

Fast Food doesn't just come from McDonalds

We are an interesting society. We stand around the microwave and shout "Hurry Up." Instant gratification takes too long. And "fast food" seems to be our diet. No, not food from McDonalds, Burger King, Taco Bell or wherever. But our "fast food" refers to the speed in which we eat.

The word "dine" is rarely found on our menu or our things to do today list – but fast is. Well, if it is not found on the list, it hovers over everything. If forks could be loaded (wait, they are loaded) with bullets – they would rival machine guns, the footwork of Flamenco dancers or the rhythm of jackhammers.

Our forks never rest. They are continually in motion. They are a symbol of our "fast food," fast society, fast everything. But we don't pay attention to our forks. We have become used to their speed and pace (or is that race) of our lives. You already know the negatives of fast food. So, how do we remove fast food from our diets and our life? "Slow down" seems too simple of an answer but let's start from there.

Let's start with the best diet in the world – you can eat ANYTHING you want. (Are you sure this works?) But it is probably the most stringent diet you will ever try. (No, it is not eating soup with a fork – but that could be fun and challenging.) It is called the "Slow Diet. (It also works for other things besides food.)

There are three simple directions for the diet.

One. You must put your fork **DOWN** between bites. (Heck, that exercise alone might burn up ten calories.) And no loading your fork between bites.

Two. You must not put any more food into your mouth until you have finished chewing.

Three. Nothing goes into your mouth **UNTIL** the flavor of your last bite totally disappears.

The discipline of this diet can be excruciating. The revelation that comes from this process is astounding.

We don't stop to enjoy the last bite (of anything) before we pile something else on our fork and into our mouth. Why do we do it? Are we really afraid there won't be any food left before we have our fill? Or have we lost sight of the good rhythm of life? Your challenge is to recover this good rhythm – not only at the table but in school, at home, at work, at church.

It seems that we move so fast that we don't take time to savor every bite – and every experience. A banquet conjures up a feast of food and an extended time at the table. But God spreads a banquet before us everyday in the flowers, in the breeze and in the glorious sunrises and sunsets. (Well, OK the sunrises could come later in the day.) But He gives them to us to enjoy, savor, reflect and celebrate.

God is big on celebration. And celebration is to savor victories and days, experiences and remembrances. The sabbath was created to slow us down – to take stock of what is important.

You are the one in charge of slowing down. And a good place to start is at the table. Try the diet for one meal a week and you will know how challenging it is and how fast you are really going. Then take that “slow” dining experience and apply it to one other thing in your life. Savor, slow down – enjoy.

We would love to hear about your new “fast food” experience. Email us fidellow@swbell.net and share.

And as they say in Spanish “Buen Provecho” and in French, “Bob Appetit.” Slow down and enjoy.