

HEALTH

# THE ART OF SLOWING DOWN

Aug/15/2025 / by Rashmi Gopal Rao



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It is not an understatement to say that life today is a race against time. Constantly driven by deadlines and notifications, we are consciously or unconsciously chasing productivity, goals and achievements. While this may be sustainable for some time, we often find ourselves caught in a vicious cycle of worry, anxiety, impatience and are in a constant state of hurry. As a result of all this we are unable to devote time to people and issues that matter, stop enjoying the whole process of working towards our goals and in short lose sight of the bigger picture. Hence, it is critical that we become more mindful of ourselves, our activities and approach life with more balance; it always pays to slow down a bit.

## MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT

It is a misconception and a misnomer that many people associate slowing down with giving up, weakness or even failure. “There was a time when I genuinely believed that slowing down just wasn’t an option for me. I was running businesses across different time zones, raising my child, and managing a foundation; it felt like the day never had enough hours. I would be replying to emails while walking through airport gates, squeezing in calls between meetings, and catching up on work at 4 am. That pace felt normal—because it had to be. Then one evening, my child asked me to help with a school project. I don’t even remember what it was about now—planets, maybe. We were just sitting there cutting out stars from paper and for a few minutes, everything felt still. No phone in my hand, no background stress; just us. That quiet moment hit me harder than any boardroom breakthrough ever has. It made me realise how much I was missing in the name of being “productive.”The world makes us think that being busy means being successful. But what I’ve learnt, slowly, and sometimes the hard way—is that success without stillness is just noise. And it is also not sustainable” says Dr. Malini Saba, psychologist, human and social rights activist, founder, Saba Family Foundation.

The world today is driven by pressure and you are somehow expected to ‘fit in’; you are expected to say yes, all the time, be reachable and never miss a beat. In the light of this scenario, it is critical that you know where to draw the line. While it is key that you give your hundred percent at work, it is also important to make time for yourself and your family after work hours. That way, you learn to balance work and leisure which is sure to keep you in good stead in the long run. “It is not possible for you to be on autopilot all day. I have made a conscious effort to be gentler with myself. Not every day is perfect. I still slip. But I have started choosing presence over performance. It is okay to stop, to rest, protect your peace of mind, even if the world around you is moving fast” says Gagandeep Kaur, Communications &Marketing Strategist.



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## FROM FOMO TO FOBI

It goes without saying that constant stimulation can cause more harm than good for you in the long run. We often indulge in activities, take on additional projects and do things only due to peer pressure and the fear of missing out (FOMO). “As a psychologist, I know the damage that constant stimulation can cause. I’ve seen how people break under the pressure of staying “connected” all the time. One must realize that maintaining boundaries is important and there is peace that comes from stepping back, unplugging and just letting yourself be” adds Dr. Saba. Thus, it is imperative that you slow down, take a pause and reflect in order to keep going. Harboring a feeling of ‘Fear of Being Included (FOBI) is any day better than the stress caused by FOMO!

“I run a handcrafted food and grocery business and I ended up fire fighting most of the time. I felt drained and soon realised—what’s the point of building something if I am breaking myself in the process? Over the years, I’ve learnt that in business, consistency is more important than speed. There are good days and bad days which I have taken into my stride. Now, I give myself permission to pause. If I want a quiet cup of tea the morning, I take it. If I need a Sunday off, I take it without guilt. My health and my peace are not luxuries but are not necessities” says Harmeet Singh, Entrepreneur, Agro & Food Products.

## CONSISTENCY AND DISCIPLINE: THE KEY

Apart from learning to draw the line both at work and at home, it is critical that we adopt some practices mindfully. Always start the day with a positive note, set aside some time for activities like breathing, meditation, yoga, walking, jogging or any kind of fitness regime that suits you. Stick to your schedule and ensure you have your meals on time, reduce screen time, especially doomscrolling. Have to do list or a journal that helps you retain your focus. Being aware and mindful, listen more than you talk and allocating time to do the activities you love always helps you appreciate the finer aspects of life. Always remember less is more!