



By [Karen Clark Cole](#)

A friend told me he usually goes into work late because he's busy playing Legos with his son instead of racing out the door to work. I thought to myself, "I bet he's a great employee and gets a lot done."

When you're down on the ground playing Legos with your kids, not worrying about anything else going on in the world, you are being fully present. And, when you make that conscious decision to be really engaged and in the moment with the person in front of you, everyone benefits.

In this day of multitasking and devices, you see presence less and less. Instead of multitasking, it should be called "half tasking" because in reality that's what's happening: You're paying half attention, getting half as much done, and getting a half dose of life.

Being fully present takes practice. It takes discipline to put the phone away, shut your laptop when someone comes to talk to you, or leave your devices behind when you go to a meeting. In most cases it's just a habit — Go to a meeting, grab your laptop, miss half the conversation. The worst part is that by multitasking, you are sending a clear message to everyone in the room that they are not a priority — in your busy day or in your life.

I learned how to be fully present from having a baby, but you can also learn it from the 3-year-old next door. Stop for a moment and look at that bug with him. Really get into it. Realize that to him, this bug is the only thing going on in the world right now. How cool is that? Let yourself be swept away, even for five minutes. Even better, stay an hour and be late for work. You'll be better engaged for the rest of the day. And I bet that hour gets gained in productivity, because you have just practiced being focused on what is right in front of you — the real secret to productivity.



*When not serving as CEO of Blink UX, you can find Karen organizing events to inspire young girls or training to become a professional kiteboarder.*