

A moment of mindfulness needn't be a strenuous act of meditation. We need only to stop, pay attention, and notice things as they are. An amazing amount of information is available in every fleeting moment of our lives. You can take a moment right now, in the place you are. You can notice the weight of this book in your hand, the feel of the page (or of the device you are using to read or listen to it), the movement of the air across your skin, or the play of light on the floor of the room. Or you can try asking yourself this lovely question, which is useful in any situation, at any time: *What's here that I've never noticed before?*

Time and attention are the essential materials of happiness. They are the reservoir from which our lives flow. This is more accurate than any financial metaphor. Just as the water from a reservoir can be directed to, and enrich, particular areas of a landscape, the flow of our attention can enliven and enrich particular areas of our lives. So it never hurts to take a look at where our attention has been flowing, and ask if it's going into places that benefit both the people we love and ourselves (these two things usually go together). Are we thriving? Are the activities and pursuits that make us feel most alive getting their due share? Who are the people most important to us, and are those relationships, challenges and all, getting the attention they deserve?

NO TIME TODAY BUT PLENTY OF TIME TOMORROW

This is a rich and developing area of research, some of which we are conducting ourselves. The results so far are not conclusive; much more research must be done. But what's clear at this point is that we can't assume that online spaces are the same as physical spaces, and we especially can't assume that the social skills kids develop by being together in person are skills they can also develop online.

ISOLATION AND CONNECTION

To put it simply, understanding another person is great, but just *trying to understand* goes a long way in building connection.

Some people do this automatically, but efforts to understand others can also be deliberate, intentional behaviors. It needn't come naturally to you at first, but the more you try, the easier it will get. The next time you have the opportunity, try asking yourself:

How is this person feeling?

What is this person thinking?

Am I missing something here?

How might I feel if I were in this person's shoes?

A close look at the DeMarco family reveals what research also shows are some of the natural outgrowths of focused attention: reciprocal love and consideration, a sense of belonging, and positive feeling about human relationships in general—which then leads to more positive relationships, and better health. In the case of Leo and the DeMarco family, their close attention to each other seems to have had a major impact on all of their lives.