

Experiments in Slowing Down.

Week 1: Anchoring to your wholeness.

Dear Mindful Soul,

Thank you for being a part of the Pause for Perspective's Experiments in Slowing Down. Let me tell you right off the bat, slowing down is not an easy skill for me. In a world that we live in today, it is not a skill that many can wear comfortably.

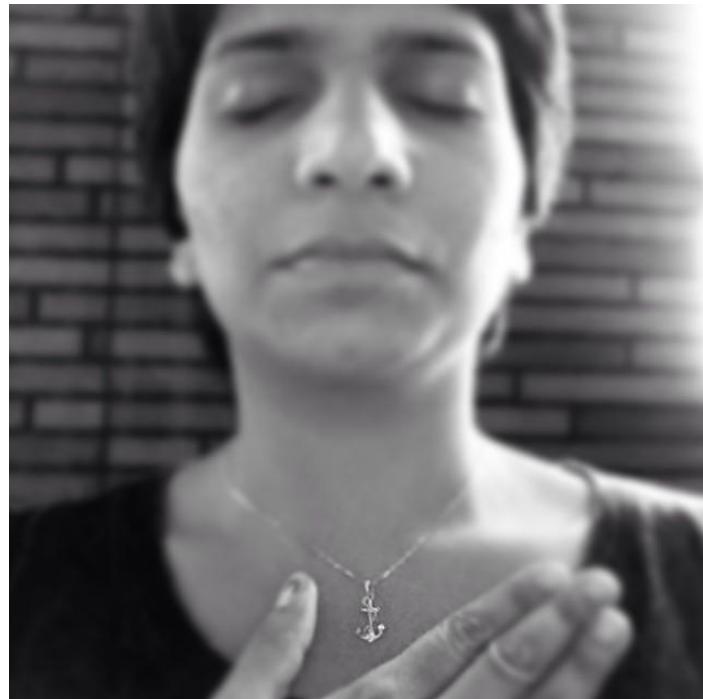
Ironically though, we desire deeply to feel ease and comfort in our everyday lives. We do that by pushing away pain and seeking pleasure. This is what causes rush isn't it? The desire to inhibit in certain mood states, experiences and spaces and the complete dislike in experiencing the difficult, the unpleasant and the uncomfortable. We rush to a safer more comfortable place and lose sight of the fullness life has to offer.

I dread when my kids get sick. I dread having to take days off, having to stay up all night, I dread seeing them in so much pain. And every time they get sick (as all kids do) I spiral into a cycle of fear, anger, and self-loathing. On the other hand, I love when everything goes smoothly at the home front. I love that I have help at home for cooking, cleaning and baby care. I love that I can come back home and spend hours with the kids in complete presence. Yet, I am waiting, waiting for something to go wrong. Wondering when the next sickness will strike. Have you experienced something like this? When life goes smoothly we often wait in fear, doubt and discomfort for it to get bad.

If I can slow down just a little and look at my discomfort, pain and fear around my kids' sickness, I can use that as an opportunity to stay deeply present with them, I can take days off to just be there, for my children and myself. I can work my way through fears around sickness, responsibility and priorities.

Slowing down is the answer to living a full and wholesome life, a life where we can sit steadily in the face of hardships and sail smoothly in the face of joy. Only in embracing our lives as they unfold can we get closer to it, transcend hardships that seem to recur, and find meaning in the yucky as much as we find meaning in the yummy aspects of our life. We cannot rush our ways out of difficult spots in our life. Not always.

So, yes, I push away pain and rush into what is pleasurable but just for this week here's what I am going to practice and what I invite you to practice in order to slow down just enough to embrace life as it were.



Every time you feel rushed this week place your hand on your heart and listen to it beat. Stay with your body and the breath. Just for a minute (more if you have the time). That is it.

If you want to go deeper: Place your hand on your heart and allow yourself to gently relax and say to yourself “I am anchored here, in this experience, just for this moment there is nowhere else I need to be”. Repeat it twice or more until you feel you have slowed down a little.

Our Experiments in Slowing Down will start with micro-movements. Movements that are small, and help us carve just a little space in which you can slow down. That is all. And we will practice them over and over again in a given week.

I hope that you are able to practice this first micro-movement this week. You can write to me about your experience in using this movement, you can blog about it or you can share your experience over at our FB page where I will make available ONLY the first months' experiments in slowing down.

Each experiment will be sent out to you on Friday. With the weekend in hand and an opportunity to naturally slow down I hope that each experiment will find its way into your everyday life and help you slow down just a little.

Love,

Aarathi.

Week 2: Calming the storm



*It feels like I am making my way, fighting a strong storm,
The forceful wind making it hard to take a simple straight step.*

Unable to breathe

Unable to think straight

Unable to listen to anything around

I am pulled away from this right now

I am left wanting to do more than I can.

Restlessness, do you feel it today?

Not all is bad about this feeling of restlessness. Restlessness teaches us that we need to prioritize. However, when it does attack us, it distracts us, pulls us away from the right now, from being present and of use.

The amazing thing about this nervous feeling state of restlessness is that when you acknowledge it, own it and create an intention to move away from it, it disappears. It's magical. The power of bringing consciousness to our difficult feelings.

I have added a video for this week to help you with a specific breathing technique that I use and teach my clients to help them acknowledge their restlessness and overcome it in order to stay present and be productive.

