A critical look on our pace in work life

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The increase in the pace of life is becoming very tangible yet it is not visible to us in a qualitative way. Technological advancements offer us a life without friction where we can go full speed, but with this change we lose our windows for reflection and slowing down. Our pace is mostly determined by people or machines around us and we rarely have a chance to listen to our own rhythm, users and designers alike.

With this project, the sustainability of the human being was questioned, particularly in the work life, where our pace is the highest. An exploratory and partially critical approach was engaged in the process and different methodologies have been explored. The result, a system of objects, aim to visualize one’s pace while criticizing the frictionless environments we create as designers.
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“We thought of life by analogy with a journey, a pilgrimage, which had a serious purpose at the end. The thing was to get to that end, success or whatever it is, maybe Heaven after you’re dead, but we missed the point along the whole way. It was a musical thing and you were supposed to sing or to dance while the music was being played.” (Watts, 1999)

Alan Watts

With lots of love and gratitude to my family, my husband, my dear friends, classmates, tutors, mentors and UID for shaping me into a designer, but more importantly someone that remembers to dance while the music is being played.
“WE LIVE IN TIMES WHEN SUPER-BUSY SCHEDULES HAVE BECOME SOMETHING TO BOAST ABOUT. WHILE THE SPEED OF LIFE INCREASES, THERE IS LESS AND LESS TIME TO ENJOY THE MOMENT THAT YOU ARE IN. THE ABILITY TO APPRECIATE THE MOMENT, THE ENVIRONMENT AND YOURSELF IN IT, IS THE BASE FOR THE BRIDGE TOWARDS LONG TERM HAPPINESS OF ANY HUMAN BEING.

#100HAPPYDAY IS A CHALLENGE FOR YOU TO able to find at least 1 little thing to be happy about for next 100 days. THE CHALLENGE IS FOR YOU AND YOU ONLY.

71% OF PEOPLE TRIED TO COMPLETE THIS CHALLENGE, BUT FAILED QUOTING LACK OF TIME AS THE MAIN REASON. THESE PEOPLE SIMPLY DID NOT HAVE TIME DO BE HAPPY. DO YOU?”

(100HAPPYDAYS, 2014)
INTRODUCTION

For the past few years I repeatedly find myself surrounded with deadlines, to-do lists and productivity requirements. I felt overwhelmed without any time or space for reflection, and I am not alone. The culture challenges us to be as fast as we can and usually without realizing we find ourselves in a tempo that is set by someone else. As efficiency (doing something in the given time) is favoured over effectiveness (doing something in a thought-through way) the essence of some things in life are lost. Balancing the pace of life in different situations is becoming more and more difficult and we live our lives in full-speed mode. We tend to forget that every living being, event, process or object, including ourselves, has its own inherent time and pace.

As designers, sustainability is one of our key principles. We take into consideration the effects of our designs on our environment, but we sometimes overlook the sustainability of human beings, users and designers alike.
1. Introduction

“If you could make something that would slow me down I would love that! I just want to be able to read a book without feeling guilty!”

Student from Umea Institute of Design

1.1 Motivation and goals

My ambition with this project is to inspire people to reflect on their own paces in life, especially in work environments and create discussions around the fast paced norm. In addition, I believe that the role of the designer is merging into a role of the facilitator offering users tools to reflect on themselves. Therefore I intend to take a closer look around the principles of interaction design to see how I can use my own process to reflect on myself as a designer by incorporating slow design and technology methodologies.

My aim is not to declare war on fast, quite the contrary, I agree with Jeremy Finch that “Our fast-moving, information-rich, ultra-connected world is an amazing and exciting place in which to live.” (Finch, 2013), but I am interested in questioning if embracing slower processes in life can be beneficial and if we can change the behaviour of the people through designing interactions.

1.2 Initial Questions

What is the relationship between being slow and being productive or lazy, being effective or efficient?

Why is being slow considered to be unproductive? Why is procrastination inherently bad? Do we say the nature is procrastinating in winter because we don’t see any flowers?

Where does the sustainability of human beings lie?

How can we hold spaces for users -and designers alike- to find their own pace in life?
1.3 Approach

This project has a twofold approach: 1- Taking a philosophical look into the way we currently design through integration of different methodologies and 2- Design interactive interventions to create discussions around the alternative pace in life.

The process and the outcome is weaved together by utilizing explorative, experiential and combinatory methodologies. In addition to interaction design practice, slow design/technology principles and communication rituals in traditional communities are explored. Both due to the process overlapping with the outcome and me having the opportunity to choose a topic close to my heart, the user (who is reading this text) and the designer (me) merged together so in one way or another the process became a reflection for my own.

Critical and reflective design perspective helped the formation of the final design and Pheobe Senger’s definition from the paper “Reflective Design” has been my main inspiration: “Critical designs do not necessarily need to be built; just the idea of the object itself can be enough to encourage reflection. Furthermore, although critical designs have the potential to spark reflection by users, they are often directed at designers themselves, to defamiliarize and thereby open up design practice.” (Sengers, 2013)
A Geographer's Adventure

The Social Psychologist

or How Every Culture Keeps Time Just a Little Bit Differently

Robert J. Levine

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The research phase started with literature research followed by user research. During research ideation, iteration and research through design was also implemented. Initial research included diverse interest areas and as the project continued the scope was also narrowed down.
2. Research

2.1 Literature Research

Pace of life - Fast-er-er-er

The perceived increase in the pace of life is not unique to our generation. Since the industrial revolution, advances in technology and incorporation of machines to daily life enabled faster ways of doing things. Though these fast ways were thought to be freeing up space, what they actually did was to shift the standards and expectations; for example having a vacuum cleaner meant higher cleanliness standards. In his book “A geography of time”, Robert Levine mentions that the farmwives in the 1920’s who were without electricity, spent significantly less time doing housework than did suburban women with all their modern machinery, in the latter half of the century. As a result, the very designs that were made to save time became labor saving devices that did not save work. (Levine, 1997)

Fastness can be defined as the measurement of speed. But what is speed? The website “Doors of perception” offers a great definition and history about it: “The Oxford English Dictionary gives old meanings of speed, which sound strange and alien to us: abundance, success, fortune, lot, assistance, help. Today, if somebody talks about ‘speed’, we understand it to be the property of a process, mostly a movement in time, that — at least in principle — can be measured by an instrument, by a technical device, and therefore can be compared. This notion of speed — as expressed in units like km/h or r.p.m. — connotates a uniform movement. It is a mechanical speed. Mechanical speed was invented together with the railroad. I doubt very much that this notion of speed, brought forth by the machines which humans invented, is the idea one should have in mind talking about humans themselves, about ourselves. It doesn’t really matter whether we wish the ‘speed of the human society’ to accelerate or to slow down — as long as we look at humans with speed in mind, we won’t look at humans humanely.” (Trapp, 2013)

