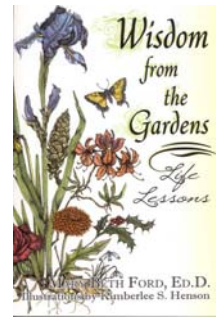




Dr. Mary Beth Ford's



Garden Wisdom Secrets

Living with Power in the Present -- Lessons from Nature

Nature is an eloquent teacher. We learn from nature the power of living in the present. Time alone in nature helps us calm a jittery mind and pay attention to the moment. It restores our inner peace. We deepen our experience of the Divine. We feel a sense of expansion beyond the ordinary self. Living in the now empowers us.

Learning from the Rhythms of Time in Nature

By observing the rhythms of time in nature--the sun's path across the sky, the growth of seeds, the changing seasons--we realize that time is not a mechanical measure. It measures process. By detaching from clock time for even a short while, we allow ourselves some moments of sanctified laziness. Our clocks and calendars measure the march of time. Our scheduling books overflow with dates, deadlines and things to do. We value speed and efficiency above all. But over activity and obsession with time threaten our inner life and peaceful mind. *Living in the present helps reconnect us with time's deeper meaning. Time becomes our friend.*

Learning the Power of the Present from Nature

In nature, past and future have no meaning. Life exists only in the present. We connect with Spirit--our Life Source and true Self--only in the present. We may regret the past and worry about the future, but we create only in the now. We are infinite choice-makers. Each choice creates our future. *When we make conscious choices toward Spirit, we act with reverence and respect for all creation. We find new joy and purpose for living.* Awareness of our choice in each moment is the key. But living in the present requires commitment and practice.

Practicing for Present Moment Awareness in Nature

Quiet time in nature offers us space to practice present moment awareness. Inner turmoil subsides. We focus on nature images with their sights and sounds and smells. We breathe deeply and focus consciously. Breathing brings us back to center. Focusing connects us with our deepest emotions. We learn to pay attention to what's inside us as well as what's around us. We appreciate small things that otherwise go unnoticed. Expressing appreciation often is a powerful way to stay anchored in the now. *The more we practice and experience living in the moment, the more we strengthen this skill.*

Full attention to the present is the most prayerful response we can make for the gift of life. In return for our commitment we receive blessings beyond measure. We connect with our true Self, the Source of our wisdom and strength. We pay attention to what matters the most to us. With confidence and joy we share our gifts and talents. We approach life from a serene, balanced center. In the midst of life's busyness we enjoy living with the power of the present.