



Let Us Be Mindful Over The Festive Season

Is it time for you to slow down and take a break?

Are you finding your life has sped up all around – fast food, fast cars, fast conversations, fast families and fast holidays?

Have you the time to restore the balance over the next few days and weeks?

Will you take the time to linger over food, over friends, over your family and savour your life?

We may be living great lives but are we really connecting to our life?

Anytime is the right time to take stock and think about your life. When reading about the slow living movement it suggested paying attention, on purpose, in a systematic way, in the present moment. To slow down and connect with life and take time to smell the roses.

This is often easier said than done especially for farmers who must work with the seasons. However if we don't listen to our bodies and to that little voice in our head that is telling us to slow down we may end up with serious health conditions. The biological costs of ignoring stress are staggering, manifesting in cardiovascular and other systemic diseases and even, new research shows, in accelerated aging. The psychological costs are equally large with anxiety, depression, eating disorders and other emotional illnesses associated with unmanaged stress.

So the best present for yourself and those that are near you is to become mindful. Mindful living is a way of life that urges people to find calm by connecting with the present moment. When we get in touch with our senses and our mind we become aware, aware of everything, aware of our senses, our body, our mind. When you use awareness you learn to open up new dimensions of well-being and integrity, of wisdom and compassion and kindness in yourself.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, professor emeritus at the University of Massachusetts Medical School has spent much of his professional life bringing the medical world's attention to the wisdom of the body and the healing that can happen. He says: "Mindfulness is a certain way of paying attention that is healing, that is restorative, that is reminding you of who you actually are so that you don't wind up getting entrained into being a human *doing* rather than a human *being*."

When we practice mindfulness in our everyday life we are less caught up in and at the mercy of our destructive emotions, and we are then predisposed to greater emotional intelligence and balance and therefore to greater happiness because living mindfully gives us more satisfaction in our job, in our family and in our life in general.

Farming Secrets says: Live this life in tune with you so those around you tune in!

Acknowledgement to the Slow Life Movement