

In praise of SLOW - Carl Honore
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Why read it?

Carl Honore tells us about the many aspects of life which, if taken slowly, will give us wonderful chances to get less from the hurly-burly of every day. In this book he discusses the societies, the enthusiasts, the organisations and the individuals who promote one or other aspect of slowness. He describes how we can have balance and contrast in our lives by punctuating the fast with times of valuable, beautiful slow and he shows us lots of ways we can do it.

Content areas:

*“For fast-acting relief from stress, try slowing down”
Lily Tomlin, American actress and comedienne*

- × Food: including the Slow Food movement founded in Bra, Italy.
- × Cities: including creating slow neighbourhood (one in Ealing) - keeping motor speeds down – blending old and new
- × Mind/Body: when do ideas come to mind – slow thinking - relaxation methods – SuperSlow fitness
- × Medicine: How complementary and alternative medicine can work when conventional medicine may fail – use of ‘integrative medicine. – Hale Clinic Regents Park
- × Sex: Tantric sex and the authors experience of it
- × Work: - benefits of working less hard – the advantages and disadvantages of the French ‘les 35 heures’ – not always how long but when we work – control of time
- × Leisure: contemplative hobbies including the ‘new yoga’ knitting ! – kicking the TV habit – book clubs! – classical music played at slower tempo (Tempo Giusta)
- × Children: children pay a price for leading rushed lives – relaxed ways of learning – education from home
- × Overall the argument is to add some slowness into our lives, and it does not assume we want it everywhere. Contrast is valuable.

*“Instead of saying ‘don’t just sit there do something’
we should say the opposite ‘don’t just do something, sit there”” Zen master*

Influences of the author:

Honore starts the book by remembering a time in his youth, in Rome, when he had the time to lie down by a bus stop to wait for a bus, and enjoy the wait. He contrasted that with a later time in Rome, when he was a journalist. He was rushing for a plane and noticed a book about cutting down the time you can take with the bed-time read for the children. At first he wondered how quickly he could order the book and then stopped to think. That was the catalyst that led him to finding out about the worldwide range of slow societies and movements.

Benefits to:

Freelancer and our clients:

Taking time out – improved quality of decision making
Investing time in building relationships

Spin-offs/Links

The whole book has clear links to the issue of time management. For example, how would those who are competitive and obsessed with filling each moment of the day learn to apply some of the ideas? How could we help them to 'slow down' and recognize that slow is not bad because it clearly has real tangible benefit, especially around the quality of decision making... the concept of slowing down to speed up. Perhaps some of the lessons from the 'Slow Food' movement could help promote this concept to the non-converted.... how much longer do we want to rush the development of food to the detriment of its nutritional content?

There is also a clear link to taking time out to review, refresh and revitalize – how often do we realize that a product or way of doing something has had it's time and it's time to do something different?

Perhaps everyone just needs to stop for a moment and identify one area of their life where they could slow down..... 10 minutes review at the end of each day or taking a walk for 30 minutes instead of pounding the treadmill at the gym.

Reviewed by LNG Book Club members
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