

SEPTEMBER 2015

ROAD RUNNER LIVING

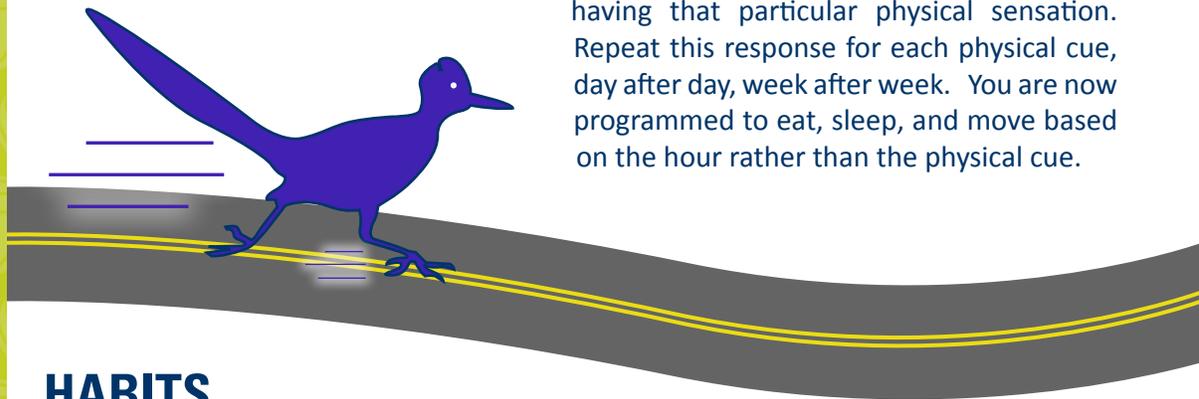
There is something about birthdays. For me, it is more about contemplation than celebration. Perhaps because my upcoming birthday is a milestone, I am contemplating more than usual. I am always conscious of being a model for wellbeing, but this turn of the odometer felt like it required a tune up. The tune up began on July 20 with a year-long coaching program that includes daily lessons, habit building and workouts. Taken on their own, none of these activities is particularly time consuming or difficult. But taken together and repeated consistently-- there is definitely something positive brewing here.

LESSONS

Thus far the most impactful lesson is the one extolling slowness. The topic kicked off with a TED talk by best-selling international author, Carl Honoré. He opened by describing the shame he was feeling for rushing around the globe on a whirlwind tour—ironically, for his book about slowing down. He also noted the remarkable indignity of getting a speeding ticket on the way to a dinner hosted by the Slow Food Movement. I loved his term for our fast-paced lifestyle. He called it “road runner living.”

Road runner living started when we allowed the clock to govern our physical wellbeing. Consider your typical day. What is the first thing that you do when you: Wake up? Feel hungry? Get restless? Yawn? If you are like most of us, you look at the clock to verify that your present experience is appropriate given the time of the day. You then

override whatever your body is telling you because you judge that it's too early or too late to be having that particular physical sensation. Repeat this response for each physical cue, day after day, week after week. You are now programmed to eat, sleep, and move based on the hour rather than the physical cue.



HABITS

The foundational nutrition habit is eating slowly. After implementing some of the strategies for slowing down, such as setting down my fork between bites and chewing each bite 15 times, I realized that I was racing through dinner. Because I often eat alone, I tend to read or do crossword puzzles while dining. For now, I still allow myself to multitask in these ways. On the odd occasion when my son joins me, he sits for about three minutes after he finishes and then says “thanks for dinner Mom” and gets back to his evening. I still have a good 15 minutes before I am 80% full, the second keystone habit. Based on my observations, the slow eating model is not going viral anytime soon.



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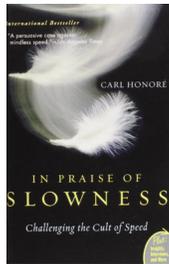
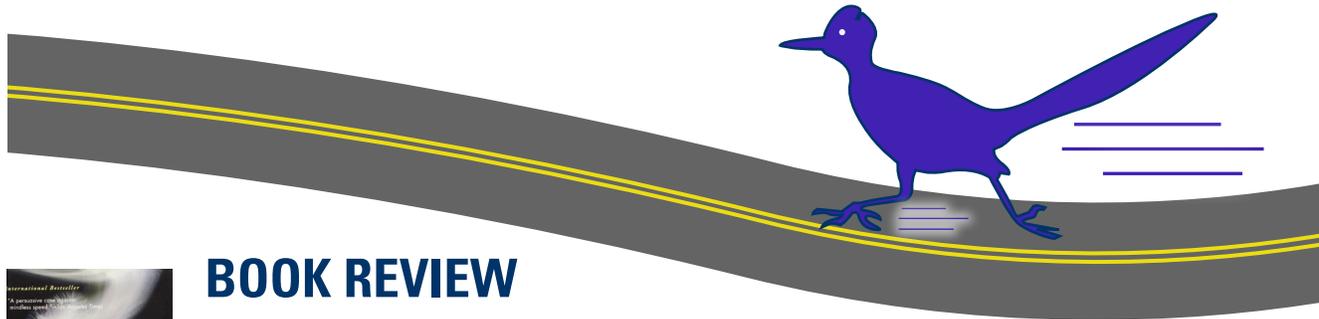


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WORKOUTS

No longer haunted by my road racing days and their accompanying “need for speed,” I now have permission to exercise in whatever way I choose as long as I do it consistently. To this end, I have found that I am more successful when I exercise with others. Consequently, I have added a third Pilates class and a long walk with a dear friend to my weekly schedule. It’s working. As long as there is someone waiting for me, I don’t have to psych myself up. When I was the only Pilates student who wanted to work out on the Labor Day holiday, I was reminded of how much psyching up it takes me to work out by myself.

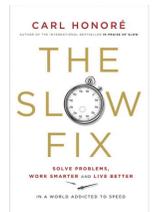
Despite my best efforts to slow down, I was recently pulled over for exceeding the speed limit by 7 MPH. I was cruising along in a tranquil beach community blissfully unaware that I was rushing. I was let off with a warning, but it did serve as a wakeup call. Apparently I am still a work in progress.



BOOK REVIEW

In Praise of Slowness
by Carl Honoré

As a died-in-the-wool Type A, my mantra has always been “don’t just sit there, do something!” Thanks to my coaching program, I am intentionally decelerating. According to Honoré, I am not alone. The success of Slow Food, a 1981 protest to Italy’s first McDonald’s and now a global movement, has encouraged other disciplines to tag along. City planners, investment bankers, musicians, medical practioners and even body builders are experimenting with practicing slowness and achieving more focus, creativity and enjoyment in both their professional and personal lives. The book was very well written. I am looking forward to reading his new book, *The Slow Fix*. The promise of solving problems, working smarter and living better in a world addicted to speed sounds pretty good to me.



RESOURCES



PATRICIA M. FULLER, PhD,
Director, Wellness
Engineering

Patricia M. Fuller has dedicated the last 17 years to designing and delivering wellness programs as a project manager and contractor for PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP. Her training events earn consistently excellent ratings for her holistic approach and her real world application.

Prior to concentrating in wellness, Pat taught accounting and auditing as an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa. She earned her CPA designation in 1992 as a senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand. She has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Utah.

Pat has a PhD in holistic nutrition. In 2010, she was board certified by the Holistic Nutrition Credentialing Board. Her areas of research include stress management and eating habits. She is a Certified Wellcoach and a member of the Institute of Coaching. She is an annual attendee to The Harvard Medical School Conference, Coaching In Leadership & Healthcare.

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