



***“Let us spend  
one day as  
deliberately as  
Nature, and  
not be thrown  
off the track by  
every nutshell  
and  
mosquito’s  
wing that falls  
on the rails.”***

Henry  
David  
Thoreau

Judith Ann Kirk

*Organizing  
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## Hurried Sickness

Doctors have coined the term *“Hurried Sickness”* to describe people who rush around all day, experience a high degree of stress and feel little sense of accomplishment. These folks go to their doctor with exhausted bodies and empty souls. They seem to have no time for the things that really matter – family, friends, solitude, relaxation, meditation, exercise, healthy eating and healthy living.

We spend a good part of our day exchanging time for money in order to buy new gadgets and other toys believed to relieve the stress of daily living. But, the more we buy, the more we have to work to pay for it all, and the more time we expend to maintain these so called *stress-relievers*. As we work more, earn more and spend more, we seem to enjoy life less. This hurried life leads to more debt, more stress and poor health.

Henry David Thoreau in his book, *Walden*, had a lot to say about hurriedness. In the chapter, *Where I Lived, and What I Lived For*, he stated, *“Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life?”* So, I pondered the question, *“How hurried am I, and how much of life am I wasting because of the urgency I have adopted?”*

While I am in a state of hurriedness, little gets accomplished. I am simply running on a treadmill, going nowhere. When I schedule action items with time allotted to accomplish them, most often those things are completed. I am learning to fight the sense of hurriedness by scheduling blocks of time. I have also instituted *“Mental Health Days”* into my life. Most often it is just one day a month, but there are times when it is a week or more. It is not so much the day that is important, but the fact that I treat this scheduled time as golden moments.

What do I mean by golden moments? Well, this is the time I do not participate in real life. Instead, I play hooky, and I mean play. This play date is just for me — time to get a spa treatment, have lunch out, go to a movie, sit in the library with a magazine, be a tourist in a neighboring town, watch a chick-flick, eat chocolates, stay in bed, wear pj’s all day...

My *“Mental Health Day”* is a day to do whatever my soul craves. I don’t answer the phone or do laundry. I don’t pick up a vacuum cleaner or go to the post office. This day can be an idle day or a day of fun. No matter, it is a special day to care for my soul; it is a day to eliminate hurriedness and alleviate stress. It is a day just for me.