



BE the CHANGE

Sean Casey LeClaire, Publisher

SLOW DOWN

For seven years now, I have been working as a life & executive coach, speaker and seminar leader. Essentially I am an awareness teacher interested in supporting myself and others to access deeper dimensions of being—the space, silence and stillness that is known as the Self in the sacred tradition I embrace and practice. Along with opening to a deeper experience of being, I have an abiding passion for slowing down and creative expression. Extensive research and personal experience indicate a profound link between slowing down and creative expression. When I say “slowing down” I do not necessarily mean doing less; in many cases it actually means being much *more* productive and creative in all areas of life. Artists and athletes know the experience of *quiet mind*, and moving within and from such space which often initiates peak and optimal performance. When I speak of slowing down, I am talking about slowing the mind down, so that you are no longer subject to the tyranny of thought. A busy mind is an unproductive mind, a mind that lacks the capacity for creative, intuitive expression and optimal performance. All you have to do is look on the faces of children at free play (meaning no adult interference) and you will see the joy, passion and clarity of mind that so many of us long for. The reason why I slow down and engage *timeless wisdom practices* is so that I spend more and more “time” in the space and silence of the Self. Side-benefits include an increased ability to concentrate and experience creative expression and happiness. More and more, I am surprised to learn how many people simply have either no awareness practice, or an inconsistent practice for slowing down their over-scheduled lives and cultivating a deeper dimension of being from which to engage life.

As a meditation teacher and life coach I hear many stories... some about being in the flow, some about profound states of stillness and unity, others about joy and achievement, and many about the struggle for such. I'd like to share one story from the last year of coaching conversation which stunned me.

A highly successful and well-known management consultant and I were part of a team created to work on a piece of business. The project never came to fruition. The guy approached me and asked about having coffee. We set a time to meet. There was something about me that he didn't get, he said. “A bizarre combination of intensity, passion and stillness,” he said. The man is a world-beater; he gets his identity from what he does. I like him. After about an hour, I could tell he wanted something but wasn't quite sure how to ask. So I said, “How can I help you?” He shared about being somewhat tired and a few private matters.

Finally I said, “When did you last take time for rest and renewal?”

He spoke about family vacations, conferences at prestigious resorts where he'd gathered with peers from the leadership development and management consultant industries, and other sorts of adventures.

“No, no,” I said, “Rest and renewal by yourself, with yourself, for yourself.” He did not understand. So I pulled the slow-down sword from my hip and asked, “When is the last time you spent a day or a weekend or a week *completely alone* resting and renewing?”

“Alone?”

“Yes, *Alone*.” A tear formed under his right eye.

“87.”

We sat in silence. He continued to cry then left and I haven't heard from him since. Too much, way too much of his identity comes from “making it happen” to ever slow down and really look at who he is, what he's doing, and where's he's headed. Twenty-one years (three seven-year soul cycles) is a long, long time to not stop, take a break and reflect, and renew. I imagine each of us can relate to this man's story in some way. I certainly can. Real change, inner transformation begins when we commit to begin to slow down our minds. I have to be willing to look at the chattering, chattering, chattering that can keep me on the fear-driven tread mill. Change implies a certain amount of uncertainty. For most people, fear arises as we move from what is known to what is unknown. Almost every retreat I go on, I must first face my mind, and see things as they are. Believe me it's not easy to stop. That's why folks don't. But the more I do so, the more I am able to remain present in my life and enjoy the benefits of such. What I have noticed is that I require less time renewing and retreating as the mind is not so unnecessarily active, thus I access the abundant energy of the present moment.

This summer, I offer you a **Slow-Down Challenge**

Click [here](#) and choose one of these three slow-down practices and make it a component of your summer.

ENJOY!

Note to reader: The above story is factual and shaped in a fashion that maintains client confidentiality and anonymity.