The concept of slow - Smell the roses

“Being Slow means that you control the rhythms of your own life. You decide how fast you have to go in any given context. If today I want to go fast, I go fast; if tomorrow I want to go slow, I go slow. What we are fighting for is the right to determine our tempos.” (Honoré, 2004)

Carlo Petrini

Aspects of slowing down may have its roots at the start of the industrialization era (Bidney, 2002) but the first time the word “Slow” was used to describe a philosophy, was during the Slow Food movement. Founded in Italy in 1989 as a counter culture for Fast Food and its impacts on local traditions and environment, the movement protested the “fast life” that industrialization created. The founder, Carlo Petrini explains this as: “[Fast food] diminish opportunities for conversation, communion, quiet reflection, and sensuous pleasure, thus short-changing the hungers of the soul.” (Jackson, 2007)

The Slow Movement describes a wide range of actions, from slow cities, (Cittaslow, 1999) to education, sex to travel and even leisure, taking place around purposefully slowing down the in order to enjoy life more and create “time and space”. In this context slow is now not just a term to describe the lack of speed, but a change of perspective. Carl Honore explains in his book in Praise of Slow as “The Slow philosophy is not about doing everything at a snail’s pace. It’s about seeking to do everything at the right speed.” (Honoré, 2004)
Slow design – Sustainability in many scales

Slow design, a term first coined by Alistair Fuad-Luke, can be considered as the modern reflection of the Arts and Crafts movement, due to its sustainable and holistic approach that supports creating solutions for the well-being of people and the planet, and building meaningful relationships. In his paper “Slow”, Fuad-Luke frames slow design as a multilayered term that may refer to process, outcome or the philosophical approach of design. (Fuad-Luke, 2002) In this project, the weight is on the philosophical approach which I believe questions the role of the designer, as well as the design practice.

Albeit not the main goal, understanding the role and work of the designer is important in my project. As mentioned in the motivations, we as designers talk about sustainability of our products often, but never the “sustainability” of the designer. The slow design approach: “… provide a lens through which to more intimately understand one’s own identity as a designer, to reflect upon the design processes one employs, to evaluate tangible outcomes, and to imagine new scenarios.” (Fuad-Luke, 2002)

Slow technology - It’s a machine’s world

The aspect of technology, especially as an interaction designer, is not something I can put aside. Technology has played a big role in advancement of many of today’s interactions but the race between the pace of humans and pace of machines could as well be the issue to point finger at for the speed oriented life we live. Many of the design problems we face in today’s world are aimed at correcting the poorly-considered technological aspects. The solution is not to take technology out of our lives, but to offer a different perspective. Slow technology, that is “aimed at reflection and moments of mental rest rather than efficiency in performance” is one of the methods. (Hallnäs, 2001) Slow technology is not about making technology invisible, but about exposing technology in a way that encourages people to reflect and think about it.
Slowing down in daily life - Reflection, friction and usability

“Doing without reflecting is like cooking without tasting”

Ayşe Gökçe Bor

The increasing use of machines and new technologies also increased the complexity of life while decreasing friction. As designer, we got better at producing more user friendly tools, such as tablets tracking eye movement to determine when to turn the page, or services that provide everything you need in the comfort of your home. That resulted in interactions offering less and less friction. Usability, defined by ISO 9241-210:2010 as “extent to which a system, product or service can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use” seems to rarely take into account the effectiveness of the product but more the efficiency of it. (ISO, 2010) The loss of friction in turn created the loss of reflection over time. Here I would like to use the definition of reflection as “bringing unconscious aspects of experience to conscious awareness, thereby making them available for conscious choice” (Sengers, 2013)

The vending machine concept, Delay-o-mat by Hoger Lee gives you the chance to choose a slower way of delivery of your can, which seems less effective but the overall quality and the transparency of the process gives you a opportunity for reflection. (Lee, 2012) How could usability be altered to encourage reflection? (Quanjer, 2014)
2.2 User Research

“Slowing down” as a topic is not only very wide, but also quite vague, since the perception of slow is very individual. I had my personal struggles comprehending the topic especially studying in a multicultural environment with very different paces. To understand more about the different paces of people and whether embracing a slow philosophy was required, I started talking to people and to conduct interviews with people from different parts of the world with varying professions and lifestyles.

Aside from casual chats, out of the 23 formal interviewees 20 replied to the question “how do you think your life pace is” as “high” or “definitely above average”. Among these people some were working in high pace jobs, so it was relatively normal for them to feel their pace was high, but even students and retired interviewies did not escape the speed trap. The 3 that did not think they had fast paces were living outside the city or had already embraced a slower way of living by choice.

The user research included Western people living in different parts of the world in order to get a deeper understanding of paces in different contexts.
Interviews - What is this slow all about?

“Slow” in daily use does not have a good reputation. Being slow is synonymous with being lazy, stupid, inefficient, late, etc. Especially in work situations, slowing down means risking the promotion, risking to be perceived unwilling. Business is after all “busy”ness. Being busy means being important, so busyness is a way to prove how good one is. Dedication is measured with the phrases such as “Oh I was at work/school until 3:00am yesterday.”

The interviews mostly started with conflicts; people complaining about wanting to have time for themselves but not wanting to slow down. In fact slow people were put down in cases, such as an interviewee complaining about her colleague not being fast enough. But as the interview proceeded the same interviewee confessed that her lack of slowing down actually made the process slower. In her words: “I do the same task 3 times, because I always have to make it fast, so it always has some mistakes that I need to correct on the next version”. Another person working with sales underlined how he liked the fast lifestyle and then confessed that he is having panic attacks due to the fast pace of his job and his biggest regret is not having time for the loved ones.

Surveys - Slow as an action vs slow as a feeling

The definition of slow was still very individual, vague and partly negative. I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of perception of the word and the feeling, so I sent out a survey. The results showed a wide variety in the definition of “slow”, entirely dependent on the context.
However, when the wording was changed to “slowing down”, it became easier to relate and reflect on. Next step was to understand the feeling, so I asked some participants to send photos of what makes them slow down in daily life. Mostly it was about moments that they did not feel the need to check the time or when they get immensely involved in something that the effort put in concentration took away the concept of time. Some of the messages could be found in Appendix 1.

Through analysing the survey and interview results, I realized there were two different areas of slow. Most of the negative notions of slow laid in the area of slow as a feeling. When people felt the time was running away and they could not catch up, they “felt” slow in the sense of “late” as in you don’t have the control over your time. Whereas when they actively slow down and take control over their time, slow gained a meaning more similar to serene or balanced. Having the power to slow down actually made people happier, calmer and in a way ‘faster’ in their daily processes.

