

SKILLFUL ATTENTION

If we do not involve ourselves in some regular practice to direct our attention on purpose, our attention will naturally drift in predictable ways. The table below illustrates some natural tendencies of attention.

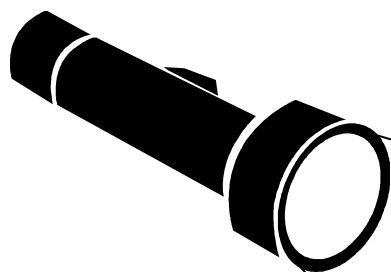
Attention Naturally Drifts	
<u>Towards:</u>	<u>Away From:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems (what is wrong) • Ourselves (self-centered) • Past & Future • The difficulty that others cause us • Symptoms • Multiple Tasks (divided attention) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolution (what is right) • Outside World (external focus) • Present Moment • The difficulty we cause others • Purpose • The joy of being absorbed in one experience (single pointed attention)

Adapted from the Residential Training Program
 ToDo Institute, Gregg Krech 2004
 Revised by James Hill 2008

Attention Determines Our Perception

The way our life looks and feels is strongly influenced by how we pay attention and what we pay attention to.

Attention functions like a flashlight in a darkroom. What I focus the light on becomes my experience. What I do not focus the light on fades from my awareness.



My water heater has worked perfectly for 3650 days in a row. I have enjoyed many soothing showers. I have never had to worry about this. I have just opened the faucet and enjoyed my warm shower.

Today my water heater stopped working. I had to take a freezing cold shower. It took me all day to get it fixed and cost me \$2000!

Both statements might be true. Guess which one gets my attention! Which one am I more likely to talk about? Which one am I likely to forget about?