



Slow Living in the Fast Lane

Slow living has become a big trend. But its essential message is about consuming less and taking a slower approach to everyday life.

Life in the Modern World

Modern living has definitely given more convenience, more outreach, more money and more power to humans. You can connect with anyone around the globe in seconds, you can cover millions of miles in few hours, you can access the information within seconds. Rapid development, globalization and Industrialization and technological advancement have brought the whole world closer to us. However, the modern lifestyle has put a lot of pressure on humans, they are pressed for time, they are more into the virtual world than the real world, their lifestyle is more artificial than natural. Moreover, all this progress has played a destructive role on the planet, the animal world and the less privileged.



The emergence of Slow living

In this modern fast-paced life, an individual is losing out on the purpose of life, the rat race, the fear of missing out, the artificial virtual world has taken away the real pleasures of life, the peace of mind and oneness with nature. No wonder, every day we hear of people leaving their lucrative jobs and heading towards the countryside to lead a simple yet meaningful and contented life. Slow Living, that's what it is called, is a lifestyle that emphasizes a slower approach to aspects of everyday life. It has been defined as movement or action at a relaxed or leisurely pace.

Living at fast pace can lead to stress and chaos while slow living gives pleasure and peace of mind. Slow living does not mean that you don't use technology and other conveniences, it simply means that you use them consciously to lead a relaxed and balanced life. It's all about living life in sync with nature and doing what you enjoy rather than falling prey to an artificial and over competitive lifestyle.

SLOW is also used as an acronym to depict the various aspects of slow living. The 's' refers to sustainable, which means living while having a limited impact on the environment. The 'l' refers to local, which means using materials and products that are geographically close. The 'o' refers to organic, which means avoiding products that have been genetically engineered or mass-produced. The 'w' refers to whole, which means not processed.

The slow living movement began in Italy with the slow food movement, which emphasizes traditional food production techniques in response to the emergence of fast food during the 1980s and 1990s.

The Pandemic Effect

The pandemic has triggered the pace of slow living among the millennials who are enjoying the simple pleasures of life like work from home, long-stay workcation and remote working, etc. They are more relaxed, spending more time with their families, with nature and working at their pace. The man who had become more of a machine is getting back to his original self, with slow living.

The Millennial Effect

Slow living is being further fuelled by an upward trend of professionals willing to work remotely for the long term. According to Dell Technologies' latest study, 9 in 10 employees in India are willing to work from home provided they have access to the right technology assets and human resources support. Millennials are opting for slower lives away from megacities. They are moving to smaller cities and towns, in the mountains or by the sea, not just to beautify their Instagram but for productivity purposes and to embrace the "less-is-more" ideology.

Adopt technology for slow living, go for work-at-home and remote working



Benefits of Slow Living

Personal:

The fast pace of living, the fast food, the competitive and stressful work environment, soaring aspirations, etc are all deteriorating the physical health, mental well being and ethical values of human beings. Slowing down is a set of values that says faster isn't always better.

Economic:

In a way, slow living is also contributing towards easing the population pressure of cities, increase in income of the towns and villages, enhancing their economies, technological and infrastructure development, and quality of life of people, etc. Let's take a closer look to understand it better. Some of the people who had shifted to cities from smaller towns and villages in search of job can work from their hometowns if their jobs allow. Their income move towards their hometown, corporates move to these towns to provide their services and offer their products to cash-rich population. Therefore, the economies do change for good too with this trend of slow living and will eventually lead to an equitable growth of the country.

Environment:

Slow living means you are one with yourself and you are one with nature. Everything is interconnected like we are dependent on nature for oxygen, water and food, etc, similarly, creation is dependent on us to nurture and preserve it. It's very important to maintain the balance and not overuse or harm the environment. Slow Living is all about not overindulging, it's about consuming less for a better tomorrow.



Living it and Loving it ...

Neelesh Misra

Audio storyteller and Founder, Slow

India's most famous audio storyteller and writer who led Indian to fall in love with radio again have fallen in love with Slow Living. Not only has he embraced slow living, but he's also actively promoting the concept and the philosophy behind it through his company called Slow.



"Slowing down does not mean falling behind in physical activity, but it is a transformation in the mind. Slow is about being more rooted, seeking content, products or experiences which are more earnest and real".

Like everything else, the launching of Slow started very organically in my life and it happened because I love this brand. To begin with, the name of my village home is "Slow". During our research, we realized that there are still millions of people who believe in a certain way of uncluttered lifestyle and that is the kind of life they also seek. Slow is not just one product or entity, it is a complete value system and we are building a large community of audiences – consumers who look at life in a more meaningful way.

The brand has several verticals including Slow Content, Slow Products and Slow Experiences. The larger thought, the larger umbrella is a Slow movement, which is a way of looking at life. Millions of Indians will relate to it as something they want, they talk about it in their everyday conversations.

The Slow community is building naturally with like-minded people coming together. I stand with the person who could not get to the first three pages of Amazon or Tripadvisor - who is making something amazing or has a beautiful homestay but could not market it. His products will never be sold because he is fighting the algorithm. And most importantly, along with increasing their income we want to give them respect and recognition in the market, through our creative platforms and video/audio networks.

Slow living is not an idea but a philosophy and a way of life. I think it is an extraordinary time for both the consumers and the brands. I feel it is an opportunity for the brands to go deeper in their offerings and their products and retain the purity in their content, products and experiences. This will help the brands give an enriched experience to their consumers and spread the philosophy of slow.

Aman Chotani

Photographer, Film Maker,
Educator and Influencer

One of the most inspiring travel photographers from India (that's how he was quoted in 121clicks.com), Aman has moved his base to Ladakh and is actively promoting the tribal culture, their sustainable practices, age old wisdom and telling the world to learn from them how to live in sync with the nature.

It was a few years back when I went to Ziro valley in Arunachal Pradesh. Late at night, our bike broke and some tribal men found us. They took us with them. I wasn't sure if that was the right decision but somehow, we went. They took us to a social gathering. There were great food, music and dance. Apparently, they had a match and their team had lost and they were celebrating that. Imagine! We celebrate victory, they were celebrating their loss! Also, later, they took us to the winning team's celebration.

A small incident but so much to take from it. This shows how deep-rooted their ideologies are. Similarly, apart from such social practices, their daily chores reflect a lot on how well integrated their systems are and prove them to be a self-sustainable community. A simple example to elaborate on this is their farming style. They collectively work on each other's farms. They have commonly owned resources that are utilized to the best of the community's interest. Another very interesting practice which I observed, at the end of each farm, they were practising fish farming using the water being flown out of their farms. What a beautiful way to control water wastage. Abundance is reflected in each of the spheres of their lives.

They have sustained themselves and survived without being dependent on any modern-day amenities or technologies. Each of their cultural element, if studied in-depth, has a rational thought associated with it. I realized if we cannot revive what is lost, at least we can help these communities sustain and preserve what they have. And that is how the journey of 'the Last Avatar' began. Where we aim to trace these original knowledge holders and learn from them, document and preserve their practices to create a cultural archive for the reference of our future generations. As a part of this project, we are publishing a book covering the major tribal communities and other cultural aspects in India.



Indian photography festival
PRESENTED BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
19 SEP - 20 OCT
STATE ART GALLERY, HYDRABAD

The Last Avatar
PHOTO EXHIBITION

Conclusion

Indulge in slow living in your everyday life, declutter your life and simplify it, be it your home or work; indulge in a hobby, do what you love in your leisure time, travel to a place where your itinerary is not packed rather you explore the surroundings, spend time with nature and local people.

After all, Life is about choices. And choosing simple living is something that is becoming a popular thing to do.