



# Slowing Down to Catch Up With Life

I've always prided myself on being a hard worker who dreams big, sets goals, and pushes hard to make them happen. But lately, I've been asking myself: *At what cost?*

A few weeks ago, I picked up a book that's been quietly changing how I think about life and work: "The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry" by John Mark Comer. What led me to this book was a five-day Bible study on the same topic, also put together by Comer. But honestly, this message had followed me long before I opened the first page. Podcasts, articles, and conversations seemed to be circling the same theme: Slow down.

And I started to realize just how much I needed to hear it.

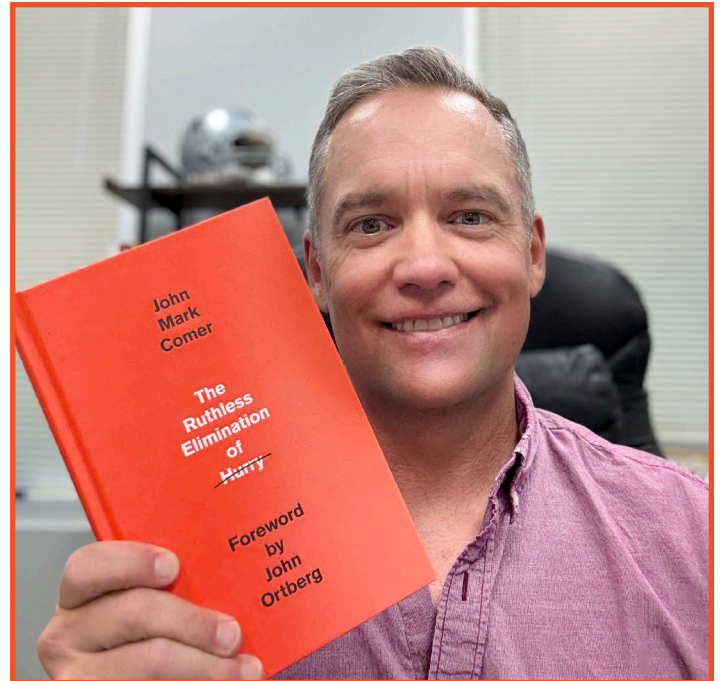
If I'm being vulnerable — and I promised myself I would be here — I've really struggled with being present. I'm guilty of checking my phone during dinner. I've caught myself answering emails during movie night with my family. During conversations with people I care about, I sometimes find my mind wandering toward the never-ending to-do list or the "super important" thing that *just can't wait*.

Except it *can* wait. And what's truly important is right in front of me.

That book didn't just describe my problem; it held up a mirror. It pointed out how rushing steals the joy of the present moment and numbs us to the beauty (and even the pain) of real life. Comer doesn't sugarcoat it. He names the problem and then offers practical ways to slow down.

One of those that hit me hard? Put your phone on grayscale. It sounds silly, but it's been a game-changer. No bright colors fighting for my attention, no endless scrolling. Just ... less noise.

But what really brought this all home for me has been my Thursday morning men's group. We meet at The Table, an



incredible space where people gather to connect and grow. Every week, we split into smaller groups of three and do a "check-in." And I started noticing a pattern: My updates almost always centered around stress, busyness, and feeling overwhelmed.

That's when it really sank in — this isn't just about me trying to be more productive or efficient. It's about how I show up for the people I love. It's about how I experience my own life. And I don't want to miss it because I was too busy racing to the next thing.

I'm still learning, still stumbling through it. But I'm starting to believe that slowing down isn't laziness — it's actually an act of courage. It takes effort to be present. To listen well. To rest. To just be.

So, if you feel stretched thin and race through your days, maybe this is your invitation to pause. To breathe. To take a step back and ask, "What am I rushing past?"

Because the real stuff of life? It's happening right now. And I don't want to miss it anymore.

