Published on *Happily Whole* (https://www.livinghappilywhole.com)

The Key to Arriving at any Living Well Destination Quickly: Slow Down

July 20, 2014, written by katie



My Dad has always told me to slow down. I probably sped up at times simply to establish my independence…okay, or to aggravate him! He'd urge us to relax as he watched **Kevin** [1] and me bustling about sometimes crashing or complaining but more often gleeful and giggling in our dance of married life.

Dad's advice didn't faze our ways. We were content in constant movement!

Then Kevin died. [1] Life as I knew it halted but I leaned hard into my natural tendency of bustling about. My fast pace even seeped into my vocabulary as I added the words, 'real quick' to almost anything: 'Girls, get your shoes on real quick!', 'I just need to finish the laundry… write an article… perfect a recipe….*real quick*.' A strange symptom, I know.

My mind and movements careened to make for a hasty self-defense mechanism, the evidence spilling from my mouth. Everything 'real quick' and overflowing with anxiety.

And you see, Friends, words too often wandering the walls of your mind change the actions of your hands and soon solidify into habits… Before you know it ***your whole being and way of life morphs into something symptomatic of what's happening inside your head.*** That's what happened to me in my restlessness. Now I know to guard what's in my mind…

I was just buying time before I wore out with exhaustion as I attempted to keep stride with the world around me. Perhaps my intent was to *prove myself capable or maybe to cover-up the pain.*

I realized I had to fall back on my married-life bustling behaviors because, you see, when trauma strikes your life, you stand still on the inside. It was in that brief and subtle stillness right after he passed that I watched the world whirl past and I got scared. Life on the outside seemed surreal and suddenly it struck me: ***I had to keep up so I didn't fall down!***

Others struck with trauma's stillness stay stuck, unable to move, in shock. They lay in bed, protectively covering their faces from the outside fast pace. But, for me, staying still wasn't natural so I kept moving…*Only this time the glee and giggling was gone*. And for the first time, my Dad watched without a word because grief was gaining on me…or maybe grief stopped him from saying.

Then alongside my fast-paced pain, I ***slowly*** saw some budding blessings God beautifully laid out before us like a perfectly crafted quilt smoothed out atop a perpetually unmade bed….*New and developing friendships, invaluable lessons, non-coincidental connections, an incredibly ironic sense of gratitude.*

Ultimately these blessings served to strengthen my faith and sooth my soul ***as if Jesus Himself walked along with me letting me know it was okay to slow down, even if it hurt.***

Yeah, I believe He was…still is…walking with me reminding me to 'slow' and savor <u>even the tears</u>…..I feel Him keeping me afloat on calmer waters when alone I'd fatigue and drown from furious treading.

He showed me tools to use for this new season of life. First was this newfound passion for words. I discovered how writing slows me emotionally and physically. God showed me that pressing pen to paper offered an outlet of healing and hope.

I'd slow down for lifesaving breath at my desk or cradled in my comforter, journal in hand. It's a cocoon where words meet purpose in my loss. *Expressions of healing, characters of hope and words of wellness walking all over pages, pacifying my pain and molding me into more of who HE wants me to be.*

For the first time, ***I was learning to notice more of my life, to see and savor simple moments***. And slowing enough to notice what I need allows me to design my life more deliberately, with more intention.

Over time, I've created more opportunities to slow, notice and live intentionally. I've rekindled my affection for reading [2] and reveled in creating new recipes. My lifelong love of fitness evolved from a high intensity sense of striving to moving more mindfully based on what feels refreshing [3].

I signed up for a writing workshop, joined a woman's ministry [4] and devote time to sit, play and pray with my little girls. I reinitiated our dinnertime ritual to sit together at the table as a family of three (sounds simple, but it was big for me). ***Now we know how to communicate without all the quickness.***

This is how God works. He takes what we already know to teach us anew what He wants us to understand. He uses our pain and reconstructs it into something more beautiful than it was before.

*Slowing down has healed my heart more swiftly.*Things are certainly not perfect, pain-free or easy! And sometimes I slip into old habits. But, I'm headed in a healthier direction by slowing, savoring and living more intentionally.

Finally, I made a life-changing, incredibly challenging choice to close my business of ten years…all to honor simplicity and attempt to remain authentic to who God's calling me to be in this new season of my life.

Out of that same vein this blog was born. ***Happily Whole is a pursuit of my heart, a home for my words, a new professional walk and a resting place for my soul.*** It articulates my passion for living well from the inside out in my humble hopes to inspire others with the lessons I've learned.

So, do indulge me as I reiterate one now: ***Sometimes we only arrive where we're supposed to be by slowing down, by simplifying, so we can see what we're meant for.***

We may feel the need to hustle and hurry. We might sense the swirling of a fast-paced world. But moving too fast slowed me way down. It's only when I decelerated that I heard God calling me peacefully to a place of healing, a place of purpose.

I bet it'll be the same for you. So, rest a little in the midst of a fast pace world. You might be surprised how much more quickly you arrive where you want to be by slowing down.

Source URL: https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/living-well-my-soul/key-arriving-any-living-well-des-ination-quickly-slow-down

Links
[1] https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/kevin%E2%80%99s-corner/reliving-last-days
[2] https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/my-favorites
[3] https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/fitness-articles/my-personal-fitness-fix
[4] http://www.anewseason.net/