Photos sent by survey participants on their daily moments of “slowing down”
Cultural Probes - A day in life

Wanting to get deeper in daily life situations, I decided to send out cultural probes, which were digital since most of the users were all around the world. I started off with a basic lean probe and tested out for a couple of days with 2 people. The basic probe was easy to fill, but as I got the responses, I realized it wasn’t providing me the aspects of their lives that I was looking for, so I re-iterated the probes into an undesigned structure to be presented as a daily mail. This failed entirely, and participants got confused over how to fill them and send them back. So I designed forms to be filled with clear instructions and sent them in as we would in a physical cultural probe kit for them to print or fill online. This structure worked better but I would have wanted to try and send it in a daily basis. However, from the first two experiments, I had seen that it took considerable energy, and therefore, I decided to send them as the whole package.

The participants later told me that the probes helped them to see their lives in a different light and some even asked for more daily questions. Only talking about the pace of their lives actually created a temporary shift in their perspectives. There were also useful insights like one participant wanting to slow down her calendar that inspired a part of my final design.
Council - An ancient communication method

Council is an old method of space creating for people to freely introduce their thoughts and feelings on a subject. The participants sit in a circle for everyone to have an equal position and a talking object is introduced to the group, so only the person with the talking object can speak. This provides a free space for that person to go deeper in his/her explanation but at the same time allows for other people to build on the subject. (Awad, 2014) I discovered this method during my time in Turkey, for effective communication to build communities, especially after the revolt movement created a need for an equal base for vocalizing opinions.

Throughout the process two council meetings were conducted, both involving 4 people (including me). The first one was held with the people in my close circle. The aim was to identify what slowing down meant in deeper social relationships and it proved to offer deep stories that built on each other, so in a way it was similar to combining in depth interviews with a brainstorming session. The next one was with IxD students in order to gain a better perspective on their perception of design process and the pace of it. As with the last one, the topic drifted off quite often but it also gave very valuable insights on things that appeared to be a waste of time (i.e. long lunch breaks and chats), but actually fueled creativity and bonding in the team, resulting in beautiful projects.

Involvement – Social groups

Since the outset of the process, I tried to keep the users updated about the research and how their data are used on a more regular basis to keep them involved. The moderation required more energy than I anticipated which I hadn’t planned for, so I could not keep up with my goal of transparency. For the communication to still exist, I created two different online groups and probed them so that they start discussions in their own ways. This approach was more fruitful since people were triggered from each others’ responses and in a way just one question sometimes led to a series of answers. Nevertheless, the moderation required was not one I could provide, so this group also fell quiet after a couple of weeks.
2.3 Findings and Analysis

The interviews and cultural probes pointed that the fastest moments were during the time of work, so the scene for further work was set to be the working environment (office, home office etc). And almost all the work involved using the computer most of the time.

A few interest areas emerged from the research findings. The detailed charts could be found in Appendix 3. Time awareness, technology and daily life were the three areas that I chose to focus on. The reason for this choice was that the research reaffirmed that we are consuming time as we do to our natural resources and a focused snippet of time is becoming a scarce resource. Since time is relatively invisible resource, we need ways to visualize it, while incorporating it into our daily lives.

Photos sent by survey participants showing their work spaces.
Main questions:
How might we make time more visible?
How can technology help a slower way of life?
How might we create opportunities for daily reflection?

There were other points that I found out during the research that were important not only to determine the destination, but also help the designer (me) to be mindful on the way to that destination.

It is not about the definition of slow: The definition of slow is both individual and changes with context, but the issue is not about the exact definition. What matters in this project is how willing are we to notice the changes, how does the gear change and concept shift happens in our minds.

The user friendly environments lead to loss of reflection: Design aims to create seamless interactions that would make the lives of people easier. Though slowly the interactions become merely about pushing a button or swiping a screen. The art of interaction (for example that comes about using old dial phones or walkmans), the delay, the excited waiting started to disappear (waiting for a game to load on Commodore 64 is a good example of this).

We have been told that good design is when the user becomes unaware of the design; it is so smooth that it disappears under the use. Is this still applicable? How does the “fast and smooth” life effect the opportunity to reflect and grow?

Sustainability of the designer is important: We talk about the sustainability of the design but not the designer. If we keep pushing ourselves, take fast decisions, never have a chance to reflect, how long can we last? Even if we put aside the late nights, no breaks and carrying our work with us all day, wouldn’t it be better to put more time, depth and reflection when designing?
"...Students are the next generation of designers – who are, overall, brilliant minds, eager to explore and so become lost, which in turn will compel them to learn in order to find their way..." (Torkildsby, 2012)

Existential Design

At this stage of the project, I had spread myself pretty thin over various possibilities. I tried a few concepts and at the end moved away from the solution approach and turned my eyes to destabilization of solution by creating a system of objects. Two workshops and reflective sessions helped me to ideate throughout this process.
3. Creative Process

3.1 Manifest

Since the self reflection is equally important as the outcome in this project, I decided to collect the small notes about my design principles under an ever-evolving manifest which would serve as a tool for me (and others) throughout the process.

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**Slow Manifest**

*for designers*

Not all things need to be designed. Allow others to be the medium for finalization. Let the designer be the facilitator, the igniter.

Design is an act of love. Let it come from your heart. Add yourself to your work. Be one with the work.

Take your time to see the big picture, get into details, track off a bit and understand where you stand.

Make a little list of your values and wishes. Think about what you want to achieve but more importantly WHY.

Try to talk to as many people as you can from the start but always sift their answers through your values filter. Talk to users, designers, mentors. Do this at your own time but don’t skip it just because you don’t have a “perfectly clear idea”.

Create time and space for yourself to ideate. Get disconnected from everything around you. Put all your thoughts in a place where you can visit later.

Embrace the uncertainty. The design process has always ups downs and wild turns. Enjoy the journey instead of focusing to the destination.

Once in a while go through what you have done to reflect on it. Are you on a path you are happy with? Is this direction parallel to your values? If things have changed, let them change and adjust accordingly.

Ask yourself about the future of your design. Where will it be? How would it be if it was used in a way different than you intended? What can that be? Ask people. Give the users this ambiguous freedom for them to express themselves through your design (easier said than done).

Think holistically. What materials do you use? Are you using your own resources (time, energy, knowledge) effectively? How will this design effect the social environment around it? What does it offer to the user?

Embrace procrastination. Sometimes your mind needs to be fueled by different things. Allow yourself to drift off then collect yourself back.

Remember the seed and the flower. There is a lot process happening under the ground before a flower buds. If you don’t feel you have any tangible results, this may be your time of absorbing and growing until you come up with a flower.

Have a reflection diary. Keep it short but try to jot down the most important thing, the most interesting thing, the biggest challenge/problem/ mistake you encountered and what you learned from it.

"Late" doesn’t exist, it is called “just in time”.

