through Presence, we accept and reside within the present moment, which transcends the realm of time. We can consider the past or future without becoming lost in thoughts or emotions about them. Fear is always associated with the future, which can be anything from the next second to several decades away. Fear is also always associated with the past, which is where our conditioning creates its triggers. The ability to transcend time means we can transcend fear and there is nothing to be afraid of, including our own death. When we are Present, we know we can intrinsically accept what is, so there is never any resistance or fear about what might happen. Occasionally, we may experience physical feelings of fear within our body if there are immediate dangers whilst we are Present, which is natural and helpful. We can be aware of the fear whilst being simultaneously connected to a different realm that is fearless. The fearlessness holds the fear with love and allows it to pass.

A unique quality about Presence is its consistency and ultimately satisfying nature. In the world of form, things such as relationships, assets, our bodies and everything else will never ultimately satisfy us. They may satisfy us for a while, but then as circumstances change, which we can absolutely count on, the level of satisfaction will be eroded or lost altogether. Ironically, even when we think we are completely satisfied with something or someone, there is always background dissatisfaction there if we look closely enough, as we know deep within us that things do not ultimately satisfy us forever. Presence does not suffer from this inconsistency of satisfactoriness. It is always perfectly satisfying and the only thing that we can consistently depend upon. It achieves this because it is formless. Presence cannot be touched, heard, tasted, seen, inhaled or felt, making it very mysterious and unexplainable. We will realize when we become Present, as there is a very deep knowing that accompanies it. It cannot be fully explained, only known.

## The Ego

The ego is referenced many times throughout this book and is covered in depth in Chapter Five. It is significant enough to justify a brief introduction here to set the scene for the subsequent chapters. The ego is the ultimate hindrance to being Present. Within this book, discussions on the ego are informed by the teachings of Eckhart Tolle<sup>1</sup>. My understanding is that Tolle describes the ego as thought and emotional patterns that are persistently repeated due to our strong identifications with them<sup>2</sup>.

These thought patterns can be of a positive or negative nature. They can be about having something or not having something. Identifications include, but are not limited to, possessions, knowledge, roles, likes, dislikes, creations, opinions, resentments, appearances, beliefs, positive or negative comparisons, addictions, attachments from the past or fantasies about the future. The mind activities then give us a sense of who we perceive ourselves to be, which is the delusion. To the ego, all identifications are viewed as beneficial. It believes that they are helping by adding to our false sense of self. The truth is quite the contrary because identifications reduce us rather than add to us.

Where there is suffering, there is the ego and its identifications. Once we are fully awakened and continuously Present, the ego is gone for good. All identifications are released, allowing us to respond creatively to every moment without any attachments or old patterns constraining us.

## Presence & Mindfulness

Mindfulness is now popular through its widespread application outside of mainstream religion, including the areas of health and business. When I run mindfulness courses, I define mindfulness as, “Awareness and acceptance of bodily sensations, feelings and thoughts within the present moment”. This book and other mindfulness teachings complement one another because they enable a connection with Presence. Nature, silence, quality spiritual teachings and a range of other sources, allowing us to gain perspective and transcend the thinking mind, are gateways into Presence.

As you read this book and develop your practice, keep in mind that mindfulness and Presence can coexist with thought. We are aiming to be the awareness that is observing the thoughts, not to control or stop them. A natural consequence of our spiritual practice is that our thoughts will become more skilful and reduce in volume over time, which means that we will enjoy a quieter and more peaceful mind. This process takes care of

itself through surrendering to the present moment and does not require any intervention from our ego trying to control things.

Paradoxically, this gives us the perception that we are influencing or controlling our thoughts through our practice. This is not because we are consciously controlling, suppressing or guiding our thoughts. The truth is quite the opposite, in that we are relinquishing control and allowing our thoughts to be guided by an intelligence that transcends who we might think we are. With our practice, we actively refrain from trying to control our thoughts using thought. Controlling thoughts through thought is what causes our minds to become busy and confused. The reality is that things do not control themselves. We surrender to the present moment and allow that to guide us. Thinking then happens when required. Thoughts manifested through a state of Presence are creative, relevant, wise and loving. Speech and action follow thoughts naturally in the same manner because Presence uses thoughts as a vehicle to govern speech and action. The more we experience this, the more our faith in Presence develops and our practices flourish.

