

GROWING SLOW



**GUIDED JOURNAL
& GROWTH TRACKER**

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WHAT IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO RUSH THROUGH YOUR DAYS ANYMORE, BUT FOUND A WAY TO MOVE THROUGH LIFE WITH JOY AND CONTENTMENT?

It's possible to grow good things in your life without hurrying. It's possible to see fruit in your relationships, your spirituality, your finances and your career, at a pace that is sustainable.

But many of us don't believe it. Instead, we treat time as the enemy to our progress, attacking and squeezing our minutes and days in order to reach growth goals.

We think we don't have enough time,

or we're running out of time,

or we gotta hustle because time is precious and fleeting,

and if we don't hurry,

we'll miss out.

But time isn't the enemy. Time is our friend. And when we take the time we need – to Grow Slow – we find that the most important things in life took the longest to grow.

Inside my book, *Growing Slow*, I share the life-changing method that helped me to embrace time and seasons. As a supplement to the book, I am offering these Growing Slow Growth Sheets to help you apply the principles over an entire year.

This method has worked for me, and I believe it can work for you, too.

I'll let you in on a secret: I didn't learn this method in a classroom or lecture hall. I learned it on a farm.

On our farm, we see how God has made friends with time.

"He has made everything beautiful *in its time*" (Ecclesiastes 3:11, emphasis added).

Over days and weeks and seasons, God grows remarkably beautiful things from the tiniest seeds buried in the dark. Corn plants don't grow overnight. Neither do we as people. Neither do our relationships. Neither do our businesses.

During our years on the farm, we have adopted a method that reminds us of the value of slow and sustainable growth. The method relies on three Rs, which are the basis for the Growing Slow method. Those three Rs are as follows:

REMEMBER: We remember wisdom we have heard, learned, read, or adopted. These are centering phrases, Bible verses, song lyrics, advice passed down, or even a text from a friend. It doesn't have to be poetic. These phrases and sentences are simply anything that help us live more intentionally. These are worthy messages that serve as simple reminders of the roots that keep us grounded, even during times of struggle. On the following pages, I have provided some Remember phrases for you, as prompts to get you thinking about the benefits of slow growth. In time, you can write your own Remember phrases. I have provided a sheet for you to do just that, at the very end of this journal and growth tracker. Feel free to make multiple copies.

REFLECT: Next, we intentionally take time to reflect on why the Remember principle matters as it relates to growth. We pause and take the time we need to ponder how God is revealing himself through that centering Remember principle.

RETURN: And finally, we "return." Here's how we apply the principles in practical ways to our everyday lives. We return to our land – the places where we dwell – and we lay out a plan to put into practice with our relationships, our work, our home life, our spirituality, and more. We write down commitments, action steps, or goals that will help us move from point A to point B.

We have arranged the Growth Sheets in four seasons – three for spring, three for summer, three for autumn, and three for winter. These sheets are intended to be used once a month, throughout a calendar year. But as you grow accustomed to the concept, this can become a weekly or even daily practice.



HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

PRINT AND DOWNLOAD the Growing Slow Growth Sheets.

FILL OUT THE PRIORITY SEEDS SHEET and identify realistic goals for the next 12 months.

COMPLETE THE COMMISSION TO GROW SLOW.

BEGIN THE GROWTH SHEET in the season you are presently in, and start the next sheet in the following month. Remember, Reflect, Return is the method of Growing Slow. Each month you will:

- ◇ remember a truth you know to be true,
- ◇ reflect on why that means so much to you,
- ◇ and then return to the land that is your life.

You can apply the Growing Slow Method for whatever you are cultivating, whatever you are planting, whatever you are growing, whatever you are harvesting, ... or whenever you are in a kind of winter season of life. This method will help you live intentionally, no matter what you are growing, or how slow you think your progress is.

COMPLETE THE MONTHLY GROWTH TRACKER AT THE END OF EACH MONTH.

This will give you an opportunity to:

- ◇ monitor growth
- ◇ to give yourself grace if growth was less than you had hoped for
- ◇ to see how the Growing Slow Method worked in your life
- ◇ to give thanks
- ◇ and to watch how the Lord is using every season for his good purposes.

