

Switch to the slow lane with success



Overtime at work. Calendars filled with kids' activities. Cancelled self-care appointments. Is it any wonder that life in the fast lane is leaving many of us running on empty? Now is a good time to take a turn for the better by learning how to slow down.

If you think life is moving too fast, try these hints to help you go from flurried to unhurried—while jump-starting your career and personal life:

Gauge your risk

Risk means getting out of your comfort zone. Determine how much risk is necessary to reach your career goals. Assess the right amount of risk to succeed in your career, while safeguarding you and your family's well-being and keeping balance in your life.

Fuel your interests

Look for ways to include your interests at work. If you can't do so in your job, then pursue your interests on the side through volunteering, taking classes, reading and networking.

Build in down time

Learn to under-schedule your time. Be sure to review your calendar each week, and leave room for unexpected opportunities that could arise.

Live in the present

Focus on what you are doing right now, rather than on what's happening at home while you're at work, or at work while you're home. If you fully engage in the present moment, you can make significant progress on both fronts.



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More ways to exit the fast track



Flex your options

Notice opportunities for building flexibility into how you serve your employer or clients. For example, your employer may let you come in early and leave early, provide your services to clients at their workplaces and schedule time-saving teleconferences instead of certain face-to-face meetings.

Play each day

Build pleasure into your workday. Make it a priority to meet new people in your community and workplace. Also, use workplace-appropriate activities from family life, such as story-telling or role-playing, in your creative brainstorming sessions at work.

Learn to say no

Recognize that you don't have to agree to do everything that other people ask you to do outside work. Prioritize your time and realize that you can turn down some requests.

Mix it up

The fast track often produces burnout. Alternate your approach to work projects as well as family and leisure activities to help rekindle your interest. Revamp your daily routine with strategies such as trying a new route to work, adding new items to your brown-bag lunch or doing a daily task at a different time. Just be sure to maintain enough routine to be efficient. Taking a fresh approach to daily tasks will renew you and make it easier to respond well to future opportunities.

Steer your way to [Blue Access® for Members](#) for additional work-life balancing advice. Click on the [Personal Health Manager](#) icon to find the [Ask A Life Coach](#) feature where you can e-mail your stress-related questions to a licensed professional counselor.