Don’t spread yourself too thin, focus, move and take effectiveness over efficiency.
3.2 Workshops and reflective sessions

Workshop 1: Exquisite corpse

In order to kick start the creative process, I ran a workshop as a part of my research gateway presentation and distributed folded papers. The task was to sketch an object from the existing workspace (pencil) and write why they choose that object (it grounds me to write by hand). The paper was then passed over to the next person to rethink “how to make pencil that is inspired by laziness/that has its own pace etc”. After the ideation, the paper was passed one more time for the next person to come up with a use for the object created during the stage before. This proved to be fun way of coming up with interesting ideas in one’s own pace.

This workshop helped me to break the boundaries of thinking and allowed me to build on ideas that were already collaboratively created. Even though no solid outcome can be drawn out, the process in itself helped me to startup my creative process.
Workshop 2: Fast virus!

In order to understand the behavioral stance of people regarding fast and slow, I prepared a workshop based on a speculative scenario. The main questions were “What if a virus forced the infected beings to become faster? How would that change the world we live in? How would you react if you were not infected? If you were a slow activist against the fast government that spreads the virus, what would your actions be?

The participants were asked to first identify the symptoms and how the virus may have spread. They were then split in 3 groups; two representing slow activists and one representing the fast system. They were all asked to create kits to promote their values (the activists to cure the fastness disease and the system to spread it).

The behaviour of the groups was interestingly parallel to the roles they were assigned to. The system group loudly stated how they were enjoying the activity and started producing various tools very fast, whereas the activist groups brainstormed for possible solutions before taking action to produce.

The fast kits were more aiming at emotional behavior and included a “holy book of fastness”, herbal mixture for “premature ejaculation as a fashion statement” and slogans/posters with the hidden threat of exclusion from the society if you are not fast enough. Targetting of emotions made me realize the invisible fastness choices we make everyday without reflecting because it was more “acceptable” and triggered the ideas of making them visible.

The slow kits included tunnel vision glasses to avoid multitasking, booster break boxes that hide the computer mouse or motion limitation objects. “Bringing limitations to slow down” fuelled up interesting discussions on choosing your own pace vs being forced to slow down and the findings from these discussions paved the path to my later concepts.

Key Findings and questions:

Fastness is the norm and more accepted – How to make slowing down more attractive?
Fast choices kill the opportunity of reflection – How can we make the choices visible?
Fast is fun! – How can we make slow more fun?
Limitations make you slow down – How to balance the choice and the force?

Reflective sessions:

Throughout the ideation I tried to engage in group and self reflection sessions in order to take a step back and see the whole picture again.
3.3 Inspirations

Living With Things is a series of modified everyday objects by Monika Hoinkis (Berlin 2005). The project questions how it would be if there was a two-way conversation between the object and the user, a symbiotic relationships where the objects need you as much as you need them. (Hoinkis, 2005)

This project got me thinking about introducing the technology, the objects into our daily lives in a different form. My ideations around animus objects were inspired by this project.

B.Super by Damon Ahola, is a kit for protestors. The final design is not aimed to be a product but more a tool to encourage discourse around protesting and consumerism. (Ahola, 2014).

During the second workshop, creation of kits were inspired by this project. “A survival kit for slow” was a concept that I visited a few times due to the intriguing nature of it. The idea of destabilizing the solution and disguising it as a consumer product stayed with me until the final design.

Happylife by James Auger and Jimmy Loizeau explores what would it mean if an electronic device could track you, know more about your emotional state than your partner does, and when would it be too invasive, through the development of emergent real-time dynamic passive profiling techniques applied to mediate and display human emotive states in a family home. (Auger, 2010).

The object/technology tracking, learning and invading our lives is an ving topic for me that I ideated around inspired by this project. One of the final elements has a very similar behavioral patterns to the happylife device.
Bossy by Lucas Neumann is a device to help flexible workers be more effective, healthy and balanced in their daily lives. (Neumann, 2014).

Bossy helped me explore and understand more how to collect data through the machine. It is a great example to see how to organize your life, but I wanted something more than a helper, I wanted to create discussions around one’s pace of life. This project inspired me to dig a bit more deeper than helping with organization.

Meditation apps such as Calm (Calm.com, 2014); Headspace (Headspace Inc, 2014); Stop, Breathe and Think (Stop, Breathe & Think App, 2014) help users to take breaks during the day to come to a mindful state. Some are desktop based while most is on the mobile.

Upon trying and researching about the apps, I fully decided not to go with an app but an actual object that will stand out and not blend into the digital chaos. The apps helped including a meditation routine into the daily life but for me they did not create awareness for the times that the app was not used actively and I wanted to break that.

Lifesupport by Revital Cohen and Tuur Van Balen proposes using animals bred commercially for consumption or entertainment as companions and providers of external organ replacement. The use of transgenic farm animals, or retired working dogs, as life support ‘devices’ for renal and respiratory patients offers an alternative to inhumane medical therapies. (Cohen, 2008).

This project made me ask the question “how far are we willing to go to achieve what we want?”. From this question came a lot of speculative scenarios that is reflected partly in the final result as a slightly critical perspective.
3.4 Ideation and concept development

**Fun element**

One of the prominent outcomes of the workshops was that slow was not as fun as fast. During the first stages of my ideation, I looked into designing a game, bringing people together to create fun slow moments. The Silent Game (Habraken, 1987) was used as a starting point to ideate on and I sketched a few concepts around it. I was dedicated to the idea and even presented it during the gateway presentation though later changed course since I felt it did not create a long-lasting awareness. Another idea was to create a set of cards for daily life use, and that idea later turned into a participatory workbook with inspirations, actions and tools.

**Speculative approach**

My main goal of creating discussions eventually directed me to look more into the field of critical and speculative design. In the light of “Fast Virus” workshop, I decided to use scenarios and speculative stories as a part of my ideation process.

Slow New World is a story where in a future setting where work and speed became holy, sacrificing your time in front of an assembly line is considered an act of faith. A rebellious group seeks to seize the time instead of sacrificing it by introducing slowness and inefficiency in daily objects. (Appendix 2)

This story helped me dig deeper into the relationship between the role of the objects in the pace of our lives. Since the story was actually not so speculative but an exaggerated view on today’s behavior, it made me question how much we are willing to sacrifice for staying fast. This food for thought showed itself in the drastic actions of the final object.

The questions for this part of ideation were:

What if objects would react to our pace in life?
How far are you willing to go to stay fast?

The aim is to reach to the setting on the concept card on the board without talking to each other. Each player puts a marble from their own color bowl AND rotates the board every turn.
Anima Sella - The chair with a soul

The tired and aggressive chairs -as you may guess- have their own personalities. They discourage you from sitting down too much; not because they think of you, but more because they think of themselves. Their behaviour on the other hand affect your own directly and force you to take a step back.