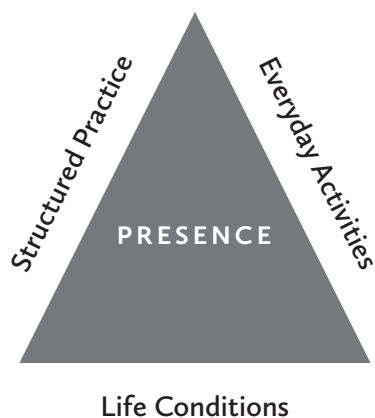
#### How to Cultivate Presence

We may experience glimpses of Presence and make a temporary connection to who we really are. The vision of our practice is to be continuously Present. There are many words and descriptions that point to this, including being “awakened”, “enlightened” or “permanently at one with God”. We let go of our egos completely, and what remains of our being is the consciousness out of which we arose. A few people may awaken suddenly through a significant experience after intense suffering or an instant spiritual realization. For most of us, our awakening is cultivated over time and follows a more gradual process. The same is true for the whole of humanity. As time progresses, we take more responsibility for our conditions and practice. Through doing this, we progress. The amount of time we are Present in any one instance is lengthened. The gaps between being Present and lost in thought are reduced and the depth of Presence we experience increases.

Being Present all the time and in every situation is unrealistic for most people, so it can be helpful to reflect on particular areas of our life and select one or two that we can focus on at any one point in time. As our Presence increases, it permeates into other areas without any conscious effort, so by working on one or two areas we are indirectly working on them all. Another option is to integrate Presence into a simple activity we do frequently, such as walking or eating. At the beginning of our practice, we

can start with something relatively simple. Then, as our confidence grows, we can work on integrating Presence into more complex and challenging areas and activities.

Presence is cultivated through three approaches. The first is through structured practice. This covers activities practised on a regular basis, including meditation, yoga and studying spiritual teachings. Any activity that is being carried out with a primary objective of cultivating Presence falls into this category.



Three Approaches To Cultivate Presence

The second approach is through everyday activities where we are consciously striving to be Present. For example, we may be making a conscious effort to be more Present whilst walking, or brushing our teeth. The third approach is to change our conditions so that our life becomes more conducive to being Present. Examples here may include changing our job, letting go of certain relationships, working to release addictions, taking regular exercise, letting go of unhelpful habits and connecting with nature. As our Presence increases, so does our discernment and courage, enabling us to make bold decisions leading to more positive changes in our life.

Admiring the beauty of a landscape or gazing at the moon on a clear night can trigger a connection with Presence. It can feel as though these things we experience are providing the gift of Presence and creating a sense

of inner peace or enjoyment. We should be grateful for such experiences. The beauty of the landscape or moon, in this case, is actually a gateway for accessing the Presence that is already there and available to us. Some experiences may have an opposite effect and lead to us becoming lost in thought. At a micro-level, this phenomenon applies to our internal experience, including bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings. Bringing to mind a picture of something beautiful may lead to Presence. Bringing to mind a difficult situation in the past that we are still resisting may lead us to become lost in thought. When we are challenged, there is always a choice to bring Presence into our experience, and the vision that underpins this book is to bring Presence into everything we do.

Over time and with practice we become more aware of when we are drifting off into discursive thought and we return to the present moment. This phenomenon can be likened to a spring. When the mind begins to wander without awareness, the spring is stretched and then uses its energy to snap back into its original shape as we transition back into Presence. In this analogy, the strength and resilience of the spring represent our capacity to be Present.

### The Origins of Presence

From where does Presence originate? This cannot be explained and is impossible to pinpoint in the same way that we might pinpoint the source of water or light. Some religions use labels including the word 'God'. By itself, this is simply a three-letter word on a page or a sound that is made when verbalized. To help point us to the truth, people create commentary, imagery, organized religions and teachings. If these creations originate directly from Presence and retain their purity, they will lead people back into Presence.

