



Slow Family Living: 75 Simple Ways to Slow Down, Connect, and Create More Joy

Bernadette Noll

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Have you ever wished you could slow down the daily grind—and even find a way to enjoy it?

All too often, the hectic pace of modern life turns our households into a blur, leaving many parents—and kids—feeling depleted and disconnected. Enter *Slow Family Living*, an inspiring guide for parents who want to rediscover the meaning, comfort, and contentment found in the day to day of family life.

Offering 75 simple ideas for reconnecting, this upbeat and invaluable resource can help turn even the most bustling of times into an opportunity to create a moment of calm—and a connection that will last a lifetime.

From holidays and other stressful occasions to bedtime, vacations, and everything in between, *Slow Family Living* will help even the most harried parents and kids pause, reflect, and find joy, satisfaction, and inspiration in each other.

Slow Family Living: 75 Simple Ways to Slow Down, Connect, and Create More Joy **Details**

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From Reader Review Slow Family Living: 75 Simple Ways to Slow Down, Connect, and Create More Joy for online ebook

Alicia Roberts says

Nice tips/affirmations on how to connect with your family every day, when life seems to be racing by all of you.

Jill says

Mixed feelings about this. There were some good ideas that I got from this book, but it seemed very repetitive. Too much touchy-feely-ness for me.....tons of mention of deep breathing, sitting in a circle to talk about feelings, and I felt like the word partner was used too much.....talk to your partner about this, have your partner answer questions about such and such.....etc etc. Just seemed very redundant. Maybe use a thesaurus and toss in husband or spouse once in a while! I also didn't care for her attitude about school.....one idea encouraged playing hooky from school and making up a vague "family time" excuse to the attendance office. She also mentioned how much they have school-hopped. Another mentioned going into school, knocking on your child's classroom door and giving them a hug. Well that is all nice and touchy feely but how about school security and not interrupting the school day? Overall....some good ideas but most of it was not to my liking.

Staci says

My husband and I gleaned a few good things from this book. I feel like it can help you change your life if you write down what you want to do and then do it, otherwise, I remember about 2 suggestions I want to implement.

Traci says

I did not expect to like this one when I got it at the library but I was super wrong. Bernadette Noll gets me. Or I get Bernadette Noll. Or we get each other. Total breath of fresh air after Hands Free Mama, this is written by a woman not only confident in her own mothering, but confident in yours, too. This is a quick read (she respects your time), she says over and over again to do what works for your family (you never get the sense that she thinks you should run your family exactly like she runs hers), and many of the ideas got me excited. While some of the ideas did feel a bit forced to get to get the grand total to 75 (I think keeping it to 50 would have made this more rock solid), since the chapters were so short it didn't detract much. If you're happy with your basic approach and just want a few ideas to make things run more smoothly or add in a few more special memories, this is a great read!

Rachel says

"Most parents, when asked to look down the parenting road twenty years from now, say their greatest hope is for a meaningful relationship with their kids. Slow Family Living is about creating that relationship now-while the children are home, while dinner is being made, while the carpool is forming, and while the laundry's getting folded. Slow Family Living is about stepping away from the busyness of life, sometimes for just minutes at a time and finding each other in all you do so that you can have each other down the road. Slow Family Living is about believing that family life can be the well, rather than the drain."

I enjoyed this book, which stresses the importance of meeting individual family members' needs while also doing what works best for the family as a whole. Bernadette Noll gives 75 practical tips on how to slow down, be present, connect with your family, and most importantly, find joy in doing so. Some of her tips I will try to implement in my family and others I will pass on, but she repeatedly encourages readers to do what works best for their own family and what feels right in day to day living. This is a book I can see myself purchasing to use as a resource to come back to for ideas especially when my kids are a bit older (a lot of her ideas aren't geared towards families with small children). The author asks some important questions which caused me to pause and evaluate our home life and what is working and what needs to change.

Laura says

I enjoyed this book. clearly written for parents in small easy to read chunks.
Great ideas for slowing down and enjoying family life more.
Mostly I liked the reminder to be conscious of the life/family the I am a part of.

Vivian says

I had the best time reading through nearly 200 pages of bullet point tips on enjoying family life--no matter the size and shape of the one you happen to be in. I walked down memory lane, being glad of the many things we did that this reading brought to mind. I also got a lot of ideas to try here and now.

I intend to journal my own reflections. Everyone needs a go-to list of affirmations that somehow you did SOMETHING right somewhere along the way. When my daughters went away to college they discovered/created the "HAPPY WALL". Anything anyone said or did that brought a laugh or a smile went on to a post-it note that was attached to a designated wall, which was dubbed the "Happy Wall". Well, I would call this exercise a "happy wall" for me.

The premise of the book is that we tend to get wrapped up in the grind of daily living, forgetting that the joy is in the journey (my words, not theirs). They've created a "Slow Family Manifesto" and a SlowFamilyLiving.com website, too. This short read is well worth the visit.

Joanna Berlinska says

I cannot honestly say that it was the most eye-opening book I have read in my life but there was something compelling about it. It wasn't quite what I expected but I suppose I was just being too naive in my expectations, looking for something that would literally create the feeling of living 'slower' so desperately needed for a person like me feeling the time is just seeping through my fingers... But it is not that. This book should have been rather called 'Deliberate family living' or 'Connected family living' something like that.

