



**LEAP BEFORE
YOU LOOK**
**72 Shortcuts for Getting
Out of Your Mind and
Into the Moment**

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LEAP BEFORE YOU LOOK

Intimate Relationship Practice: Exchange Points of View

Level of Difficulty ***

When you find yourself caught in a disagreement
With your partner or a close friend,
When you are arguing,
Trying to be convincing that your point of view is more correct,
Stop and exchange points of view.
If you have been sitting together and talking,
Stand up and change seats.
For five minutes you will represent the point of view of the other,
Vehemently, passionately, fully trying to convince.
Do this with totality, give it everything.
Make sure you include (as the other)
How you feel, what you're resentful about,
What you want and why,
And what you are afraid of.
After doing this exercise for five minutes
Move back to your original position
Take the point of view that was originally yours,
And see what remains of your dispute.

Sometimes, needing to be right eclipses what is really right: that which will serve the greatest good. We get attached to a position like an old jacket full of holes letting the water in, no longer serving us, but comfortable and habitual. And so it is that the positions we take become prisons of our own creating; we isolate ourselves with our own fundamentalism.

In order for this practice to really help you, it is important to do it with totality and sincerity. Really deeply *become* the other person so you can feel their hurts, their ambitions, their unfulfilled dreams. Don't imitate, become. It takes presence and the willingness to let go of your own view in order really feel what another is feeling.

You might need to switch back and forward a few times to get the hang of this. You and your partner will need a shared commitment to step beyond your mutual need to be right, a willingness to let go of all positions. The key is not only to do this through the mind, but also through the body. As well as taking on the beliefs and thoughts of your partner, when you exchange positions you can also feel what it is like to have this body, to have this particular set of tensions and energies. It is through *feeling* what it is like to be the other, more than thinking as the other thinks, that you will move more deeply into Oneness.

The point of this practice is not to win the war nor to lose it, nor even to negotiate a compromise, but to feel what remains when the very basis of conflict is removed. You may find that underneath and including both these points of view rests what is right, what is best for all concerned.

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