Is the source within or outside of our bodies? When we open up our minds to Presence, it flows into us. Presence is its own source. We could claim that Presence is inbuilt and all we are doing is accessing something that is already there. Although this might be theoretically interesting, we do not need to understand where it comes from. We can enjoy Presence in the same way that we can enjoy gas, electricity or Wi-Fi within our homes without needing to understand the intricacies of how they are created or provisioned. When we switch on a device and send an email, there are many things taking place in our mind, through our fingers, technology and international data communications. Do we need to understand all that to send



the email? No, we just press Send. We may need to understand part of the process if we have a design or maintenance job such as an engineer who works on data cables, or a mobile phone applications developer.

Some religious people and those with an active interest choose to intellectually explore the source. This is fine and can be an enjoyable pastime, as long as we do not *identify* with being able to fully understand it, otherwise the identification will stop us from making the connection. Also Presence cannot be understood through theoretical means. It is unnecessary for us to understand what we do not create or maintain in order to connect with it. We just need to know it's there. Presence does not need to be created or maintained. It is constantly accessible and maintains itself. Unlike services in the world of form, Presence has a perfectly consistent service level and all we really need to be concerned with is accessing it.

### Presence & Religion

Different religions and philosophies use words and teachings that point to a spiritual goal such as enlightenment or becoming one with God. The ultimate goal, as I see it, is to be continuously Present. When I reflect on my practice, which is aligned with the pointers presented within this book, I can say categorically that my life has been transformed in terms of personal ethics, peace and happiness.

I was a practising Buddhist for a few years and have connected with other religions and movements lightly through reading, friends, spiritual retreats and travel. What I have learned through my own experience and discussion with others is that Presence and the teachings within this book may integrate with other spiritual and religious endeavours that are pointing to the same single truth.

Through Presence, it will become clear as to whether an existing spiritual or religious endeavour is appropriate for us. It is important that when we are involved in a religion, we retain our sense of self. This is not the ego-based mind-made self or another self that has been created for us by our religion, but our true self which is the real essence of us. We must never become lost in a religion or anything else for that matter. When we are lost in a religion, we are lost in thought and when we are lost in thought, we cause harm. Religions can be a great help to people who need their structures, teachings, network of friendships and other support on offer. In these instances, if we can retain our true sense of self, it may well be beneficial to integrate into a religion for a period of time and in some cases for the whole of our life.

## How Our Thoughts Change

Presence enables freedom from thought. When we are Present, we have perspective on our own mind. We can choose to think or choose not to think, and never be lost in our thoughts. Over time, it becomes as easy to stop thinking and experience a quiet mind as it does to mute a mobile phone. Thinking is no different to any other tool in that it works well if it is used consciously for a job that needs doing and then placed down to rest. It does not make sense to carry physical tools around with us if they are not needed and the same applies to thinking. Thinking is analogous to a power tool in that if it is used constantly for a long period of time without a rest, the functioning and quality of service it provides degrades. Used without awareness, it can cause harm. Once our thinking has served a specific purpose, the mind can rest and we can let go of thought. A few people who have undergone very sudden spiritual transformations may instantly develop the skill of being able to let go of thought on demand, but for the majority the ability to actually decide when to think and when not to think evolves gradually over time.

## The Prompts to Write This Book

One morning during my regular meditation, I received a calling to write a spiritual book. The thought popped into my head and was completely out of the blue. I disregarded it and later in the day I walked into town. I entered a shop that sold second-hand goods to raise money for a mental illness charity. I'd passed by the shop a few days before and experienced a pull to enter it, which I resisted at the time. On entering the shop, I was greeted by a friendly and curious elderly woman who was a customer there. I remember her being very alert and Present with sparkling bright blue eyes. She asked if she could read my palm. During the reading, she told me that I was able to teach and that I would write a book. It felt most peculiar that this should happen within a few hours of the calling during my meditation.

These two events happening together on the same day coupled with a strong intuition convinced me that this book needed to be written. So I got to work on it in my spare time, which was usually on an evening after I had finished work for the day. Within one year, the book was complete.

