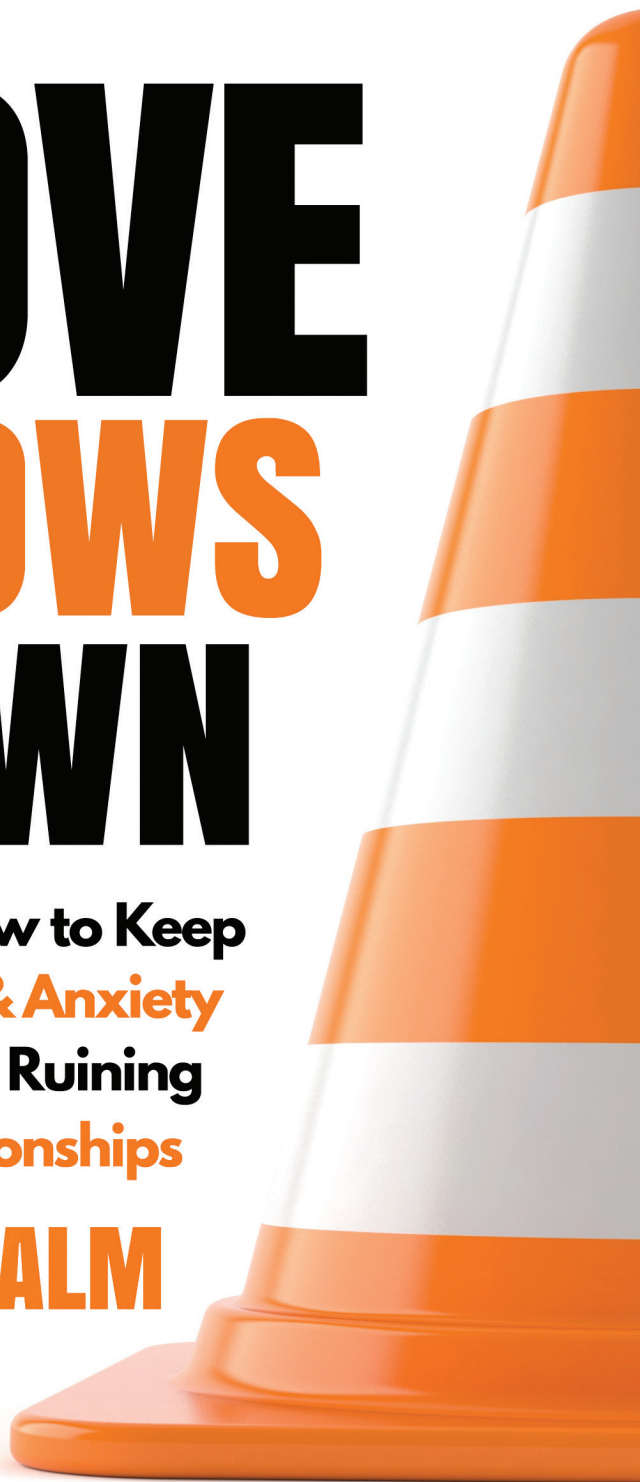


# LOVE SLOWS DOWN

How to Keep  
**Anger & Anxiety**  
from Ruining  
Life's Relationships

**JOËL MALM**



ANOTHER INSPIRING TITLE FROM



**SALEM**BOOKS  
an imprint of Regnery Publishing

## **Praise for *Love Slows Down***

“It’s easy to confuse a lot of activity with a purposeful life. Sometimes we get so busy doing good things that we don’t have room for the best thing—loving others with focused intention. In *Love Slows Down*, my friend Joël leads us on a great adventure—the journey of learning how to overcome fear and anger and hurt so you’re free to slow down and truly live love.”

**Bob Goff**

**Founder of Love Does**

**Author of *New York Times* bestsellers *Love Does* and *Everybody Always***

**Honorable Consul of Uganda**

“I’ve been on some amazing adventures with Joël—hiking to Machu Picchu, rafting the Grand Canyon—and I’ve seen his passion for helping people live in the freedom of their identity in Christ. This book is about the greatest adventure of all: walking in God’s love that sets us free from fear and anger. It’s filled with personal stories of adventure and triumph that will challenge and inspire you to live with courage and confidence.”

