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Eileen McDargh  
CSP, CPAE

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## Be Here Now

by Eileen McDargh

When we are young, we feel that time is on our side. Not any more.

Our days are a blur of perceived demands from workplaces stretched beyond the leading edge to the bleeding edge, from technology that allows others to locate us even in the privacy of our cars and bathrooms, from children and aging parents who name us and claim us, and from our inability to find options for creating mind sets and actions that can give us a modicum of breathing space and control.

We can all sing the chorus: "There's too much to do and too little time." We have created a commodity worth of the Stock Exchange: Time. We spend it, lose it, waste it, and manage it. We're told to make time, use time, take time and, if we've had a run-in with the law, we might even "do" time.

Time is the great equalizer, given in singular 24- hour chunks by the rising of the sun and the setting of the moon. No money can buy it, no power can hold it, no army can stop it. We need to concentrate on winning back our life -- snatching it away from the blur of to-do lists, technology, and work/life pressures.

### Four Truths

The more I ponder time demands, I realize four truths:

**Truth 1:** Simplicity isn't simple. It's an admirable, essential goal that most of us are working on. Simplicity takes time and requires an agreement from all those impacted by its requirements. We've been given day-to-day wisdom to follow in realizing the already-present abundance without adding to our closet, our bank account, our larder.

**Truth 2:** The technology genie will not go back into the bottle. Once released, our challenge becomes to wisely choose when we access technology's power. The seductiveness of thinking we are so important that people must find us any time, any place, for any matter is ego at its worst. Consider my experience with a man who brought his computer and cellular phone along on a four-day cruise. He was not present. He missed the experience. And, I think, he lost.

**Truth 3:** Time management creates order and structure. It does not create present moment awareness. I'm not concerned with "managing time" as much as I am for discovering how to make better choices for what we put in these

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blocks called "time." This is not about finding the latest time-saving devices. We all have a plethora of these. Too often, they've become excuses for letting us cram our life with longer to-do lists. We end up working harder and longer. What I want to have us consider is taking control, finding personal empowerment in our work, lives, lifestyles, and relationships. It's about finding more life in our years and more years in our life. We do not have extra time, but we do have discretionary energy and creativity. And we can learn to be present in the moment.

**Truth 4:** Being present takes practice. As children, we felt we had command of our day, at least until bedtime. Summers stretched into hide-aways, street games, lightening bug hunts, marshmallows over campfires, and inner tubes in pools. What would happen if we could capture, practice, and re-frame the present so that at the end of a day, a week, or year, we felt like we have lived life -- with it's joys and sorrows -- in a manner of our choosing? Plenty.

## How to Get Started

Here are two examples of what you can do to be here now:

1. **Create a sacred space for regrouping.** This could be your car, your bathroom, your backyard. When you enter this space, ban anything that distracts your attention from simply breathing and noticing your surroundings.

2. **Try and discover something you have never seen or heard before.** There will always be something. This is like any exercise. The regular practice will allow you to stop at any given moment and be in control, centered, and observant. Keep a journal, and jot a few words of some event, person, experience or observation that struck you as meaningful. This is part of being in the now.

Being present means seeing with new eyes and looking beyond the obvious to that metaphorical magic which takes an event in time and earmarks it as a memory. By collecting these moments and capturing them in word or picture, at the end of a year, you'll be amazed at how much you have won by being present. You have won back a portion of your life.

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Eileen McDargh is a woman of many hats: author, radio commentator, organizational development consultant, acclaimed international speaker, and retreat facilitator. Author of four books including *Work for a Living & Still be Free to Live*, and *The Resilient Spirit*, she's a frequent contributor to numerous business journals and produces a radio commentary, *Celebrating the Human Spirit*. Visit her web site <http://www.eileenmcdargh.com> or contact her toll free at 877-477-4718.

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**McDargh Communications**

(949) 496-8640

[Eileen@EileenMcDargh.com](mailto:Eileen@EileenMcDargh.com)

[www.EileenMcDargh.com](http://www.EileenMcDargh.com)

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