Tired chair
“Sorry, I just can’t.”

Angry chair
“I don’t have to carry your fat ass all day!”

Slosole - The spiky shoe sole

Slosole is a concept that was triggered when I found out that the pace of the city is determined by the pace of the people walking in that city. Slosole is shoe sole that reacts to your walking pace. Walking fast activates the soles to create a spiky surface creating a quite unpleasant experience.
One of the fictional concepts I iterated on was Sacrifice-o-meter, a non-obstructive device tracking your pace in life through an embedded chip and could offer you extra hours during the day as long as you are willing to pay for it. The currency is the important things in your life, things you value such as forgetting your daughter’s birthday, wiping your first kiss from your memory etc. The dial on the device is tuned to your pace in time and generates a personal understanding of your optimum pace. If you are over your optimum pace more than 3 times a week, you need to pay for that extra pace (again with values).

Throughout the ideation phase I had generated a lot of small ideas but did not develop them far. An addiction kit for fast people, a device to disconnects you by distracting, various ways of creating obstacles in order to slow one down were a few from the vast amount of small Post-its.

This concept set the base for Buggy and PaceMaker, with a softer touch on the sacrifices but still keeping the digital sacrifice, the personal tracking and visualization.

I decided to create a set of objects that each has a different behaviour and offer them out as a way to observe your pace in a work environment.
Final Concept

Collecting the results of the ideation and the directions I had in mind, I started to experiment over some forms and possible functions. I used the sacrifice-o-meter and the happiness project as a starting point for the visual representation, PaceMaker, though the "how far would you go" feeling was more conveyed through the other element, Buggy. The objects with own behavior and visualization of the pace were also encapsulated in the concept.

In order to have a non-obstrusive feel, I decided to make PaceMaker almost like a painting that will sit on your wall or a photo on your table, watching you without you noticing.

Buggy started out as a table calender with an additional feature - the focus mode. When the screen was tilted, the focus mode would be on and would only show the highest priority task. It would lock all the other programs in your computer that are non-necessary for the completion of the task. The focus mode felt great, but eventually I dropped that part of the concept, since what I was trying to do was not to create a solution or a better environment, but to introduce the friction and letting the user be a participant of their life. The form of the calendar was decided according to the focus mode to allow flipping down, yet it stayed similar at the final design.

In order to understand the reactions and to get a better feel if the concept delivers the desired effect, I made some prototypes and talked to people around the concept and how it would work. Since the actual value of the design was in the discussion it would create, I invited people to ideate around speculative scenarios. The reactions were a bit scattered, some were annoyed and scared by the intensity, some said "I would give 100 dollars for this". The data collection and behaviour of the objects were what we discussed the most. In the end I did fine tunings about the behavior of the algorithm and the objects based on the conversations.
My goal at the outset was to create a set of tools to initiate discussions around the speed of our lives. Through the research, user studies, ideation and concept iteration, it was clear to me that I did not want to wage a war on speed or to praise slow. The final design is to make the user shift their perspective, their experience from the existing pace. What they do with it is completely up to them (as with everything that is designed).

The objects are not meant to bee seen as consumer products but objects of discussion.

How would it be to have our environments reflecting our paces? What if you could see your pace and not just feel it? Does all the designed objects need to be focused on usability? How could including frictions to daily life change our perception?
4. Final Design

4.1 The system and the elements

sPACE is a system that aims at visualizing our rhythms and re-embrace friction in our lives. The three elements of the system can work both together or individually. It has various degrees of control; with PaceMaker, which is an artistic representation of your daily rhythm, you can just be an observer.

With Thoughts on Slow, an interactive notebook, you are allowed to create a roadmap for yourself. Buggy on the other hand has its own mind and takes control if you don’t take action.

Conventionally, design offers compensation and help in rough situations. With Buggy, an object that is seemingly user-friendly and designed to eliminate friction in your interactions, this notion is challenged by introducing a breakdown of the system. This may create both annoyance and/or empathy and the needs of the user becomes needs of the object. The system makes the invisible pace of the user visible, and forces one to solve the problem that the object created, thus in a way helping oneself i.e. taking a break.

Alternatively, I could have focused on creating a more “usable system” with options of scheduling downtime to help you work better or give you incentives if you focus well. I talked with a few people about the concept and walked them through the emotional scenarios but despite some of the feedback I received, I chose not to make this a system of solutions. It is intentional that I left room for some ambiguity for the viewers and users alike for them to start asking questions around the objects. The reason for not making an app is to bring the consciousness to a visible plane instead of letting it get lost in clutter and cluster.

The decision of not merging the two elements is also an intentional one. Your pace (fast or slow) in itself is not bad or good by itself, so the PaceMaker is a neutral object entirely. The problem stems from the way we act which renders Buggy a “buggy” object due to the way it responds to situations, just like we do. This is a system about reflection and action.

4.2 Graphics

In the start of the project, the name was slowGround, since it was an experimental playground for me. As the concept started the name sPACE came to the surface. sPACE gives an idea about what the system wants to achieve, for you to slow down your pace and create space in your life.

The colors are also used in the calendar to color code the tasks and were chosen to have a soft, pastel palette that would not distract the user yet can give information through the use of it. The split diamond shape creates a visual space while still holding the three elements together.
4.3 PaceMaker

PaceMaker is a visual representation of one’s daily rhythm. It is formed as a photo-frame that either sits on your desks or hangs in the room as if it is an artistic representation of your pace. The dial does not have any markings stating “fast” or “slow” as the system calibrates according to the behaviour of the user. This results in everyone having a unique PaceMaker, visualizing their own paces.

The system employs an algorithm that extracts data through your computer. Hard data such as schedules, mail correspondences, tasks, and meetings are extracted from your digital footprint as well as calculating the predictions around the behaviours of the past years. The soft data, meaning attention levels, heartbeat, browsing and computing behaviour is collected via the webcam and analysed for further understanding the regular pace of the user.

There are two indicators, red one being the current pace based on today’s events and your mood. The black one is the future prediction of your pace based on past events, mail correspondences, calendar entries, seasonal factors and create patterns of your future pace.

Unmarked dial
The system collects and analyses the cloud data and learns about user’s pace and behaviour. Due to this unique data mining algorithm, the dial does not indicate “fast” or “slow” pace and rather calibrates according to the user.

Range of prediction
Prediction range can be set for the upcoming 3 days, 1 week or 1 month starting from today and gives an overview of the predicted pace in the future.

Predicted Pace
Upcoming schedules, past data analysis, seasonal behavior patterns, overall well being and daily data extraction forms a base for the prediction. The indicator twitches showing an area of prediction that is subjected to change with the daily rhythm.