**Mark Batterson**

**Pastor of National Community Church, Washington, DC**

**and *New York Times* bestselling author**

“Anger is often a result of disappointment. When things don’t turn out the way we expect them to, it’s easy to become angry and succumb to fear. In *Love Slows Down*, my friend Joël Malm reminds us all that God’s love calms our fears and frees our heart to trust Him—especially when life doesn’t make sense.”

**John Bevere**

**Bestselling author and minister**  
**Messenger International**

“Every day at The Dream Center I see the miraculous power of what God’s love can do. Love can drive out cycles of addiction and anxiety and anger. In *Love Slows Down*, my friend Joël shares lots of life-changing stories and principles that can help you unleash the power of God’s love in all your most important relationships.”

**Matthew Barnett**  
**Pastor and Co-Founder of The Dream Center**

“Joël Malm is one of the most adventurous and authentic people on the planet. In his powerful new book, *Love Slows Down*, he invites readers on a Kilimanjaro-sized adventure of living life to the fullest by letting go of anger and baggage and grabbing hold of faith. We believe this book could instantly and positively impact your faith, your family, your career, and every other part of your life.”

**Dave and Ashley Willis**  
**Hosts of *The Naked Marriage Podcast* and**  
**Bestselling authors of *The Naked Marriage***

“Anger is like a bright flare shooting into the night. It’s meant to make us stop and take notice. Too often, we blaze by flashes of anger. Yet ignoring anger never makes it go away. Joël Malm challenges us to take a close look at the source of our anger—the underlying disappointments and hurts—that we may find the healing and wholeness our souls crave. If you’ve ever wrestled with anger, this book is for you.”

**Margaret Feinberg,**  
**Author of *Taste and See* and**  
**Host of *The Joycast***

“Joël not only leads adventure trips around the world, he’s an expert guide for the interior life. In this age of rush and hurry, *Love Slows Down* is a needed invitation to stop and examine your life. What makes you tick? What makes you ticked off? Your life is a journey. This book will help you travel lighter, carrying what’s most important to you and ditching everything else.”

**Arlene Pellicane**

**Speaker and author of *Parents Rising***

“When we began our ministry of books and speaking on the topic of anger, one of our goals was to destigmatize the issue. Joël Malm does this beautifully in *Love Slows Down*. We’re convinced that reading this important book will bring freedom from guilt and the permission to work through your anger issues by loving others—but first by receiving the love of God, for *you* despite your anger. Joël’s writing feels like a conversation with a trusted friend who knows your skeletons and is committed to both helping you and encouraging you. A must read!”

**Amber and Guy Lia**

**Coauthors of *Marriage Triggers***

**Amber is coauthor of parenting bestsellers *Triggers* and *Parenting Scripts***

# Love Slows Down

How to Keep Anger and Anxiety from Ruining Your Relationships

By Joël Malm

Advance Review Copy

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## **Part I**

### **Consult Your Anger**

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**Love Slows Down.  
Anger Speeds Up.**

*Love is patient ...  
it is not easily angered.*

—1 Corinthians 13

Love is patient.

Most of the time I am not.

Patient, that is.

Why should I be? We live in a world that pretty much gives me anything I want, when I want it. Food. Entertainment. Information. Knowledge.

But there are some things in life that just don't come quickly. In fact, oftentimes those things seem elusive and nearly impossible to get. I'm talking about the big things like love, joy, peace, contentment, fulfillment, and meaning. You want those things for yourself and your family. Love gives, and you're doing your best to give your kids everything you had (or didn't have) growing up. But at times it seems like the whole world is conspiring to block every goal you have.

We have moments when it seems like things are on track. The relationship seems to be improving. The kids are starting to behave. Things at work have calmed down. You paid all the bills on time this month and had a little left over for fun.

But then it happens.

Whatever it is. The disagreement with your spouse. The car accident. A relapse of the illness. The phone call from your child's school. The new project at work. The email from your ex. It throws things back into chaos and you feel anxious and frustrated and, well, angry.

Sometimes it just explodes out of nowhere and your response scares you.

Your kids trigger your anger so quickly that you wonder if there is something really, deeply dangerous lurking inside you.