Prior to writing the book, I had been reading and listening to spiritual teachings extensively, including those of Eckhart Tolle. Tolle introduced me to 'Presence', which inspired the writing<sup>1</sup>. For years, I had binged on teachings, retreats and communication with those who I believed were

more spiritually evolved. It felt like I had consumed so much and writing this book provided me with a way of digesting it all. Much of the content is based upon teachings I have extracted from other sources. The synthesis between these teachings, the structure of the book and my own insights are original and unique at the time of writing, to the best of my knowledge.

### Using This Book

The book has been developed in such a way that each chapter provides a component in an overall framework or structure within which you can operate your spiritual practice. The chapter headings on the contents page show the wide variety of areas covered. The diversity of each chapter represents the magnitude of the opportunity to practise being Present. The fact that you can incorporate practice into everything you do means this wonderful gift has the potential to be realized in every area of your life and for the whole of your life. To start with, it is fine if you focus your practice on a few areas or even a single area. Those who like to make plans and create goals, can take a more structured approach. Whatever your personal style, once you are on the path, something accessible by you which transcends your thoughts will guide your practice.

The book can be read from cover to cover or as a reference guide. You may choose to read the whole book first and then return to chapters where you need to go deeper. The guidance in the chapters of this book has been introduced to inspire you in different ways at different times so reading the chapters multiple times may prove beneficial. You may find that you need to take a break after reading a relatively small amount of content. If you feel 'full' at points, it is best to stop for a while and continue again after you have digested what you have just read.

Throughout the book you may hear certain words repeated such as 'Presence' and 'ego' without understanding fully what they mean. This is absolutely fine. There is no need to get hung up on specifics and definitions. As you continue to read, reflect and read again, the meanings behind these words will become clearer.

Chapter Two covers the centricity of the body within spiritual practice, providing some practical guidance that demonstrates how caring for the body and giving it the attention it needs leads to better health and increased Presence. We can use our body as a tool to raise our level of consciousness. Areas covered include exercise, diet, breathing, tiredness, illness, pain and sexuality. Our interactions with people are considered in Chapter Three.

This is a highly influential area for us, deserving careful consideration. The guidance helps us understand the impact that different people have on our own personal state, along with providing a range of pointers on communication, friendship, how we handle difficult relationships, listening and solitude. The relevance of meditation is introduced in Chapter Four, with guidance on technique and integration into our day-to-day activities.

Chapter Five introduces the main internal hindrances that lead to us being lost in thought, including the role of the ego. Guidance on simplifying our lives and using simple situations and activities to become more Present is provided in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven helps us understand how addictive thought patterns and behaviours hinder us, pointing the way to action we can take to reduce them and ultimately let them go. The gifts of stillness, spaciousness and nature, which are all gateways into Presence, are introduced in Chapter Eight. Chapter Nine explores the core practice of acceptance and how it can be cultivated. Chapter Ten explains how we can hold the relative importance of what we do with lightness and ease through taking an absolute perspective on our life. The areas of work and other forms of service are discussed, giving us the opportunity to review our current work situation and take responsibility for initiating change if required. The final area of practice, examined in Chapter Eleven, is that of integrating spiritual teachers, religion and study. To conclude, Chapter Twelve provides guidance on how we can bring all these areas together and create a structure to support our ongoing practice.

At the end of each chapter, you will find sections labelled 'Points for Reflection', which repeat a short list of some of the key elements from the main text of the chapter. To support your learning, you are advised to reflect on each point in the context of your own personal situation and understanding. This should be undertaken slowly and mindfully, followed by a pause for reflection after each point. It may also help to reflect with friends or in a group. Refrain from using the points for reflection as an alternative to reading the main content of the chapters. The main content and key points must be used together to provide the context of the teachings and the greatest opportunity to reflect and learn. You may also return to the key points from each chapter as a reference point in the future.