Current Pace
Current pace is based on the soft data (emotions, focus, digital behaviour, distractions, heart rate) and hard data (weather, tasks, schedule, chores and digital correspondances).
4.4 Buggy

Buggy is a desktop calendar and focus booster acting as a companion to keep your work life in order. It is the most active element of the sPACE kit. Through the system it shows you your daily tasks, monthly schedules and meetings. All is good, but Buggy is a bit “buggy”. It follows your rhythm so the faster you get, the faster it gets. Your distraction and unfocused behaviour reflects from him and it starts acting erratically, giving you a visual notification that you should take your space. It mixes up the days, forgets appointments and gets very distracted. It tries to cool off by introducing longer wait times to the programs in the hopes of slowing you down. The worst scenario is a seizure where it shuts off and slowly dims your screen temporarily, forcing you to take a break until it recovers.

There are a few options to wake Buggy up. The easiest way is to calm it down by holding it close to your chest and breathing slowly. You can also take it for a walk or simply just wait. Alternatively you can get furious and curse around, but that really does not help.

The first time this happens, it will be stressful and NOT a space creator, but how would your behaviour change with time? Would you take your own space before buggy takes it for you? Do you really need to be tracked in order to make yourself slow down?

Buggy, the desktop calendar, accesses the user’s digital data to keep track of tasks, schedules, meetings, and correspondances.

If the user is distracted, feeling overwhelmed or multitasking to the extent of not getting deeper in work, Buggy also gets distracted and starts acting erratically. If the signs are ignored, Buggy goes into a seizure and shuts off the computer screen.

The tasks are color coded and gives an overview of what are the most urgent things to be done during that day. More information can be reached by swiping the screen.

In case of a seizure, the best course of action is to take a break and walk away from the computer or hold Buggy while breathing slowly.
4.5 Thoughts on Slow

Thoughts on Slow is an interactive notebook that gives voice to the exploration and questioning of the user’s pace, tries to explain the principles, methodologies and backbone of slowing down in life and in design. Readers will discover their own definitions of slow, their methods for a balanced life and a new way of keeping track of their rhythms, completely how they want. The notebook offers instructions, prompts, ideas, information on mindfulness, slowing down and slow design as well as blank pages for the readers to fill and be fully engaged in the process of slowing down.

4.6 The website

The website serves as the first point of contact with the kit. In the website one can get more information on what is slow, visit references and links for further understanding the concept and most importantly order the kit or the elements individually.

A mockup could be visited at slowground.strikingly.com
4.7 How it works?

sPACE collects soft data by listening and monitoring the user’s activities across social media. It tracks the intensity of different emotions (Dataversity, 2013), identifies sentiment, reviews the data and obtain the current state of the user. When allowed, the webcam also retrieves data about heartbeat, eye movement and facial coding, resulting in a more accurate determination of the user’s emotional state, focus and pace. In addition, the computer using behaviour is mapped, that gives insight into if the user is distracted. The calendar, meeting times and how busy the user is and will be, the number of emails the user receives, digital distractions even the weather and time of the year is taken into consideration while determining the pace of the user.

4.8 The user

sPACE as a system is targeted towards people that have a full-time job, whether in an office environment or not, that uses computer mainly to achieve their work and feel like they are overwhelmed with to-do lists, fast work pace and distractions during the day. A small scenario that explains more about how the system is put in use and a persona can be found in Appendix 4.
4.9 Exhibition

At the exhibition space, I tried to create a space where people could sit down, take their time and have a look at the mini report or the manifest. Mock-ups of Buggy and PaceMaker were acting according to two scenarios shown on the screen: A slow paced working day and a distracted digital behavior indicating a fast day.

During the time of the exhibition there were interesting discussions with the visitors. We talked about my decision of creating friction, whether it will cause more annoyance than mindfulness. Some were appalled by the thought of it yet most of the visitors actually told that they felt harsh measures were needed to make them slow down in work. They also expressed how they want to slow down but they do also enjoy the fast pace too. The focus of the talk was more on Buggy as I have expected but a few questions were asked about the PaceMaker too.

As a ground for discussion I think the objects served their purposes. However I felt that I would have loved to be able to have a working prototype to introduce this to daily life and observe the behavior and reactions of the users as a means to broaden the discussion via experiencing the actual slowing down procedure.
REFLECTION

At the start of the project, I had an idea on the things I wanted to achieve. I knew I wanted to do a project about slowing down, to explore paths I haven’t been to (and maybe will not have chance to in work life), understand what my role is as a designer and provoke questions in all the areas above. When I look back at the project from a distance now, I realize I have achieved almost all my goals, though it proved to be more difficult then I expected. I have documented a bit of my struggle in my project blog, slowground.wordpress.com.

Contrary to many of the projects I had been involved in my graduate school, this project gave me the opportunity to choose my own topic and I decided to choose a topic that was close to my heart, which made it difficult for me to stay grounded and rational at times.

I gave more time and importance to research and exploration, and that left me with little time to develop my final concept. The end result in terms of design is not where I would have wanted it to be. Even though it has still fulfilled the purpose of provoking questions and evoking discussions around our pace in life, I personally feel like the project stood somewhere between a speculative design and a human centered design. I would have loved to push it through a little more to the critical side, but during the time of the project I think I felt I did not have enough understanding on that area so I drifted towards human centered design.

I got lost many times during the project, change course a lot, learnt a lot. One of my biggest learnings is that there is no perfect decision, but a decision needs to be taken if I want to move in a direction. I had a great support network (a community that I created during user testing) that helped me during the times I was lost so another learning for me is even though this was a solo project, there is great power in collaborating with people around me.

There is a lot of future work that can be done with this project; doing more user test with the system now (I did not have time to do proper using testing of the final concept unfortunately), how the technology could really be introduced and how it would be if these objects were to be placed in the work environments for real, how would people react and would there be any behaviour change. Even so, I feel this project has come to an end for me and I do not wish to pursue it further.

However I have gathered a lot of feedback during the exhibition and I still have quite a lot of unused research (both literature and user) material. I do not want to revisit this project, but I do want to use this knowledge and find a way to share it. My wish is to actualize the book “Thoughts on Slow” using the material I have and create a book similar to “Wreck this Journal” (Smith, 2007) but more on the emphasis of slowing down.
REFERENCES


Jackson, S (2007), The Slow Movement: On the Snail’s Trail, YL Magazine


REFERENCES


IMAGES


The photographs, images and graphics that are not indicated above were either created by me as a part of this project or has been sent in by the research participants.
I've got to apologize to everyone before hand, but something that slows me down is a mix between Music, chocolate and cigarettes, it's all about having a moment for myself...

Another thing, no photo, but one is on its slow way to you: folding origami flowers. Doing sth physical with my hands, focusing on precision, following a strict set of steps.

I knitted an XL sweater for my husband and it took me 5 months! Today we had the opening ceremony for that.

Sitting down on a train going through nice landscapes for some hours. The scope of choices shrinks to a minimum and thoughts float.

