

Book Review

Becoming Grandma: The Joys and Science of the New Grandparenting

Author: Lesley Stahl

Publisher: Blue Rider Press 2016 (288 pages)



Lesley Stahl explains in her very intriguing book *Becoming Grandma* how being with a grandchild can be both exhilarating and therapeutic. She herself found a new purpose in life when she became a grandparent. Grandparents relive their lives with sheer joy without feeling the stress of raising them. They feel reinvigorated like never before.

She discusses many different angles of grand parenting which makes this book so different and unique. For example, not many of us realize that grand parenting helps the economy. Grandparent spending has increased sevenfold in the last decade.

Stahl did a lot of research and interviewed many of her colleagues to infer her statements. She also observes that some women who never bore children of their own often wind up becoming especially involved and gleeful grandparents to their stepchildren's kids. She mentions Diane Sawyer who relishes her role as a step-granny to four children. Stahl writes about Sawyer, "(She) acts just as goofy as the rest of us grans."

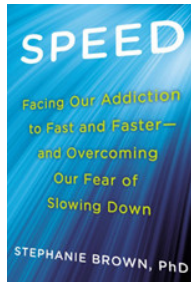
Stahl includes stories of generational conflict and her personal regrets as a working mother along with plentiful glimpses of her family's joys and those of many other families. The book is full of supporting statistics. Such as the median age of new grandmothers in the U.S. is 50 (54 for grandfathers). As Stahl points out, that young age, coupled with longer life spans, represents a large-scale shift in the role of grandparents in U.S. culture.

As a grandfather, I can certainly relate to all that. **—Anil Shrivastava**

Speed: Facing Our Addiction to Fast and Faster

Author: Stephanie Brown PhD

Publisher: Berkley



Stephanie Brown has a very simple message in her book, *Speed - Facing Our Addiction to Fast and Faster*. Technological advances were supposed to provide us more time for creativity, but it has worked quite the opposite for most of us. People have become addicted to technology to the extent that they are controlled by it. They have less time to reflect on anything as they feel a need to act, a need to be online, robotically always checking their devices. This has resulted in internal chaos and fragmented attention. What is supposed to help us is hurting us. Instead of freeing us, the technology seems to enslave us.

According to Ms. Brown technology is impeding our comprehension power and learning abilities inasmuch as we don't have patience to study any subject in depth. This may also be ruining our relationship with our loved ones and friends as we tend to chat with them in truncated messages rather than conversing with them heart to heart.

When I think about this I realize that technology has certainly made our lives convenient and has aided in saving time. The mystery is where the saved time goes. Here are some of my observations.

I go to parties or bridge games where folks can't stop checking their cells in case there's an emergency – it's interesting what people define as an emergency. That kind of pressure weighs on the mind – people can't relax as they are in a constant state of expectation.

There's an expectation that people post images for one another – great to share but how many? If you have 150 people in your group of friends and family, how much time would it take if you view pictures from all of them?

For many employees It takes hours to start getting into work because they have to check their email, peruse social media sites, and read morning news from various sources. What was supposed to aid productivity has become a reason for its decline. No wonder that the US Q2 productivity was down 0.6% in 2016, the first decline since 1947.

According to Ms. Brown, researchers note that this push for speed is changing the way people think. The need to be efficient and instant leads to a dumbing **down** –Anil Shrivastava