- Scott Snellings



# Turn Their Dreams Into Reality

## What It Takes to Adopt a Child

Welcoming a new child into the family is one of the most exciting and life-changing events we can experience. While many Americans conceive with their significant other, others explore the world of adoption. According to the most recent Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System report, approximately 114,000 foster children are eligible and waiting to be adopted. By adopting a child, you give them a place to call home, a family who cares for them, and experiences they would never have had without you.

If you're interested in adopting a child, you're probably wondering what requirements you must meet to be eligible. Adoption is not a quick process: Domestic adoptions usually take up to two years to process, while international adoptions often take 2–5 years since you must follow American adoption rules and the guidelines of the child's home country. These rules are strict, as most countries do not want to place children in unsafe conditions. Here are five of the U.S.'s adoption requirements.

### Age

Both prospective parents must be at least 21 to be eligible to adopt. While this is a minimum age requirement, there is no cutoff age, so even those in their golden years can consider adoption.

### Health

You need to be there for your new child, especially as they adjust to their new home and environment, but you can't do that if you're battling a serious illness. Stable medical and emotional health are requirements for prospective adoptive parents. Those with a history of chronic illness or currently facing a serious condition must get a letter from their primary physician that states they are physically stable enough to raise the child until they turn 16. If one or both parents have a current or past psychiatric illness, you also need a doctor's statement assuring stability. All members of the household must prove they are physically and emotionally stable.

### Criminal History

Having prior convictions does not immediately disqualify you but makes things much more difficult. All household members over age 18 must pass a child abuse clearance process. If you or another adult in the home has an arrest history, you must provide personal statements about the incident. Depending on the seriousness of the crime, you may be considered ineligible or require rehabilitation before moving forward.

### Finances

Raising a child isn't cheap. According to the Institute of Family Studies, the expected cost of raising a child is \$202,248–\$430,928. There is no specified income requirement to be eligible to adopt, but you must prove you have the necessary resources to provide for the child. You should also consider other adoption costs, such as travel and adoption service fees.

### Home Environment

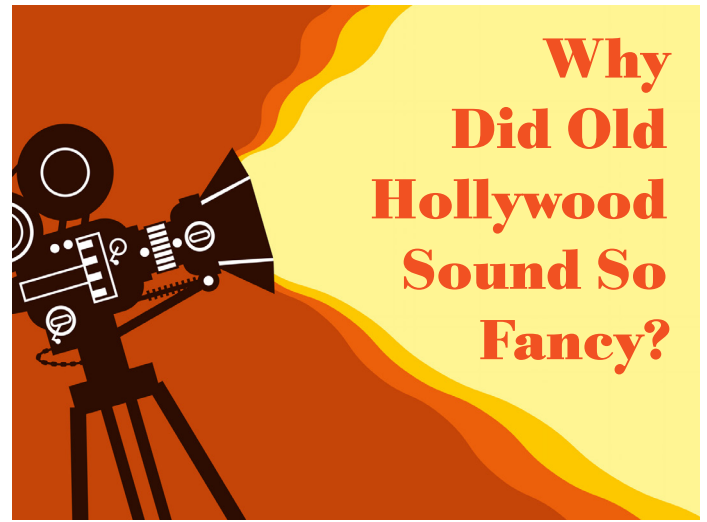
An adopted child will spend ample time within your home, so the environment must be safe and accommodating to their needs. You must allow the agency to conduct a home study to ensure your house is safe and well-maintained. You may need to provide references that speak to your ability to care for and manage children. You should also be prepared to discuss your adoption and parenting plan.

Adopting a child is a serious decision you should not take lightly. If approved, you will be responsible for another human's life, development, and health. After you verify you meet all the requirements listed above, take some time to explore your state-specific requirements. The adoption process is complicated and sometimes disheartening, but stick with it. It will be one of the best decisions you make in your and your adopted child's lives!





# TAKE A *BREAK*



## Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, and the Art of Speaking Like an Aristocrat

There's a certain charm to old Hollywood movies — glamorous stars, sweeping orchestral scores, and, of course, that oddly posh, vaguely British way of speaking. You know the one. The voice makes Katharine Hepburn sound like she's perpetually midway through an important luncheon and Cary Grant appear to deliver a one-liner while also sipping afternoon tea. This isn't just a coincidence; it's the **Transatlantic accent**, and for a while, it was the gold standard of sophisticated speech.