So I sent in a photo of my Kindle. I love that I can do nothing with it but read, there's no temptation to check things like Facebook unlike on this phone... I can't do anything with it except read, and I love it for that reason. No temptation to do anything else.

I was together with my family for Christmas last time when I felt slowed down. I was away from work for several days; that was the perfect feeling of no rush.

I started pole fitness classes. There you have to stretch and warm up really well. Our teacher is really good. She always repeats with a slow deep voice like hypnosis: imagine all thoughts of the day go out the door, down the stairs... She describes actual places where thoughts go, so it's easy to believe they are not with you anymore.. This is a slow down moment that happens however only ones a week. It helps me to start on new challenges.

Another thing, no photo, but one is on its slow way to you: folding origami flowers. Doing sth physical with my hands, focusing on precision, following a strict set of steps.
Chapter 1

As life got faster and faster, the complexity of it increased. It started with consumption of the resources, then relationships and finally time. Designers and engineers kept working to create tools that will help people cope with this high pace life, making all the tasks less time consuming to allow the consumption of more... and more... and more. By 2015 people were already buried under the digital speed, by 2020 ubiquitous computing, ease of data access and productivity requirements due to the increased competition made the attention span so little, that anything that was “in” today was “out” tomorrow.

Usability and user friendliness became highly important to avoid all the friction by making the interactions smooth and seamless. Computers started reacting to your needs just merely by thought processing and new services popped up every day to bring you the world in the comfort of your house. The loss of friction had an unexpected effect, it was killing the opportunity of reflection and depth. Even though, it was a naturally occurring course, the industrialized system made good use of this.

Designers got better at producing even more user friendly tools, such as computers that react to you without you even stating what you need or services that bring you everything you need in the comfort of your home, interactions offered less and less friction which in turn left no chance for reflection. The smoothness of the tasks raised the
expected for humans to be more like machines. The increasing pace of a human life after the industrialization continued its acceleration where eventually it reached a point where anyone that didn’t reach to the pace of the machine was considered to be useless to the society.

The world did not become robotized at once, but human to human interactions (HHI) started decreasing drastically, since computers and smart devices did not lose time through those kind of interactions. Work/ life balance slowly disappeared as remote working, mobile technologies and brain implants became commonplace, leaving you no place to hide from the work. Even when for some wicked reason, you didn’t get any work related messages, you were lulled to a passive state due to the social cloud apps that came preinstalled with the implants.

HHI regulations put an end to face to face meetings and casual chatter, which in turn turned all the relationships into busiships (a business relationship, much like what we know as networking today) where you were free to buy and sell busis (the business friends) depending on their qualities work. It was far from being a currency, but if your busi was putting someone for sale, it meant a huge drop in their sociodigital credibility. Since face to face interactions diminished noticeably, the connection had to be made via the

Many of the activities that once was considered as daily practices such as going out for a walk, talking with a friend and even religious affairs started to get integrated into the work life. In fact, for a while the workspace was considered to be the sanctuary of modern life. Just like the ancient deities, the material gods asked for services and sacrifices, which resulted in the creation of Workship Lines in every office where workers sacrificed their times in assembly lines. The holy Book of Fast entitled many principles such as “You stop you die!”, “Don’t you want to be something, more than anything?” and “Nobody will like you unless you win the race”.

It was that, the workship lines that led the system to fail. Due to the dullness of the ritual, the workshippers started getting into a more meditative state of mind. This in turn caused the brain implants to malfunction, leaving silence instead of the non-ending hum of the social cloud. In the silence, people started finding themselves. Small revolts started here and there and everywhere. The food pill movement was the first, followed by many, but the story we will tell now is about a small (in fact they were only 2, Shane Huxley and Maureen Sade) order named “Slow New World”.

Chapter 2

The activities of the slow new world, started from where they were the most: the office. There were many offices in the town, but this particular office was a design office and it was called “the factory” due to the endless working hours of the employees. The “designers” were still able to work with only 1 day off in 3 months and they were preprogrammed in their brains to feel guilty and sinful when they took the time for reading a book. The factory was where all the smoothness was created. It worked like a clock and even the creativity was standardized, so that they could do more without thinking or going deeper...

Due to the policy “Report Inefficiency”, they were highly monitored so they all worked separately to bring a change to the office.

Shane Huxley was a guy in his sixties and remembered how it all started. He was one of the very happy kids that got his first computer but he never expected things to become this way. He grew up in a family with long dinners accompanied with chatters and laughter. But the more devices that were introduced, the less time they had for chatting. He remembered very clearly the day his mother bought a washing machine, both his mother and father seemed to be very pleased by this amazing. Until that day, he and his father washed the dishes while his mother prepared the “after dinner tea”, but the ads clearly promised that they will “save time that you can later on use to spend quality time with your family”. After that day, there were always dishes to wash, kitchen to clean and that promise of “saved time” never came. The night before he left to join the work force, he was stuffing “responsibly produced chicken wings that are not really chickens nor wings” to his mouth, alone but connected in his room,
typing and texting while watching the latest episode of some well-known series. He texted his parents goodbye as he left the door, never to come back again. Not until that day while he was workshipping in the booknomore line where they disassembled old books to create fast reading pieces out of them, he was reminded of a book that his father read him slowly, savoring each word and taking his time every night, spending time to make the book just more interesting. His understanding of “spent time” shifted that day and he craved for deeper interactions that revealed slowly.

(Principle of choice: Reveal. Creating interactions that stretch the time or reveal instances from everyday life. Thinking about the experience rather than efficiency. Creation: E-brynth - a slower interaction with the messages you receive in your smart devices. E-brynth is a palm sized creation that is connected to your device via an induction magnet. When you receive a message, it requires you to move a ball to the center of a labyrinth. The same applies when you want to send a message. Main motivation: Bringing back the care and consciousness to the digital HHI situations, since physical HHI is somewhat impossible to achieve in a heartbeat)

Maurelle Sade was born to this era. Her time was spent in the playground centers where kids were collected together in big buildings and taught how to “play efficiently”. In these centers not only they learnt how to build busiships, the children were also protected from the dangers of the outside world. They were always given a task which was evaluated by the time they complete it, so they learnt fast that it was never about the value, but the time. Maureen was a curious kid with pouring creativity but long hours of play buried these traits down deep inside. She grew up to be a gentle, silent member of the society and forgot what it was like to create. Not until one day she was workshipping in the thought extraction line (because talking was no longer efficient enough) emerged deeply into the assembly of suction poles, which were made by the combination of birch extract (trees have amazing thought extraction properties, one may notice how their thoughts become clear and light when they sit by a tree for some time) and nano carbon tubes. While she was separating the birch bark into tiny bits, her motions slowed down and she got a splinter. Instinctively she took her hand to her mouth and at that moment she could smell, taste and feel the tree. From that moment on, a fire to bring nature closer kindled in her, never to fade away.

