

ATTENTION

Beyond Mindfulness

GAY WATSON

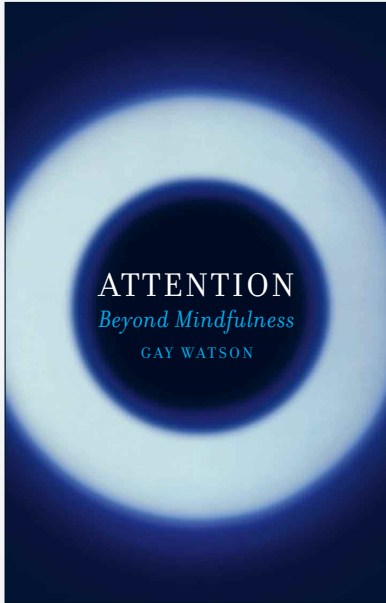
Attention is central to everything we do and think; yet it is usually invisible, transparent, lost behind our fixation with content. We pay attention to this and that moment or we let our attention wander, but we rarely give attention to the process of attending and distraction. It is typically viewed instrumentally, in terms of what it can achieve, and so its process and practice are overlooked, yet it is central to neuroplasticity – the brain’s ability to create new neural pathways in order to adapt – and underlies both the mindfulness revolution and the concern about the influence of new social and digital media.

Gay Watson explores attention in action through many disciplines and ways of life, from neuroscience to surfing. The book contains interviews with, among others, John Luther Adams, Stephen Batchelor, Susan Blackmore, Guy Claxton, Edmund de Waal, Rick Hanson, Jane Hirshfield, Iain McGilchrist, Wayne McGregor, Garry Fabian Miller, Alice and Peter Oswald, Ruth Ozeki and James Turrell.

A valuable and timely account of something central to our lives yet all too often neglected, this book will appeal to all those who find their attention wandering owing to the distractions and clamour of modern life, and want to know why.

PRAISE FOR ATTENTION

‘This is a remarkable and searching account of the meaning of attention. Gay Watson looks deeply into the practices of artists, writers and musicians and reveals the correspondences with spiritual disciplines. This is a provocative book in replacing attention at the heart of what we should care about.’ – [Edmund de Waal](#)



GAY WATSON is the author of *A Philosophy of Emptiness* (Reaktion, 2014) and *Beyond Happiness* (2007). She lives in Devon and California.

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