

In Praise of Slowness

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“Being slow means striking a balance between fast and slow. You can live better than you think.”

Living in societies where efficiency and acceleration reign supreme, the body and mind go from bad to worse in terms of health while fast foods and boring TV shows proliferate. The resulting damage of high-speed pressure on the mind and body include on the rise of insomnia, hypertension, asthma and ulcers. In Praise of Slowness challenges the cult of the speed and strives for a better balance between fast and slow in order to help us enjoy a richer, fuller life. The following examples introduce slow movement.

Slow food: healthy eating habits for mind and body

Ask yourself :

1. Do I always rely on the microwave to quickly heat my meal?
2. Do I always eat fast food?
3. Do I always eat like a horse and then rush off?
4. How long has it been since I have last enjoyed the beautiful taste of food?
5. How long has it been since I have spent time eating food while talking with my close friends? Family? Relatives?

Sometimes people eat alone while doing other things at the same time such as working, driving, reading the newspaper and surfing the internet. This behavior creates a situation where people eat faster in order to get back to work as soon as possible, never resting to replenish the body and mind. Eating while watching TV seems like a good idea, but why is it that the person who engages this way feels empty at the end of the meal while the show(s) go on and on. Lacking and lost in both situations is the enjoyable pleasure that comes from preparing and eating food that feeds the mind/body. Also, obviously missing from the picture is another warm human simply enjoying good company and good food.

The first step toward healthy eating habits is feeding your self slowly. I am. not suggesting that all-day crockpot-cooking is a must-do to be healthy— although it's not a bad idea once in a while. I am strongly suggesting that slow food does

not include artificial, packaged and processed industrial foods. Slow food is defined by how it is prepared, and how it is enjoyed. Cooking for yourself does not have to be complicated and expensive. Buying fresh, simple foods and preparing them simply can be well... simply inexpensive, convenient, enjoyable and fun to share!

Slow exercise: Integrate your body and mind

1. Meditation eases anxiety, frees emotion and lowers blood pressure.
2. Yoga enhances deep breathing, strengthens immunity and promotes the healthy circulation of blood.
3. Chi Kung develops the control of breath and improves balance and patience.

Slow motions and movements strike a different kind of balance between fast and slow. We can play healthily with the fast pace in our life when we experiment by creating our own new slow styles. We can create more time and space to think and to breathe our life and in the process stumble upon the enjoyment of it. Grow the slow in your life and enjoy the surprising blooms of happiness that appear and you are going slow enough to notice!

References :

Carl, H. (2005). In Praise of Slow. UK: Orion.