

## BEING PRESENT

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### The Expression of Schools

*Do not mistake mere words to be the meaning of the teachings. (Padmasanbhava)*

Being present brings us from a three dimensional existence into a Higher World. In the moment, we are part of a deeply intimate, observable universe, full of light, varying tones of light. Our heart appreciates everything. Events, people, words are filled with special meaning. Presence is poetic, flowing, a unique experience. When we are present, we see more clearly.

In developing consciousness, participants of a School know that a moment of presence often brings powerful insights or a significant understanding. When the aim of presence is established, qualities and attributes that were once distant become attainable; compassionate love, objective wisdom, liberating will: qualities that become spontaneous through the experience of consciousness. It is from this experience of presence that Schools develop an objective expression of its value. The monumental pyramid of Saqqara in Egypt contains the same objective truth as these small lines from Rumi, "Though we seem to be sleeping, there is an inner wakefulness that directs the dream, and will eventually startle us back to the truth of who we are."

It is the same in this statue of the Buddha; his hand is raised in a quiet, humble gesture, indicating his intention to interrupt the momentum of time and awaken in the moment. Just as Augustine, a lover of the moment, and as though aware of this same gesture, encourages us, "Lay your finger on the present."

To express the value of presence is the aim and—because of the experience of presence—the celebration of Schools. Their message is beautiful, enigmatic and compelling in its outer form, while the inner message is simple, direct and joyful. Being present is the meaning of your existence. The state of being present is You.



The gesture called the Vitarka Mudra, expressing the mindful force of the teaching

### Related Thoughts

A mystery is accomplished secretly between the soul and God.

*Philokalia, Theognostos*

Knowledge of God is basic and must come first.

*Bernard of Clairvaux*

Look at this surprising flower, which cannot be seen and yet its fragrance cannot be hidden.

*Bahauddin*

Christ lies hidden from the eyes of the crowd. Only with the eyes of the soul can he be seen.

*Philokalia, Macarius the Great*

The light of the inner eye lets you see God's nearness to you.

*Ibn Ata'Allah*