I hope that you will watch the video. Here's the gist of it:

1. Acknowledge your restlessness
2. Create an intention and invite a desired feeling state
3. Attend to your breath (as shown in the video) for five cycles

4. Go back to life as it were (and without the restlessness).

I hope that you can introduce this micro-movement in your everyday life this week. Place reminders around your home and at work as well as perhaps on your phone, to remind you to take a few healing breaths. A sticky note at your desktop, blue nailpolish reminding you to breathe, anything to do the trick should go a long way in helping you make this experiment a successful one.

Please let me know how it was for you. And if the restlessness doesn't cease write to me and we'll look at it one-on-one in an email conversation.

Much love,

Aarathi.

Week 3: Pause to Observe Stillness



Welcome Dear Mindful Soul to another experiment in slowing down. How does life feel on a daily basis? May I ask you to hit reply and let me know? I am offering a one week one-on-one email coaching exclusively for members who have signed up for Experiments in Slowing Down, and that includes you. Write to me about this topic and how your everyday life looks like, and how you would like for it to be and I will offer support, a listening ear and presence that you need to ensure we will come around to supporting you successfully in Experimenting and effectively experiencing the beautiful effects of slowing down. Write to me if you are drawn to this, okay?

Now for this week's experiment in slowing down. Let us **pause to observe stillness**. In this moment, pause and look around you. On the surface of things there might be chaos, the tooting of the horns from the street, your children screaming for you, or your co-workers having a conversation.

Take a deep breath and look around and see how there is stillness in the objects around you. The earth that is bearing us, the furniture-still and sturdy, the air present and quiet. Observe the nature of stillness around you and allow your thoughts and actions to slow down just a little to connect with the stillness present among these things.

This exercise takes only a few seconds to do and it is magically powerful and providing that pause needed in our busy lives.

Do this as often as you can. I also recommend that you place reminders around you to remember to connect with the stillness around you and within you.

Taking this further: If you have some time in your hands a great way to slow down would be to bring your colors out-paints, crayons and whatever you have and use this exercise to find one object that is still, that stands out in its stillness and draw it. The drawing doesn't have to be perfect. In drawing this object you are connecting with its stillness. Pay attention to the contours, the way it is sitting on tabletop perhaps. Draw it with fluidity in your motion and then paint it in a color that appeals to you.

I hope that you enjoy this experiment in slowing down. Do let me know how this practice has been for you.

With love and gratitude,

Aarathi .

Week 4: Embracing the Chaos



Hello Dear Mindful Soul,

Sorry for not writing on Friday. For those of you who have recently joined the Experiences in Slowing Down, I send out one email a week on Fridays that are invitations to slow down. I chose to send on Fridays because you have the weekend to naturally slow down and practice the experiment for the week.

This past Friday though was not a great day for me to write. I was overwhelmed and also a little frustrated by work. The thing is that for the last month I was working with a corporate as a psychologist on their board. In that one month I realized that this wasn't something I wanted to be doing, that the work didn't resonate with me and I was not valued as a member. So, what I did next was that I quit.

Over the years I have learnt that if I was doing work that didn't light me up I needed to let it go in order to make way for something more delightful. I also have a sweet and solid mentor alongside me to help me process this tough stuff.

So, in the process of making a decision to quit I felt several emotions-anger, confusion and frustration to name a few. What do you do when you are feeling so chaotic within?

One of the things I was doing was practicing was **embracing the chaos**.

This week let us experiment with Embracing the Chaos and let us see how that can help us slow down to embrace our life more fully.

Here's what we'll do:

Embrace the chaos but not necessarily the situation:

The universe was born from chaos. Chaos is part of the rhythm of our universe. The great Mother Nature lives, thrives and finds peace as a result of chaos. We are a part of this universe. Our chaos, our overwhelm and our difficult emotions are a part of this universal rhythm.

In accepting our chaos as being a natural cycle of nature, of being human, we embrace the overwhelm without the story it brings with it.

When I can embrace the anger I experience at work, just the anger and not the story that led to the emotion, I disconnect from the story itself and embrace only my anger. When I can do that, I begin to see the light in the situation. I can see the situation for what it is and hence I see ways that can help me overcome it, I can make clear decisions that resonates with who I am.

This week let us embrace the chaos and in doing so connect with the natural rhythm of the universe that the chaos is a part of. Let us see if that can serve to clarify our situation.

How to practice embracing the chaos:

When you are feeling overwhelming emotion because of a situation, connect with the emotion, take a deep breath and say to yourself I am feeling anger. Allow yourself to sit with the physical sensations of anger. Then say to yourself that while chaotic in nature, the universe is made up of such chaos. This anger is a natural rhythm of the universe, and saying thus out loud or in your mind may help (always helps for me!)

Stay with it till it feels like the emotions sharp edges are now dulled down. See if you are now able to have a different perspective on the situation itself. If not you will need to stay with the chaos a while longer.

Subscribe

If you enjoyed these four Experiments in Slowing Down(EISD) don't forget to subscribe for the weekly invitations to experiment with me.

If you are a subscribed member for EISD you will receive one invitation a week to slow down at no cost. At the end of the month I will create pdfs that will be available at www.pauseforperspective.com for purchase.

To register to receive EISD click [here](#).

With love and light,

Aarathi Selvan.

Licensed Psychotherapist, Mindfulness Guide and Contemplative Artist.

www.pauseforperspective.com