

LIFE IN THE SLOW LANE

by JRW Dubois

"*Life in the Fast Lane*" is a song written by Joe Walsh, Glenn Frey and Don Henley and recorded by the American rock band the Eagles on their 1976 studio album *Hotel California*. The song includes lyrics like, "Surely make you lose your mind", "Everything all the time", and "They didn't care, they were just dyin' to get off".

The song depicts the dangerous free-fall into debauchery and destruction that comes from living life, "Eager for action and hot for the game" - even though people know that the game is a race without direction and without an end, "She pretended not to notice she was caught up in the race".

Life in the slow lane is, obviously, much different. But, does that mean life in the slow lane is better than life in the fast lane? Not quite. Humans are just as good at getting carried away with themselves whether their life is fast paced or slow paced.

What makes life better is when people can see, and care for, each other whether their lives are fast paced or slow paced. What do I mean?

It's normal for people living the fast paced life to 'not see' the people around them who are living a slow paced life. Yet, the people in the slow paced life can easily see all the people living the fast paced life. Again, what do I mean?

Let me provide an example which I witnessed one day sitting by a window. As I looked down towards the sidewalk, just outside my window, I saw a snail crawling along leaving his signature slime trail. Suddenly, not ten feet away, a large crow landed on the lawn adjacent to the sidewalk. He was looking for a meal. Crows are good at scavenging and will eat any small creatures which they can spot. The snail would make a nice little snack. But, the crow cannot see the snail move, even though the snail is moving, but at a snail's pace. If the crow would only stop looking around frantically, and focus his gaze towards the snail for a few seconds, he would see the slow movement. The crow flew away and the snail went on his way. The snail could see the crow, but the crow could not see the snail.

How does that relate to people and life in the fast or slow lane? I feel like the snail when I go shopping. When I walk, I walk very slowly in order to reduce the impact of walking on my spinal condition. The faster I walk the more pain I feel. Most other shoppers are walking faster than I can, yet they maintain a normal pace as compared to the majority of people shopping. If two people are walking at the normal pace and are about to collide, both will slow or stop as they say to each other, "Excuse me". As people walk about and see me, travelling at a slower pace, they quickly acknowledge to themselves that no collision is imminent, so they can now ignore me as an obstacle - I'm not someone you need to stop for or slow your pace for, or say excuse me to.

This is normal and to be expected, just like the snail and the crow. It's just life in the slow lane.

It's good to stop and smell the roses once in a while. You never know who you will meet.