

## HOW IS HURRY IMPACTING YOU?

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[Meyer Friedman - a cardiologist](#) - coined the term "Hurry Sickness" after noticing that most of his at-risk cardiovascular patients displayed a harrying "sense of time urgency", back in the 1950's. He defined it thus: *"A continuous struggle and unremitting attempt to accomplish or achieve more and more things or participate in more and more events in less and less time."* Psychologies and mental health professionals have labeled this a disease.

John Mark Comer, a noted teacher and author, said, "Hurry is a form of violence on the soul." Inspired by this insightful perspective, the following self-inventory, derived and adapted from his book *"Ruthless Elimination of Hurry,"* serves as a tool to self-assess whether you might be experiencing "Hurry Sickness." This inventory is designed to help you reflect on your daily routines and identify if the pace of your life is adversely affecting your well-being.

### INVENTORY: Check if the symptom rings true for you

1. \_\_\_\_ **Irritability:** You get mad, frustrated, or just annoyed way too easily. Little, normal things irk you. People have to tiptoe around your ongoing low-grade negativity, if not anger. Look at how you treat a colleague or neighbor; look at how you treat those closest to you: your spouse, children, roommate, etc.
2. \_\_\_\_ **Hypersensitivity:** Minor issues like a critical comment or a terse email can disproportionately unsettle you, quickly spiraling into significant emotional reactions. Depending on your personality, this might manifest as irritability, over-critical behavior, anxiety, or a pervasive sense of fatigue. Essentially, routine workplace challenges unduly impact your emotional stability and your ability to interact positively with others. This indicates an underlying problem of excessive stress or overcommitment in your professional life.
3. \_\_\_\_ **Restlessness:** When you try to relax or take a break, it feels impossible. Leisure activities don't engage you, and your mind struggles to settle, even during supposed downtime. In bed, sleep eludes you due to a racing mind. While watching TV, you're often multitasking – checking emails or browsing social media. This restlessness stems from a habituation to a fast-paced, constantly stimulating environment. Without constant activity, you feel uneasy, a sign of an overstimulated lifestyle lacking genuine rest..
4. \_\_\_\_ **Workaholism (or just nonstop activity):** Knowing when to stop seems elusive, or worse, feels impossible. You're driven by a relentless pursuit of accomplishment and productivity. This might manifest in excessive dedication to your career or in compulsively filling every moment with tasks, even mundane ones like house cleaning or errand running. At the end of the day, you're completely drained, leaving little energy or patience for interactions

with family or friends. They end up dealing with a version of you that's irritable, terse, and exhausted.

**5. \_\_\_\_ Emotional numbness:** You just don't have the capacity to feel another's pain. Or your own pain for that matter. Empathy is a rare feeling for you. You just don't have the time for it. You live in this kind of constant fugue.

**6. \_\_\_\_ Out-of-order priorities:** You find yourself losing touch with your core values and goals, constantly caught up in the immediacy of urgent tasks rather than what's truly important. Your life becomes more about reacting to immediate demands rather than proactively pursuing your priorities. Despite being busier than ever, there's a persistent feeling that there's no time for the things that genuinely matter to you. Time passes – months, years, or even decades – and you find that the most important plans and aspirations have remained unaddressed, overshadowed by the day-to-day urgencies.

**7. \_\_\_\_ Lack of care for your body:** You don't have time for the basics: eight hours of sleep a night; daily exercise; healthy, home-cooked food; minimal stimulants; margin. You gain weight. Get sick multiple times a year. Regularly wake up tired. Don't sleep well. Live off the four horsemen of the industrialized food apocalypse: caffeine, sugar, processed carbs, and alcohol.

**8. \_\_\_\_ Escapist behaviors:** When exhausted and unable to engage in genuinely fulfilling activities, we often resort to various distractions: overeating, excessive drinking, binge-watching shows, endlessly scrolling through social media, or other forms of digital consumption. These activities, akin to cultural narcotics, can be harmless in moderation, offering a temporary reprieve from stress. However, when used excessively as a means to escape reality, they become detrimental. You might find yourself trapped in a cycle of socially acceptable addictions, using these distractions not just for temporary relief, but as a chronic method of disengagement from the challenges of life.

**9. \_\_\_\_ Neglect of Rejuvenating Practices:** In the rush of a busy life, the activities that genuinely nourish us are often the first to be neglected. This could be morning meditation, reading for personal growth, regular exercise, or simply a quiet meal with friends. Ironically, these activities, while restorative, require some emotional energy and discipline. As busyness leads to exhaustion, we lose the energy and willpower to engage in these vital practices. This creates a self-perpetuating cycle: the more tired we get, the less we do what truly rejuvenates us. Instead, we might default to passive activities like binge-watching shows or mindless scrolling, which, while easy, rarely leave us feeling truly revitalized or fulfilled. This cycle often leads to an emotional burnout, depriving us of the deep, restorative experiences that rejuvenate our spirit and prepare us for new challenges.

**10. \_\_\_\_ Isolation:** You often feel disconnected from others and your own inner self. In rare moments of reflection or solitude, stress and distractions prevent you from truly engaging. With friends, your attention is split between their company and your phone or to-do list. Alone, instead of introspective self-discovery, you quickly revert to busyness and digital distractions to avoid facing this sense of disconnection, missing out on meaningful personal and social interactions.

## REFLECTION:

How'd you do? How many do you identify with? The following is an expert from "Ruthless Elimination of Hurry and underscores the reason why we need to address the problem of "Hurry Sickness":

*" Yeah, don't worry; you're not alone?*

*Reject any guilt or shame you're feeling right now. It's not helpful, rarely from God, and definitely not my agenda with this little exercise.*

*The point I'm driving toward is this: an overbusy, hurried life of speed is the new normal in the Western world, and it's toxic. Psychologists tell us anxiety is often the canary in the coal mine, our souls' way of telling us something is deeply wrong and we need to fix it, fast. In one recent study 39 percent of Americans reported being more anxious than they were a year ago. That's not something to keep your eye on; it's an emotional epidemic. As my grandma used to say, "Just because everybody's doing it, don't make it smart."*

*And as I said before: hurry is a threat not only to our emotional health but to our spiritual lives as well.*

*Thomas Merton once called "the rush and pressure of modern life" a "pervasive form of contemporary violence." Violence is the perfect word.*

*Hurry kills relationships. Love takes time; hurry doesn't have it.*

*It kills joy, gratitude, appreciation; people in a rush don't have time to enter the goodness of the moment.*

*It kills wisdom; wisdom is born in the quiet, the slow. Wisdom has its own pace. It makes you wait for it —wait for the inner voice to come to the surface of your tempestuous mind, but not until waters of thought settle and calm.*

*Hurry kills all that we hold dear: spirituality, health, marriage, family, thoughtful work, creativity, generosity ... name your value. Hurry is a sociopathic predator loose in our society." - Ruthless Elimination of Hurry, John Mark Comer, Pages 52 - 53*

## NEXT STEPS:

**1. Consider what your level of "Hurry Sickness" is costing you.** If the cost is not worth it to you, decide what simple, easy steps you can take to start making a change.

**2. Listen to the first season of our podcast, "The Overflowing Life".** In the first season we explore solutions to "Hurry Sickness" and very practical actions you can take right away.

**3. Reach out to us.** We specialize in helping leaders live full, healthy lives that don't sacrifice the good things outside of work. We'd love to have an exploratory conversation to see how we can help and be a resource for you. **Go to**

**TheChrisAndCo.com/Contact**