After the points for reflection, learning activities are provided. These take the form of questions and opportunities for you to take action and make changes based on the content of the chapter. Review each of the learning activities and decide what you would like to take forward into your

practice. It may be that you follow up on none, one or all the activities. Less is often more. Consider doing fewer activities over a given time period and doing them well. This will be more beneficial than starting a larger number of activities and failing to benefit from any of them. Go for quality rather than quantity. You have your whole life to work through these activities and can return to them at a later date if you wish.

This book will introduce you to spiritual concepts and practical interventions you can make in your life conditions and mindset to cultivate more Presence. Consider exposing yourself to other spiritual teachings in-between reads. All quality spiritual teachings point to the same source. I use the word *quality* to denote the fact that they have been created out of a state of Presence rather than from the ego. These teachings can help you discover Presence for the first time and also deepen your experience. In addition, the content found here will guide you towards sustaining Presence for longer periods of time.

Being Present has also been written to support your personal practice. By this, I mean that any pointers that you wish to apply should be applied to yourself as opposed to advising others. The content should not be read so that you can 'fix' a friend or family member. Through working on yourself, you will inspire and teach people naturally and spontaneously. The best thing that you can do for others is to become more Present yourself. Only through doing this can you increase your love for them. On a related point, the content of this book is written for adults. Being Present with children is encouraged and highly beneficial. Teaching them how to connect with Presence in the same way that you might teach an adult may cause problems as they have different development needs. Please consult more targeted teachings for parents if you have children and wish to support them in this area.

Finally, I would like to reference the two main sources of teachings that have inspired this book and my own insights. The first source is Eckhart Tolle's teachings and the second source is Buddhist teachings which are central to many of the approaches and concepts outlined. I hope that what you read will be instrumental in pointing you towards a way of life that is peaceful, happy and full of love.

### POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- This book will point you towards Presence. Only you can make the connection and know it for yourself.
- Characteristics of Presence:
  - A still and quiet mind with no discursive thought.
  - Connectivity to something that transcends us. An intrinsic part of this transcendental experience is receiving love and giving love.
  - A wise and loving creativity that can manifest in any form.
  - A loving appreciation and experience of beauty.
  - Skilfulness, aligning us to give the universe what it needs for the totality to become more conscious.
  - Fearlessness.
- Suffering is different to physical pain and is created by our thoughts.
- Suffering is created through craving, which is one of the central teachings of Buddhism.
- Skilfulness is the action that manifests from a state of Presence, including thought, speech, physical acts or stillness.
- Our only option, if we want to be consistently and wholly skilful, is to surrender and allow the whole and complete intelligence to lead the way.
- Presence does not suffer from an inconsistency of satisfactoriness. It is always perfectly satisfying and the only thing that we can really count on in our life.
- Anything natural that allows us to gain perspective and transcend the thinking mind is a gateway into Presence.
- Our practice should be to aim for being continuously Present, also known as being awakened, enlightened or permanently at one with God.
- Presence can be cultivated using structured practice, everyday activities and changing the conditions of our life.

## INTRODUCTION

- The experience of external form can trigger a connection with Presence.
- Being lost in thought is the opposite of being Present.
- Religious organizations can be a great help to people who need and benefit from their structures, teachings, network of friendships and other support.
- The demands of an organized religion may lead to us becoming lost in that religion if it is out of alignment with our true purpose.
- Aim for regular practice and steady progress rather than speed and perfection.
- Presence enables freedom from thought. When we are Present, we have perspective on our own mind.

### OPTIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Recall occasions when you have experienced the six characteristics of Presence:
  - A still and quiet mind with no discursive thought.
  - Connectivity to something that transcends us.
  - A wise and loving creativity that can manifest in any form.
  - A loving appreciation and experience of beauty.
  - Skilfulness, aligning us to give the universe with what it needs for the totality to become more conscious.
  - Fearlessness.
- List some of your identifications. What does your ego identify with? Examples include possessions, knowledge, roles, likes, dislikes, creations, opinions, resentments, appearances, beliefs, positive or negative comparisons, addictions, attachments from the past or fantasies about the future.
- Bring awareness to when you are lost in thought in your daily activities and see if you can regain Presence by bringing your attention back to something real like the breath or the energy in the body.