

## ***Inspired!* - Introduction**

Centered in Italy and making worldwide converts, a “slow movement” recommends stepping off the 24/7 treadmill and reclaiming the joys of eating, relating and appreciating life’s pleasures. Carl Honore’s book, *In Praise of Slowness*, chronicles companies, cities and individuals that insist on taking the necessary time for leisurely paced medicine, child care, cuisine, travel and more.

Contrary to stereotypes, however, slowing down doesn’t mean you get less accomplished. A German lawyer quoted in Honore’s book explains the benefits of taking two hours to get to know each new client, instead of getting to work after a brisk ten-minute summary of the problem. The slower start minimized his need for follow-up calls or backtracking because he’d misunderstood something.

You’ll find many such paradoxes about productivity, thinking and trying here in *Inspired!*, supported by research and illustrated with anecdotes from historical figures and contemporary day-to-day life. For example:

- You’ll get more done by taking breaks – or even naps – than by driving relentlessly toward the finish line.
- Trying hard to solve a problem doesn’t yield results as well as sleeping on it.
- Reliable inner knowing may feel like a wild guess.
- Stupid ideas are sometimes the productive ones to focus on.
- Beginners may be able to do what stumps experts.
- Doing just one thing at a time boosts efficiency by up to 40 percent more than multitasking.
- Deciding to make boatloads of money isn’t the surest way to become rich.

*Inspired!* also proves to you that you are creative. You may not be expressing originality in your work at present, you may not be paying attention to the inklings that flash through your mind like lightning bugs, but the potential exists for you to develop. *Inspired!* provides guidelines for cultivating your intuitive and innovative capabilities, so that fresh ideas come easily and bountifully.

This book was written, compiled, revised and updated over a period of 20 years. My research on creativity and productivity began in the 1990s, when I wrote and published a subscription newsletter called *The Creative Glow*. I distributed surveys around the world and taught workshops in Boston and Cambridge on accessing and expressing creativity. I have incorporated recent research and perspectives into this edition.

“You sound like you do the work of twelve people” is a comment I often get at workshops or by email. Before you now stretch the secrets of how I and others accomplish that feat, and how you can, too. Enjoy!

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