

The Hurrier I Go, the Behinder I Get
By Jeanne Loehnis

Are you a “human being” or a “human doing”?

In the hustle and bustle of life in these United States, many of us resemble a “human doing”: clean the house, buy the groceries, mend Johnny’s pants, make dinner, help at the church festival, work 9 to 5 with overtime ... And the list goes on. Sound familiar?

When was the last time this list sounded more like you: daydreaming about the upcoming vacation, smiling at the memory of a recent visit with a friend, evaluating the meaning of a religious affiliation, saying “No” when asked to take on one more responsibility?

What happens when life becomes non-stop activity?

- Weariness is so prevalent we don’t even know what how it feels to be well rested
- Continually high stress levels take a major toll on our health
- Sloppy work results from the belief that there isn’t enough time to do a good job; this sloppiness begs re-work so we work faster and harder as we do and redo
- Choices are reduced to the most pressing critical and urgent needs; long-term goals and projects, therefore, go nowhere

As busyness becomes constant hustle and bustle, what happens to relationships? Those closest to us: spouses, children, friends, are constantly infected by our frustration over “too much to do”. They receive the brunt of the pain that we aren’t acknowledging as we try to “rise above it” and “do it all”. We push our children to do more and they learn well how to be a “human doing” just like us. The relationship with our significant other: is there one? Those very qualities and interests that drew us together in the first place have been set aside. There is no time to read and discuss a good book or take a walk in the woods and watch the birds. Relationships suffocate in the rat-race and take far more time to rebuild than they would have taken in continual nurturing along the way.

And to what end? Is it our goal to “keep up with the Jones’ s”? How can that be possible? In case you haven’t noticed, things are moving faster and faster “out there”. New products are entering the market daily. Having the “latest and greatest” is a never ending challenge. Is that what you really value?

“And on the seventh day, He rested.” (*) All major religions acknowledge the need for Sabbath, a time to rest and revisit the deeper meaning of life. In his book, “Sabbath, Restoring the Sacred Rhythm of Rest”, Wayne Muller says:

"Life has become a maelstrom in which speed and accomplishment, consumption and productivity have become the most valued human commodities."

"In Sabbath time we remember to celebrate what is beautiful and sacred; we light candles, sing songs, tell stories, eat, nap and make love."

Muller teaches us to use a time of sacred rest “to refresh our bodies and minds, restore our creativity, and regain our birthright of inner happiness”.

Without rest, as we keep pushing, keep trying harder, keep moving, and we neglect some very critical needs:

- Rest
- Play
- Self-care
- Asking for help
- Discerning what the next step in the major project really **should** be

In those times of rest, when we pause from life’s activity, we connect with an inner wisdom. We listen to our bodies and become aware of specific exercise or nutritional needs. Answers to life’s “problems” seem to appear out of nowhere as we evaluate steps taken and listen for direction.

And we remember. We remember **why** we took this job, got married, or started a family. We remember our dreams and goals, the vision that we held as a college graduate. We remember what really matters and we find the willingness to redirect our daily activities to be more in alignment with this inner truth of our being.

With regular rest and renewal, the actions that we **choose** to take have a greater impact. Without sacred times of rest and renewal, we are as the caged rat in the wheel going nowhere fast.

Is it time for you to remember: “the hurrier I go, the behinder I get” and honor your need for rest?

(*) *Genesis 1:100*

Jeanne Loehnis, spiritual singer and songwriter, with a B.A. in Music from Lawrence University, is a professional computer programmer/analyst and manager at Lawrence. Contact Jeanne at SongsForYourSpirit@new.rr.com. Discover Jeanne’s creative expression at www.SongsForYourSpirit.com. Check out Unity Church of Christianity at <http://www.focol.org/unity/> for one source of her spiritual nourishment and outlet for creative expression.