



BE the CHANGE

Sean Casey LeClaire, Publisher

THE WEB

The other day a young man said something startling to me: “Friends of mine think that if they have looked at your Facebook page then they’ve had a conversation with you.”

Picking up the phone for a conversation, or actually meeting someone in-person for a chat, beyond a work-related conversation, has been relegated to “not the norm.” And, you know what they say...the norm is rarely natural. The internet, e-commerce, email, webinars, twitter, mobile phones, GPS systems and so on have given us many freedoms, but the seductive nature of these technologies are creating “fast minds” attempting to mirror the speed of the technology that we’ve created to serve us. I’ve consistently observed that these minds are disconnected and almost always anxious. Certainly my mind is, when I get hooked by the technology. I call this ubiquitous state mind: frantic serenity—a person with all the modern tools and toys and no inner peace.

Recently at the [Arjuna Men’s Conference](#) in Western Massachusetts my colleagues and I introduced three *timeless wisdom principles* and five timeless wisdom practices to the participants. The first practice was “slow down.” There are so many ways to do this...you could take a slow walk every day or you could go to my BCB page and do three body-centered breaks a day for a month and see how that feels, or you could start with stopping at the stop signs on the road. Growing up in Canada, we had a phrase, “Oh, he just did an American stop.” The car, somewhat led by the driver, approaches the stop sign, and slows to about 10 to 15 miles, sometimes 20 miles an hour, as it blows right through the sign. Americans are in general *gung-ho*, it’s one of the many things I like about the people...imagine what we could accomplish, if we’d also spend sometime “slowing down,” finding a more natural pace for our lives.

Another *timeless wisdom practice* we introduced to the guys was “rest & renew.” The practice involves spending at least 24 hours, preferably two or three days completely alone, engaged in no activity, or some activity that rests and renews your spirit, mind and body. When I asked how many men had done so in the last year, 1 in 5 raised their hands, an unusually high percentage in my experience of coaching men and women.

Try it sometime this summer, a day or two alone, no flat screens, no mobile phone, Blackberry, etc...downtime, getting in-touch time, off-line, and deeply connected, within and held by *timelessness*. We’re not talking about taking a vacation, that’s a very different animal. Taking time alone to “rest and renew” is life-affirming and soul awakening, you could even start by gardening for a whole day in relative silence. That’s a start in the right direction.

I like the web, the freedom it can give, but it is just a tool like a hammer or hoe, nothing more. Modern technology will never surpass the simple pleasure and joy of seeing a friend’s face laugh in real time over a coffee, or the beauty of two people occupying space together in silence, or the peace without suspicion, which can arise when you slow down, and drop into deeper dimensions of your own being—off-line and connected.