



AN INVITATION...



TO THE
SLOW LANE OF LIFE

Dear

A year's time can bring many changes. Last year my reflections took flight from my experience as an extra in the Philadelphia performances of The Royal Ballet of London. This year's reflection comes from a less elevated stage, but one no less important in living life in all its fulfillment.

This year's focus comes from the implications of recent hip replacement surgery. Since statistics suggest that up to 600,000 Americans will have a joint replacement in the next year, I am hoping the benefits I have experienced will serve you when and if your turn comes and/or will help you be supportive of anyone you know experiencing this or similar surgery.

One very clear realization is that I over-focused on the surgery, knowing that it would render me vulnerable only for a few weeks, and completely downplayed the recovery process that was to take months. (One analogy is to prepare for a wedding but not the marriage!)

Once I became aware that a disciplined exercise regimen was the key to maximize a new opportunity to be pain-free and more flexible, it became my active pursuit. But a more profound insight dawned on me rather unexpectedly: *I was being invited into the Slow Lane of Life!*

What did that mean? In addition to the expected opportunity to read and to watch movies, time presented itself for such vital practices that are often overlooked or ignored when time seems less available. I welcomed:

- Daily journaling to make direct contact with my interior life.
- Healthy food, afternoon naps, a slowing down, to value the physical realities.
- The precious responsiveness of family since my sister and both my daughters (plus granddaughter!) suggested how pleasant being asked for help could really be!
- The gift of the support of caring friends.
- Coaching individuals (in my home) who were challenged by important transition opportunities.

Cover Detail: Cassatt. *The Cup of Tea*. 1880; Inside Detail: Slavícek. *Walking in the Park*. 1897.

- The salubrious effect of order in my surroundings, from email to the kitchen table to scarves!
- The opportunity to enjoy a larger than usual number of flowers on my deck.
- Playing tourist in Philadelphia as a “staycationer.”
- Taking advantage of water exercises along with the tan that ensued this summer.

What might be the choices you would make in your **Slow Lane of Life?**

Returning to the corporate world of my very patient executive coaching clients, I was reminded how we often note in business that we can be active but not necessarily productive. I was surprised that my convalescence in the slow lane had indulged me in a purposeful use of time and a greater sense of fulfillment. Fortunately, I have kept several of these experiences in my schedule and continue to feel their benefits.

Ever the Executive Coach—even in *convalescence*—I realized that this experience has been essentially a partnership with my surgeon, which he has affirmed. Thus, we are developing a post-operative means for his reach of support to extend to his patients for months after surgery that does not require his direct touch.

I sincerely hope that you and yours are also experiencing significant returns from your experiences this year and that 2009 will be even richer in every way!

Happy Holidays,

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