(Principle of choice: Reflect. Reconnecting us to the environment around us and become aware of the moment. Creation: Naturalize – a carpet that reflects the outside world. Walking on the carpet gives you audio and sensory feedback on the season and weather outside. When you step on the carpet, it feels like walking on dry leaves or snow. Main motivation: The phrase “walk like your feet is kissing the ground”. Since going outside during work hours is strictly forbidden, she aims to remind people of the rhythms of the outside world.)

The SNW order worked undercover in the office to deliver their message and hack people’s workspaces. They also have a little book called “thoughts on slow” which they wrote at the back of the electronic packaging, using a poorly made carbon structure that acts as a pen (since the use of physical pen and paper has long forgotten, with the hands only familiar to typing or even just voice recognition).

Chapter 3

The activities of SNW has unfortunately been found out by the work force and the founders were exiled. Their creations were somehow saved by some of the followers but never to be used again. Their book “thoughts on slow” has been an inspiration to many and even though the order was terminated the ripple effect of their ideas and principles continued long after they were gone.

-The End-
Appendix 3 - Areas of interest during research

- Can we create a "slow" stamp and use it to redefine objects of daily life into reflection opportunities?
- What if we had "time knobs" or if we could make time more visible? How would that change the way we behaved?
- HMW communicate to each other about our paces? What if we could combine our powers to create "just the right" pace?
- HMW incorporate technology into the slower way of life? Does it always have to be fast?
- HMW transform the spaces in daily life into zones of reflection? HMW create smooth gear changes?
- What if "fast" was like dirty and we could wash it off? Where, when and how often would people "take a shower"?
- What if we could combine our powers to create "just the right" pace?
Slow is about doing something not because you have to but because you want to

Careful, elaborative, meticulous, strong, aware

Lazyness, incapability, getting old, shyness

"Slow" has a lot of meanings but inside them all it has some main characteristics.

"Slowing down" is considered mostly to be "in time" and not "in space".

The rules of social time differs a lot from person to person and also in context. The rules of social time differs a lot from person to person and also in context.

I lost my mom in 2007 and I still wish I had spent more time with her. But I don't think about this and make this connection in daily life. Most of the time you don't even realize that your tempo got faster, it just happens!

People do have regrets about time but there is no action taken since the connection is not visible. It is easy to get sucked in to the time and be ruled by the clock.

If you share a space with someone, most of the time you need to share the pace too. How can I keep my own pace when others are constantly distracting me?

My pace is perfect when I'm enjoying what I'm doing. When it is me that is running late, I can tell the person waiting for me that I will be late. But trying to get someone else to do it faster is difficult. It is not like I can do it for them!

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I used to smoke so I had the chance to get up once in a while. Now that I quit, I don’t take any breaks.

There are many social protocols that slow us down, such as queues and bus stops. But we don’t reflect on that.

It used to be that once you went through security in the airports you simply couldn’t be connected, which meant time to relax and read a book. And I loved the contrast between rushing to the airport and slowing down.

Unnoticed routines create opportunities for people to slow down and reflect.

There are many contrasts and many different gears in daily life.

When I cross the bridge on the way to school, I feel I am getting into the school mode. When I cross the bridge on the way to work, I feel I am getting into the work mode. I try to keep my inbox empty but as soon as I try to do that once in a while, it irritates me. I am getting used to that. I can commute easier connected to anyone I like. I can commute easier connected to anyone I like.

Technology makes my life easier and faster. I can commute easier. Connected to anyone I like.

I create physical spaces in the calendar so that I can have meetings with myself. “Slow zones” are created through contextualizing and ritualizing.

Physical limitations act as indicators to adjust your pace. We both gain and lose time with the technology. We both gain and lose time with the technology.

I create physical spaces in the calendar so that I can have “meetings with myself.” Slow zones are created through contextualizing and ritualizing.

When I first got the dishwasher, I always appreciated the time it saved me. With time I got used to it. I appreciate the time it saved me. With time I got used to it.

Technology will not disappear soon and we need ways to adjust our alternatrive. Technology will not disappear soon and we need ways to adjust our alternatrive.

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Appendix 4 - Storyboard

The website had a kit called sPACE that offered order and slowing down in work environment. I decided to give it a shot and ordered the kit. Today the kit arrived and I had a quick look, yet haven’t had time to do a set-up.

I feel like I am losing track of what I do, so many things to do at once! Today I even missed the lunch break since I have so much to finish before the meeting tomorrow. Thankfully Max brought what he could carry from lunch, an apple and a sandwich. I ate them in front of my computer. Even though I spend hours in front of it, I still don’t feel like I am working fully. Max told me to check out www.slowground.com, said I might find it interesting.

I am overwhelmed. I do not know if I should respond to the mails, finish the last project sketches or arrange the next meeting. I have been jumping from one task to the other and it mostly ends up with me checking the Facebook. This is not a way to work!

It has been a while since I set up the system. Today I had a busy day and it doesn’t seem like this was the last. The PaceMaker started twitching more and more as the emails kept coming. The black indicator rolled up to almost half the way. From what it says, I know that is the future prediction and it seems like it will be a busy week!

Buggy had a seizure! All the days and tasks started flying around and I did not know what to do! I tried to ignore it and keep on working so he collapsed entirely and shut off the screen. I got frustrated and tried to push my way through. Didn’t end well. It took almost 2 hours until the screen came back. I checked the booklet that came with the package, though it helped me slow down a bit, I am still pissed.

I set up the system today and Buggy is already a great help! Helps me focus and organizes my whole day. Even though I did not take any breaks, at least I did not miss the lunch! I put up the picture frame as well, though it just occasionally twitches but does not tell me much.
As I was putting down Buggy to get back to work, a movement caught my eye. Maybe for the first time, I watched the current state indicator move counterclockwise. Even the predictions seemed to be fluctuating. Strangely, I felt appreciated.

Working hard now to reach the deadline. Not easy times and it is obvious from the twitching of the PaceMaker. Whenever it twitches more, I learned to take a deep breath and it predicts a possible downtime in the upcoming days. It fills my heart with warmth.

Buggy had another seizure today. This time I decided to try a different method and hold it in my hands to calm it down. It didn’t happen at once but it came back to world faster than the last time. Maybe we are striking a balance here.

It has been 6 months since I got the system and that damn Buggy kept crashing for the first few months and stole my time, or at least I thought so! Now, I don’t allow it to take time for me, I take my own space!

You have read an intercept of Peter’s diary to get some insight on how he feels as he uses sPACE.

Name: Peter Salkin
Age: 37
Occupation: Design engineer in aerospace industry, working for 6 years
Hobbies: Cooking, doodling characters on any surface he can find, playing with his cat