

Slowing down

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Yes, I am. Slowing down, that is. But before you starting oohing your sympathy for me or nervously click away to avoid what you assume will be a downer post (if you haven't already, but how would I know?), allow me to reassure you that I'm feeling quite 'up' today.

I had Covid in late July. Which means that in addition to the shaky hands and aching back that are features of my age (the hands) and carelessness (the back), I have been dealing with adventures in what they call Long Covid. Which is not especially life threatening but also not particularly fun.

I've had maddening problems with memory. Words that won't come. Having to ask Mary or the Garmin lady for directions for well-travelled routes. And at a meeting of my woodturning club a couple months ago, I went on and on thanking a guy for some help he'd given me in troubleshooting my broken-down lathe. When his confusion became obvious, I paused long enough for him to share that he'd no idea what I was on about. Yeah, wrong guy. And it was worse when I heard a voice behind me, "That was me." And this was a guy who'd driven over an hour each way and spent 4 hours bent over my lathe.

I had planned to finally build my new hand work bench and I did. But it took six months to complete rather than the 3-4 weeks that would have been the case pre-brain freeze.

Probably the worst aspect was that I wasn't able to write. At least, not much nor with any degree of fluidity. In desperation, I figured I would just spend my recovery time editing the various woodworking and family videos. Until I was unable to manipulate the app I purchased to do just that.

Finally, instead of continuing to fight and harbor dread thoughts about how my life would play out from now, I went back to reading. I found that the inability to focus on characters and story line that had haunted me the first few months resolved if I just didn't expect myself to zip through a couple books a week. I slowed down to a chapter or even a few pages each night and the next thing I knew, I was through a book. And then another. And then...

I could only spend a couple hours a day in the shop so as I said, the bench build dragged on. But slowing down on it actually gave me the time I might not otherwise have taken to incorporate design features and alter dimension so that the bench I ended up with will serve me ever so much better than if I'd followed the original design.

I spent hours refurbishing and hand sharpening old tools, a slow but absorbing process that filled my days and left me with obscenely sharp tools. And then, I started carving, relying on Mary May videos and downloaded patterns (an artist I'm not) to learn that part of the craft. And I did. Learn, that is. And yesterday when my arthritic hands got sore, I tried once again to download the app that I purchased (5?) months ago. I approached it slowly and without expectational burden and sure enough, it was easy.

I'm not convinced my brain is fully re-allied with me as of yet but I can feel it coming closer by the day. I'm healing. And I truly believe it's mostly due to having intentionally slowed down.

Yes, it's true. I'm slowing down. Thank goodness.