

Being and Doing

Early in *Supercoach*, Michael Neill distinguishes between *being* and *doing*. This tells me that he is indeed a brilliant coach, since many coaches address only doing but do not recognize the importance of being. *A Course in Miracles* tells us that if you want to know the truth, just reverse what the world has taught you. The world has taught us that the road to success is paved by doing. The more you do, the more you will succeed. So we set out on a long and arduous journey of getting things done. Do this, do that; do this, do that; do this, do that—until we are exhausted from doing and our life become do-do.

Most people don't recognize that *being* is the force behind all doing. If you are doing but not being, your doing is empty and will eventually collapse of its own weight. If you cultivate being, doing will come naturally and your actions will have the power of the universe behind them.

Another way to understand the being/doing matrix is to say that *what* you are doing doesn't matter as much as *how* you are doing it. Because we are spiritual beings, it is the *spirit* in which we act that makes all the difference in our experience and the results we get. We all know people who do all the right actions mechanically, but they are devoid of joy or life force, they are no fun to be around, and they don't achieve maximal results. That's because their being is absent. We also know people who do not execute perfectly, but they are so vital and alive in their actions that they are a delight to be around and what they do works out in wondrous ways. If you merge your being with precision execution, that is optimal. But for now we will say that all effective action begins with being.

Ram Dass' guru Maharaj-ji asked him, "Does good come from truth, or does truth come from good?" In other words, does doing good things lead you to truth, or does being alive and honest lead to creating good in the world?" Maharaj-ji indicated that the answer is the latter. When you are real, alive, and honest with yourself and others, you generate more good than when you do good acts for their own sake.

So how do you cultivate being? Here are several ways:

1. Check in with yourself before undertaking any act, and during it. Ask yourself how much of your being is invested in this act. Is it fun, life-giving, and meaningful, or is it

boring and empty? Do you really want to do it, or are you doing it out of fear, guilt, or obligation? Is it a “should” or is it a “would?” Be impeccably honest about whether your heart is in it or not. If it is, proceed with confidence. If your heart is not in it, don’t do it. If you have to do it, find some way to keep your energy alive and have fun in the process.

2. Notice people whose actions are inspired by being and those whose actions are devoid of being. Everyone is your teacher. Some teach you what to do and some teach you what not to do. You don’t need to change others. You just need to recognize role models who inspire you, and emulate them. You also need to see the results of actions devoid of spirit, so you can take care not to go there yourself.

3. Sit quietly each morning in prayer or meditation and invite Spirit to fill you. Connect with where the life force lives inside you, and enjoy the sense of wholeness and vitality it creates. Ask Great Spirit, “Help me today to go where my life force lives and not go where it is absent.”

Cultivating being does not mean that you ignore, avoid, or run from doing. To the contrary, it means that your doing is so infused with spirit that you get more done in less time, and you have more fun doing it. The most important element in life is life. This means that your life is valuable only for the content that is truly alive. It is easy to go through the motions and look like you are doing something, or to do something because it is easy and familiar. But to constantly surf on the cutting edge of your life force is the greatest meditation there is.

I would rather be ashes than dust!
I would rather that my spark should burn out
in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot.
I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom
of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet.
The function of man is to live, not to exist.
I shall not waste my days trying to prolong them.
I shall use my time.

— Jack London

Exercise:

1. In what activities is your being or spirit most alive and present?

2. In what activities is your being or spirit least alive and present?

Why do you continue to do the things that are devoid of spirit? What is the perceived payoff?

3. Who do you know whose being is most infused in his or her actions?

4. Who do you know whose being is not very infused in his or her actions?

5. What changes can you make, in attitude and/or action, to amplify the amount of being you bring to your activities, days, and life?

Affirm:

My actions proceed from life, joy, and choice.

I let my being guide my life, and successful doing follows naturally.