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Principles for Presence in Daily Life

If we look, we see that the events of life are constantly pulling our attention in different directions, draining our energy in the process. Feeling under the pressure of time, we multitask and are rarely fully available to what we are doing. As we absent-mindedly perform activities, they start to lose meaning, and we may wonder about the purpose of doing them. So what can support us to come to balance and be more present, and make what we do more meaningful?

I have discovered a set of guidelines that have helped me: the [Nine Principles of Harmony](#), a component of the comprehensive system called Breema, which also includes two movement components (Breema bodywork and Self-Breema exercises). [The Nine Principles are](#): Body Comfortable, No Extra, Firmness and Gentleness, Full Participation, Mutual Support, No Judgment, Single Moment/Single Activity, No Hurry/No Pause, and No Force.

I started practicing these [principles](#) while studying the bodywork, which gave me the perfect setting in which to get a taste of what they actually mean. But the beauty of these [principles](#) is that they are universal so I can use them while doing any activity, in any situation. They are not fixed and geared toward producing a specific result, but directional, and their aim is always to support me to be more present.

For example, last night I was washing dishes at the sink and I saw my thoughts were like a bird jumping from one branch to another, my body was tense, and I was feeling anxious. I decided to work with Body Comfortable. First I relaxed my shoulders a little, which was taking one step in the direction of Body Comfortable. Then I recognized that I was rushing to get the dishes done quickly, and remembered No Hurry/No Pause. Without changing my pace, based on some unexamined idea that doing things more slowly would be better, I brought my mind to simply follow the movement of my hand circling the sponge around the dish. I saw that by staying with my movement, my body gradually found its own natural rhythm, which also took me in the direction of Body Comfortable once more.

Moments later I saw I was lost in thought, remembered No Judgment, and bring my mind to be with my activity again. The traffic in my head slowed down and my feelings became calmer. I experienced a few moments of just being present with what I was doing as I was doing it. I had moved in the direction of Full Participation. Now, instead of draining me, my activity was supporting and energizing me. And because I was including myself in the activity, it was more meaningful.

Working with [the principles](#), I see that each one is like a lens through which I can reframe how I view myself, and come to a new posture toward life. I see how each of them supports the other as nine aspects of one unified whole, the foundation of a practical approach that nurtures living more fully. And practicing them gives me moments of being a little more available in my everyday life, for which I am grateful.

You can explore for yourself how [the Nine Principles of Harmony](#) can support you, at an upcoming workshop in Nashville, and on the Breema website, where you can read more and [watch a video](#) about them.

For a link to the [Nine Principles Book/CD](#) on website, [click here](#). *Listen to samples of the audio book!*

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