

Slowness - Additional Readings

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[Le Carnaval des Animaux #4: Slowness](#)

It might not be the thing
You've come to associate me with
This elegant display
As I steadily move forward
Do not mistake my slowness
For laziness or worse
I take my time for things I like
As I enjoy the things that slowly pass by
Life's too short and too fast alike
And I'm just a helpless little pawn
But do not mistake my slowness
For laziness or worse
As you come to see me
As someone who values life
And takes things as they come
Slowly and gently
Like the turtle's steps

"ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A CERTAIN SLOWNESS" Paul Cilliers, 2006

As a result of a whole range of what one could call "pathologies" in contemporary culture, the idea of "slowing down" has of late been mooted in a number of contexts. A few can be named briefly. The "Slow Food" movement, which started in Italy but has a worldwide following, extols the virtues of decent food made from decent ingredients without compromise. The resistance shown to "junk food" is not only based on aesthetic considerations, but also on ethical (and nutritional) ones. The movement promoting "Slow Cities", also of Italian origin, fosters an understanding of cities which is more humane. Such cities should encourage walking rather than driving, have small shops with local products rather than shopping malls and, in general, provide opportunities for the community to interact, not to live in isolation. "Slow schooling" is a movement which questions educational processes in a world geared for instant results. It emphasizes the contextual nature of knowledge and reminds us that education is a process not a function. On a more personal level, "slow sex" involves attitudes which tries to prevent that the values of the marketplace also rule in our intimate relationships. We need to recognize that the journey is more important than the destination, and that takes time.

From *In Praise of Slowness*, by Carl Honore, 2004

The Slow movement is not about doing everything at a snail's pace. Nor is it a Luddite attempt to drag the whole planet back to some pre-industrial utopia. On the contrary, the movement is made up of people like you and me, people who want to live better in a fast-paced, modern world. Be fast when it makes sense to be fast, and be slow when slowness is called for. Seek to live at what musicians call the tempo giusto the right speed."

As one Zen master put it, instead of saying "Don't just sit there, do something," we should say the opposite: "Don't just do something; sit there."