It is a set of ideas, that may or may not work for you. Some I found inspiring, some I found ridiculous, but the message of the book is one and clear: pause to look at your children, at your family, notice them, kneel down to attend to a specific need of a moment, connect, before you rush through your life again... Nothing groundbreaking but it may be a small memento for me when I catch myself time and time again saying 'Just a sec...' to my children. Ms Noll is right saying: 'Enjoy it now as childhood is fleeting...' - so do go lay down with your little ones before they go to sleep. Soon they won't want it and then they will simply be not there! Do close the tap running the water to wash the dishes and go read a story - the dishes will wait, guaranteed! the growing up of your kids will not, guaranteed! It may sound banal but all those innocent moments of 'Just a sec...' may amount to a dangerous routine and disconnection. And 'Slow/Deliberate/Connected' can be created in all you do, from the obviously connecting like reading the bed time story, to doing some chores together.

This book will not slow your life down but it may really help to reach for each other's hand every now and again when running through life... As I said at the beginning, nothing groundbreaking, but it may help you remember to press the slow motion button for a moment...

Angel says

Lots of good recommendations in here, if only I could remember to do them.

J says

Caveat: I did not finish this book. The writing style and intellectual thought was annoyingly and frustratingly amateurish.

I like the idea of balancing busy and relaxed periods in home life. Without activity, I become bored. But when I am overscheduled, I get overwhelmed and can't enjoy anything. I also liked the following ideas:

- Do things you love
- Know you have choices
- Celebrate moments

I did not like the following ideas:

- There is no right way, just what feels right
- It is important to constantly be connected to your own emotions and those of family members

Additionally, I noticed:

- Overdependence on breathing meditation and new age-y "holistic" thought

- The book seemed to advocate co-dependence within families. It emphasized maintaining relationships over all else. It carried a subtle message that maintaining relationships within the family was the highest priority for a parent. It seemed to feed into the desire to be a friend to children, rather than an authority figure. (My highest priority is to raise a child that will be a good person and productive member of society. Whether they like me or not. Whether I am around to enjoy their company or not.)

This book was written for older families with active children. Not parents of very young children (babies/toddlers).

Frequent grammar mistakes involving capitalization and punctuation.

Chapters were only 2-4 pages long (half of which were "thought-provoking" personal questions). Chapters were independent from each other. They felt too short - like a collection of short blog posts or magazine articles. The advice was very vague and ungrounded.

Whitney says

A little repetitive and a lot cheesy. I skimmed the last third of this, and it was by no means a hard or long book to read. Still, some good ideas on bringing mindfulness to your family. I liked:

"Dropping Love Bombs"

"The Blitz: A Family Tidy-Up"

"Spend Nothing Day"

"Camp Out at Home"

"Playing Hooky, Family Style"

"How Low Can Your Pantry Go?"

"The Half-Full Weekend"

"Screen Free"

"DEAR Time"

"Don't Sweep Until the Rice Dries" (or, in my case, "Don't Clean Up the Cat Vomit Until It Dries Because It Will Be Less Gross At That Point")

Christy Sibila says

There was a quote in the forward that really hooked me: "Development is...not...a process of pouring information in but rather...a process of unfolding out into our best and most expansive selves." I read this book because I am so tired of "go, go, go" and wanted ideas, and yes, I admit, permission, to slow down.

Some of the ideas are honestly a bit hokey and wouldn't work with my family, but some ideas I love. One of my favorites is the mom who gave up the pressure of soccer leagues in favor of weekly neighborhood multi-generational games. Or the Blitz, where the family turns on loud music, sets the timer for 20 minutes, and zooms around cleaning up a messy house. The advice definitely has a warm climate slant, and I would have liked to see more ideas for winter-bound parents, but overall, the book has 75 "take it or leave it ideas", with enough "take" to make it worth the read.

Natalie Frausell says

I picked up a few tips from this book. Nothing that made me think ‘why have we not thought of this’ but definitely a good reminder to appreciate everything.

Cindy Hudson says

If you ever feel that family life is like being on a speeding treadmill in a never-ending rush from one chore or activity to another, take heart. A book by Bernadette Noll, cofounder of SlowFamilyLiving.com, has a few ideas for how to slow that treadmill run to a walk.

Noll and her husband have four children and plenty of family commitments, so she’s had experience juggling schedules and slowing her own family life down so both parents and children can spend time together, getting to know one another and developing healthy bonds. As part of SlowFamilyLiving.com, she’s given workshops to other parents on achieving a slower pace in their own lives.

Noll’s book, *Slow Family Living: 75 Simple Ways to Slow Down, Connect, and Create More Joy*, brings her suggestions to everyone who needs them. Noll is quick to say that she doesn’t have all the answers and her guide is only a start to implementing small changes that can bring big changes for families. Yet the simple suggestions found in its pages are likely to generate even more ideas from harried moms and dads who read them.

Noll doesn’t suggest dropping out of activities all together, rather she suggests an approach that asks parents and children to consider the things that are most important to them, and then implement changes that will make sure those are the things that get done.

For instance, Noll says one of the questions to be asked with any family routine or activity is, “Is this working for us?” Too often we make commitments or accept invitations without considering the impact it has on the rest of our time. Noll suggests not answering right away when offered the opportunity to take on something new. Instead, she recommends taking time to reflect on how the new thing will relate to everything else going on and if it’s truly worth it.

The short, simple suggestions found in *Slow Family Living* are easy to digest quickly then return to and ponder for a while. After all, Noll knows that what works in one family may not work for another. She doesn’t give set prescriptions, rather she invites parents to think about what’s important in their own lives and gives them ideas for how to achieve it. *Slow Family Living* is a resource you’ll want to keep handy to refer to often as you work to create the kind of family life you want to be happy with as your children grow.

The publisher provided me with a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Sandi says

Cute little book with many great ideas to help keep your family close.