Unlike normal regional dialects, the Transatlantic accent wasn't something people naturally developed by growing up in a particular area. It was an *acquired* accent drilled into the minds of upper-crust New Englanders at elite boarding schools and embraced by stage actors who wanted to sound refined. Essentially, it was the linguistic equivalent of wearing a tuxedo at all times.

Hollywood, never one to pass up a trend, adopted this cultivated accent in the early days of talkies. Why? Because it made actors sound polished, articulate, and, quite frankly, fancy. The crisp, clipped tones worked wonders for those speedy, back-and-forth screwball comedy exchanges. Just watch "His Girl Friday" and try not to be dazzled by the machine-gun dialogue between Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell!

And then, just as suddenly as it arrived, the Transatlantic accent packed its bags and vanished. By the 1950s, Hollywood started shifting away from aristocratic dramas and high-society stories, opting instead for gritty realism and everyday characters. The era of Marlon Brando and James Dean meant mumbling was in, and sounding like you vacationed on the French Riviera every summer was ... well, out.

Of course, we can still enjoy the legacy of the Transatlantic accent in classic films. Want to master it yourself? Pick up "Speak With Distinction" by Edith Skinner, the holy grail of old-school elocution training. Soon enough, you'll drop your R's, crisp your T's, and stretch your vowels until "dance" becomes "dahnce." After all, old Hollywood may be gone, but its impeccable enunciation will never go out of style.

## Teriyaki Beef Skewers

*Inspired by AllRecipes.com*

*This light, flavorful dish of tender, marinated beef slices can serve as a protein-rich appetizer or a tasty entree for a summer evening.*

### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup soy sauce
- 3 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1/2 cup pineapple juice (optional)
- 4 lbs boneless round steak, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 1/2 cup water
- Bamboo skewers soaked in water

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, whisk brown sugar, soy sauce, pineapple juice, water, vegetable oil, and garlic together. Drop beef slices into the mixture and stir to coat.
2. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and marinate in a refrigerator for 24 hours.
3. Remove beef from marinade, shaking to remove excess liquid.
4. Thread beef slices on skewers in a zig-zag pattern.
5. Preheat grill to medium heat and lightly oil the grate.
6. Cook beef skewers for about 3 minutes per side until the meat is cooked through.

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## WENDY WILLIAMS FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM

### Inside Her Battle for Control Over Her Life

When did you last hear Wendy Williams' iconic "How you doin'?" It's likely been a few years, and it's not because you didn't tune in to her daytime talk show. Actually, Williams hasn't filmed an episode of her talk show since 2022. It's not because she got tired of the responsibility or was taken off the air due to unpopularity. Williams effectively disappeared after an incident with Wells Fargo led to a court-appointed guardian taking over her financial affairs.

Williams learned that Wells Fargo had frozen her accounts after she attempted to make multiple large withdrawals from her bank account. Even more unsettling, her financial advisor, through Wells Fargo, notified the bank that Williams was of "unsound mind,"

which prompted a court-ordered guardianship. Initially, many believed this was solely a financial guardianship, but the Hollywood Reporter revealed that the court-appointed guardian was overseeing nearly everything in Williams' life.

So, how did Wendy Williams end up in this situation? In 2024, her care team disclosed that the talk show host had been diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia and aphasia. Information related to her situation came from various sources but nothing directly from Williams for many years. She has recently started taking phone interviews and making television appearances and has clearly disagreed with the situation since 2022.

Wendy Williams states she has been living in a memory unit in New York City for the past three years but does not think she belongs there. "Look, I don't belong here at all," stated Williams during a phone interview with "Nightline." "This is ridiculous."

Williams is actively fighting for her freedom, and one source even told ABC News that Williams' court-appointed attorney was planning to file a request to terminate the guardianship. The fact that she's getting opportunities to share her side of the story provides hope to her fans, but only time will tell how this will unravel.