MY PRIORITY SEEDS

You have seeds in your hands that you are planting every day into your spiritual, relational, and personal growth. Name those seeds here. And then, identify any specific goals for growth you'd like to see in the coming seasons of your life.

Spiritual Seeds

Health Seeds

Financial Seeds

Career Seeds

Family Seeds

Relationship Seeds

Legacy Seeds

Other Seeds

A COMMISSION TO GROW SLOW

Hi, my name is _____, and I know that it takes time to grow good things.

Because this is true, I ask God to grant me patience with _____

I want to find more joy in _____

To see real growth in my fields, I need to let go of _____
And I need to hold on tighter to _____.

Sometimes I second-guess my ability to _____

I need God to give me the courage to _____

Deep inside, I sometimes wonder if _____

When I look at my growth I feel proudest of _____

But I also face setbacks in _____

Today, I will do my part to _____

And I give myself permission to _____

Let's go nice and easy now. *Ready, set, slow.*

SPRING PLANTING

FIRST MONTH OF SPRING

Remember

The most important things in life take the longest to grow.

Reflect

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Return

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Growth Tracker

As I track growth in my priority seeds, I feel good about growth in

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I felt disappointment or discouragement in growth when

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But I will give thanks to God anyway for

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I saw the effectiveness of the Growing Slow Method in my life when

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I know that the Lord is using every season for his good purposes because

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SPRING PLANTING

SECOND MONTH OF SPRING

Remember

Before God grows good things *through* us, he wants to grow good things *in* us. God is planting seeds in us, shaping us into the women we are becoming.

Reflect

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Return

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SPRING PLANTING

THIRD MONTH OF SPRING

Remember

A Growing Slow life gives you what your heart really longs for: permission to take a beat and to take a breath; grace to try again; courage to walk instead of run; and space to live in the astonishing and wild love of Christ.

Reflect

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SUMMER GROWTH

FIRST MONTH OF SUMMER

Remember

We grow through what we go through.

Reflect

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Return

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SUMMER GROWTH

SECOND MONTH OF SUMMER

Remember

Not everyone will understand what you're growing, but that doesn't mean that what you're growing isn't important.

Reflect

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SUMMER GROWTH

THIRD MONTH OF SUMMER

Remember

You might think that what you've built with your life so far isn't all that grand. But maybe that's not the point, anyway. It's not what you're building; it's *who* you are building *with*.

Reflect

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AUTUMN HARVEST

FIRST MONTH OF AUTUMN

Remember

If you saw your progress the way God does, you'd never doubt for a moment that you're making a difference.

Reflect

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AUTUMN HARVEST

SECOND MONTH OF AUTUMN

Remember

There are no set milestones. Not for when you get married – or even *if* you get married. Not for when you have kids – or even *if* you have them. Not for when you earn a certain salary or master a certain set of tasks. There just aren't milestones for any of these things.

Reflect

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AUTUMN HARVEST

THIRD MONTH OF AUTUMN

Remember

Let's stop glorifying the end results, and start embracing the day-by-day process of building something beautiful with our lives.

Reflect

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WINTER REST

FIRST MONTH OF WINTER

Remember

We need to reframe winter seasons, because there's little doubt that we are all going to face them. It's not always our turn to grow or our moment to shine. Perhaps winter isn't the punishment you thought it was. Perhaps it is your gift.

Reflect

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WINTER REST

SECOND MONTH OF WINTER

Remember

In winter, trees go dormant. If a tree needs to take a break, why do we think we have to keep running on all cylinders? God is going to call us to do a lot of wonderful things in this life, but he will not call us to a life of burnout.

Reflect

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WINTER REST

THIRD MONTH OF WINTER

Remember

We typically think of celebrations during the seasons when our hearts don't necessarily need it most: graduations in spring, weddings, block parties, and picnics in summer. But perhaps we need celebrations most in the winter.

Reflect

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GROWING SLOW

----- MONTH OF -----

Remember

[Empty light blue rounded rectangular box for writing]

Reflect

[Yellow rounded rectangular box with five horizontal dotted lines for writing]

Return

[Light grey rounded rectangular box with five horizontal dotted lines for writing]

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