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### Eliminating Hurry

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# Eliminating Hurry



▲ INGRID WEISS SLIKKERS

ALTHOUGH I AM TRAINED TO “BE A LISTENER” AS A LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH THERAPIST AND WORK AT THIS WITHIN MY PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS, I HAVE REALIZED OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS THAT I HAVE NOT BEEN PRACTICING THIS ART WITH THOSE CLOSEST TO ME— MY FAMILY.

After my husband and sons, respectfully but openly, said to me, “You are interrupting me” or “hear me out!” I recognized I needed to address this, and it was humbling. After all, I was supposedly trained.

In what I believed was a desperate desire to help, I found that I frequently interrupted them and barged forward with rapid questions and solutions so that ultimately, at least from my perspective, I am somehow helping.

With some prayer and intentional self-analyzing, I identified that when I am in my professional persona (or “working”) my interactions are different. I grasped that the reason I sometimes interrupt in my wife or mom mode is simply because I am in a hurry! I concluded that sadly my train of thought was “Let me just help you get to the point so I can help you and we can move on to the next thing because of so many things that I need to get done.” Does anyone share this with me?

In my busyness of managing errands, finances, medical issues, aging parents, and all the other

countless important things, I noticed that I am simply too frequently stretched to be able to listen, truly listen, to my loved ones.

Some of the pastors on my team at our trauma education center recently shared they had been reading a book by John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, where he draws the reader to the concept that during his earthly ministry, Jesus was never in a hurry. Was He busy? Were there constant needs He needed to respond to? Resoundingly, yes! Yet, *He was never in a hurry*. Spending time with this concept has created some changes in my thinking and daily activities.

How am I altering some things? Firstly, I have openly encouraged my family to call me out and say, “Let me finish.”

Secondly, I am finding it helpful to ask, “Are you looking for comfort or solutions?” This is from a tweet that went viral in 2021 by Alexander James, who used it as a method of communication between him and his wife. Popular psychology has promoted this saying as it is implementable in multiple communication situations and with varying ages. I started using this short phrase shortly after I became familiar with it in talking with students or colleagues. Now I am committing to using it with those closest to me. I am finding that verbally asking this has caused me to pause and help me listen. It has surprised me that it is allowing me to slow down to be more fully present and intentional—and hopefully, more like Jesus—who wasn’t in a hurry. ■

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