The raging lunatic you turn into in traffic leaves you feeling guilty and exhausted.

Trying to talk to an actual human on the customer service line brings out the R-rated language you hope your kids never hear you say.

Off-handed comments on social media resonate in your head and you spend hours thinking about how you can lash out with your own mean responses.

You internalize all your anger about your job and end up feeling worn out all the time and dreading being at work.

Yes, call it frustration or irritation. It's OK to admit it—you feel angry at times.

What's worse, you know anger and anxiety are messing things up in your life.

You notice your kids haven't been quite as willing to talk to you about their struggles since you lost it the last time they confessed. You and your spouse tiptoe around each other at home.

And then there's the anxiety. It's keeping you awake at night. It ruins what should be really enjoyable moments because you're always worried about what could go wrong. You know it's stressing you, and those around you, out.

Anger and anxiety are serious problems and you know it. (By the way, anger and anxiety are directly connected; more on that shortly.)

It's OK to acknowledge that you're frustrated and anxious. It's OK to admit that your pace of life has become a problem. After all, that's why you picked up this book, right? People who don't

realize there's a problem don't read books that mention *slow* or *anger* in the title. They just charge ahead, ignore the problem, see it get worse, and then they have a meltdown.

And you know you don't want that.

Which is probably what drew you to this book. You see the writing on the wall. You know life is going way too fast. You know you need to slow down. You know you feel angry—a lot. The tension is building. And you know you need to do something about it.

Trust me, you aren't getting any judgment from this side of the page. I've struggled with anxiety and anger most of my life. It's caused lots of regrets and broken relationships. Part of the reason I went to get a master's degree in counseling was to help me sort through my own anger issues. In the process of learning how to help others, I realized that having people sit on a couch and share their fears and hurts with me wasn't my style. So I started leading outdoor adventures instead. A kind of outdoor therapy—hiking to Machu Picchu, climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, rafting the Grand Canyon. My friend Mark Batterson describes what happens on those adventures this way:

*Change of Pace + Change of Place = Change of Perspective*

When we slow down our busy pace and take some time away, we get a chance to process our lives differently. It brings some clarity and insight.

That's my goal with this book. I don't want to add more to your plate. You're already doing too much! I want to help shift your perspective. I want to help you slow down and see that there's an amazing life full of love and joy and peace out there, and you don't have time to operate at half-capacity because you're angry and worried. There's too much adventure in life for you to miss out on because you are afraid and offended. You've got people who look up to you. You've got something to give to this world and worry, frustration, and anger are holding you back.

But they don't have to.

Let me offer some good news. It's possible to live without constant fear and worry. It's possible to control your anger and actually use it for good. Anger is just a sign that something needs to be resolved inside us. Anger isn't bad or sinful. Whenever you feel anger, frustration, or anxiety about what is happening around you, it's always because of something happening inside you. So, to deal with anger, you have to learn to look just below the surface at what's going on inside.

Anger is a symptom of fear. Anger and fear (anxiety) are always connected—which is why anger speeds up. When we feel something is threatening us, we kick into a fight-or-flight response that causes our bodies and minds to react and do whatever it takes to confront, or run from, the fear.

But love drives out fear. Which means love is also the solution to your anger. I'll start explaining how shortly.

The question you probably want answered right from the start is this:

*Why am I so anxious and angry?*

Great question!

Here's the simple answer: It's because you have some hopes and dreams for you and your family, but all around you are threats to those hopes and dreams. Every hope or dream you have can be narrowed down to one or more of three things:

**Security:** You want you and your family to be physically and emotionally safe and provided for.

**Connection:** You want loving relationships, validation, and acceptance from those around you.

**Control:** You want to feel empowered; you want choices and freedom for you and your family.

We all want the same things.

But everywhere you turn there's something or someone standing in the way of getting those big three. Which is why you're keeping a break-neck pace, doing your best to make sure you and your family achieve those hopes and dreams. When people, situations, or challenges threaten you, it triggers a deep part of you and leads to angry responses.

Fortunately, anger and fear don't have to run your life. In fact, anger and fear can become your allies if you learn to use them correctly. They can shine a light on what's holding you back from the life you really want.

Read on, I'll explain ...

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