

Slow down, please

Today's guest blog is from Steve Olsen, the Director of Advising at AIB College of Business. We were happy to first meet Steve as a volunteer on our Iowa Character Awards selection committee.

In our fast-paced lives, we pride ourselves at doing more in less time. We complete tasks at high speeds only to pile more onto our already full plates. Why does it take getting pneumonia for us to slow down or losing our job to compel us to reevaluate our lives? If only we would realize that those "setbacks" we thought we would never get through are what test our faith and build our character. Sometimes taking the long road is not the most gratifying or fun, but it's during those journeys we truly begin to grow.

Most would say the quicker they accomplish something, the more free time they will have to work on other tasks. But when have all of the tasks on your to-do list ever really been completed? Life and circumstances do not allow us to be free of lists. That is exactly why we must take the time to purposefully and intentionally slow down, and my recommendation is to start today. Take a leisurely walk through the park with your family; eat a meal at the dinner table that you all prepared together; or spend an hour in silence just listening to your thoughts.

By not slowing down, what may get overlooked during this rush through life is the importance of character development. If you haven't taken the time to honestly rate your character and reflect on your assessment, I encourage you to do so. Look at the Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship) and make a commitment to slow down and focus on building each Pillar into your life. But remember...this self-evaluation may take some time, and that's perfectly fine.