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SLOW DOWN, YOU MOVE TO FAST

by Dr. Murali Krishna



Murali Krishna, MD, COO of INTEGRIS Mental Health and James L. Hall, Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit, has been on a mission to improve the health and well-being of Oklahomans since 1975. He has great compassion and enthusiasm to educate others about the importance of the “whole person” wellness. He has shared sage advice on setting your life’s pace.

“There is more to life than increasing its speed.”- Mahatma Gandhi

Away from work, you’re always on the run, delivering children to appointments, shopping for groceries, taking care of house-hold chores. At work, deadlines are crashing down upon you. You are overloaded and overwhelmed. In response, you race through meals and rush to appointments. You feel that no matter how fast you go, it’s not fast enough. If this describes your life, take a deep breath and ask yourself these questions.

- Do you dislike waiting or feel impatient with the rate at which many things take place.
- Do you regularly do more than one thing at a time?
- Do you suffer from “racing mind” and experience disturbances in your sleep:
- Do you feel a chronic sense of time pressure?
- Have you lost interest in activities away from your job:
- Do you have difficulty accumulating pleasant memories?

If you answered yes to any of these, you may have what medical researchers refer to as “**time urgency**.” It’s not a healthy condition to have. The stress felt by people with time urgency can also cause muscle pains, headaches, high blood pressure, irritable bowels, insomnia, phobias, depression, and anxiety. Your immune system may be weakened as well.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

The finding that counseling can help people with time urgency is consistent with other findings on the value of stress management in combating illness. This is not to suggest that if you have time urgency, you need counseling. So what should you do?

Be objective about your life. Time urgency causes us to lose objectivity about our lives. People who are running themselves ragged can easily lose sight of their values. Stop and determine why you are doing what you are doing and what steps you need to take to reach your goals.

Take responsibility for your choices. Every human being has the same 24 hours each day. What you do with yours is your choice. Every second of the day you make choices about what to do and how to spend your time. Own the decisions you have made.

Set priorities. Drop the idea that everything must get done. Choose a small number of things to do, from accomplishing specific on-the-job tasks to nurturing relationships with your spouse and children. Act decisively in pursuing these goals.

Pursue meaningful relationships. All too frequently in our busy lives we don't make time to nurture relationships. Conversations with family, friends, and colleagues take place on the fly. Ultimately, we need to connect with people on a deeper level. True intimacy replenishes our souls.

Seek oneness. These are moments of oneness with creation, times when every cell in your body resonates with a sense of rightness, when every fiber of your being says life is good. You may have experienced that moment in any number of ways, holding a sleeping newborn, praying, creating a work of art, laboring on a project you truly believe in, finishing your morning run. These moments restore us spiritually and recharge us emotionally. They also do wonders for us physically, reinvigorating, and replenishing our immune system and making us feel more vital and alive.

In this century, we've seen our life spans almost double, from an average life expectancy of 49 years for someone born in 1900 to about 80 years for someone born this year, but with twice as much life to live, we're living at a pace considerably greater than twice as fast.

Those who came before us had an ability to savor life. For the sake of your health, we need to learn to do the same.



For additional help you may contact **CAP**, to speak with a counselor, at **(405) 947-2688** or **(800) 677-2729**