



It's time for positive

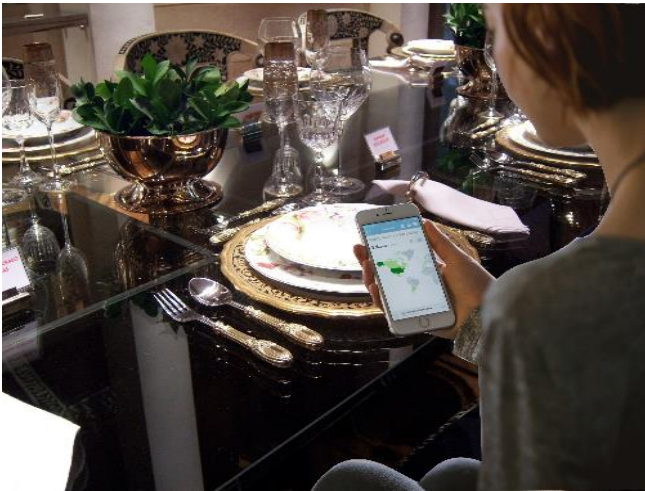
# CHANGE

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## Wandering Attention:

How to Re-Focus and Be Present

UXL, December 2015



Remember when we used to EAT our food instead of TAKING PICTURES of it? Remember when dinner time was a time to talk, catch up with one another, and *interact* with each other?

With the modern problem of "[screen addiction](#)," and our ever-shortening attention spans, it's becoming more and more difficult to be present. Why is being present important?

- It lets others know you truly care
- It allows you to fully focus on a single task (and do it well!)



*from the*  
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- It helps you live in the moment, instead of letting your mind flit around
- It lets you live each day with **intention** and **purpose**

I believe that being present is so important, that I dedicated an entire chapter of [my latest book](#) to it. It's an essential part of being an **excellent leader, an exemplary employee, and a happy, healthy human being**. When we're too busy multi-tasking, thinking about other things, and only partly paying attention to our surroundings, we miss *a lot*. Life is happening around us, and we're not fully participating.

Since we're in the middle of the holiday season, it is especially important to be present and give the people around you the time and attention they deserve. Stop burying yourself in your smart phone; don't flick on the television right after dinner; stop focusing on other things when someone is speaking to you. Instead...

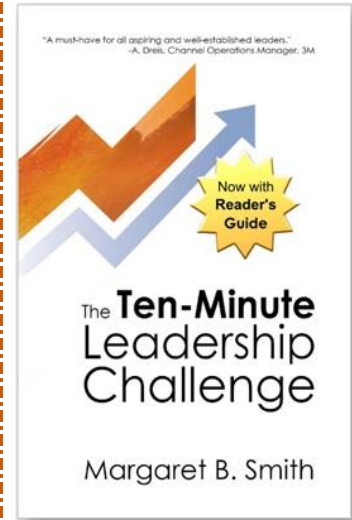
- Put away your devices and make eye contact with the people around you
- Engage others in conversation
- Ask good questions; start a dialogue
- Play a group game instead of turning on the television
- If you catch yourself thinking about something other than the present moment, acknowledge that thought and let it pass through your mind like a cloud (a technique that's often taught in meditation)
- Practice understanding: Take the time to *really* understand and empathize with others by asking good questions and repeating back to them what you thought you heard them say (i.e. "It sounds like you're saying that your boss doesn't appreciate you. Is that correct? Can you elaborate?")
- If you find yourself fidgeting (paying full attention can be hard if you're not used to it!), keep your hands busy with a stress ball or tap your foot to a steady rhythm—just don't let these fidget-reducers get distracting!
- Keep a notepad next to you and write down ideas/thoughts that pop up in your head; address the ideas at another time.

Be mindful, intentional, and PRESENT this holiday season. You *and* your loved ones deserve it.

Wishing you a happy holiday season,



Margaret Smith



Ready to take the Ten-Minute Leadership Challenge? Meant for leaders and aspiring leaders of all types.  
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#### How Great Leaders Inspire Action



Leadership expert Simon Sinek discusses his concept "Start with Why." He cites famous examples of incredible leadership (from the Wright Bros to Steven Jobs) and explains why they were so successful. [Read on...](#)

Founder, [UXL: Creating Successful Leaders](#)  
Author of [The Ten-Minute Leadership Challenge](#)

## Thank You For Reading!

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**To Redeem:** Email Margaret at [margaret@youexcelnow.com](mailto:margaret@youexcelnow.com) and mention this offer.

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We live in a stressful world! Can laughter really help us relax and focus? I recently attended a class by the folks at Brave New Workshop and [here are some important things I learned about laughter.](#)

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# About UXL

**UXL's** mission is to create leaders, promote positive change, and enable businesses and individuals to transform their dreams into reality.  
**Margaret Smith** is a career coach, speaker, author, licensed Insights Discovery practitioner, and adjunct professor at St. Kate's University with 27 yrs experience as a Senior Leader for 3M.  
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