

How to Stop Time

I starting writing this on a long flight between countries in the Middle East. I hope you like it. - Micah

When I was 5 years old, I heard someone say that time goes by faster as you age.

This bothered and puzzled me. WHY does time go by faster? How can you stop it?

As

I grew older, I began noticing that this sad fact was true. Time WAS speeding up. I was young, but I could see my youth flashing before my eyes. If time was flying by like this NOW, what would it be like when I turn 70? Will decades be gone in the blink of an eye? Will my whole retirement seem like it lasts only months?

I think the sad answer is - yes. But I think I know WHY.

Time

slips by based on how much attention you pay to it. If you don't pay attention, it's gone. If you do pay attention, moments last forever.

When you're young, everything is new. Every experience you have is a new experience, something to be wondered at and discovered. When I was very young, time didn't seem to pass AT ALL, because every moment was significant. The fact that my birthday was a whole year away was unfathomable; I was still experiencing an everlasting stretch of joy, just licking the candles.

Licking the candles lingered as if time didn't exist. Licking the candles was new and unique. But as I got older, experiences started repeating themselves. I got used to a weekly routine. I got used to travel, going to the store, watching TV, eating. I got used to Summer and Winter. Eventually I got used to having birthday after birthday.

With familiarity comes lack of attention. And as less and less is significant, time goes by faster and faster.

Sometimes time still slows down. "Time flies when you're having fun" is actually a way of saying, "time drags when you're miserable". When you're miserable, every little detail of your misery pops out at you. When the bus ride is uncomfortable, every jolt of the tires is beaten into your mind, and so because you PAY ATTENTION, every moment is significant, and 30 minutes on the bus seems like hours.

But

for children, time always lingers. That's why children are magical. Everything is still worthy of attention, every Summer is still new.

And therein lies our path to salvation from the loss of time. Break the routine, destroy the familiarity of the moments.

If we stop paying attention because things become repetitive, we pay attention when things are unique. If you

take a trip you've never taken, the first few days of that trip will stretch on and on. So have an adventure, take different routes, learn new things, teach yourself skills, start new relationships with people. Stop repeating the same experiences over and over again.

Time is attention, and attention is about NEW. So create NEW.

But you can also slow time in the ordinary and the mundane, because there is always more there than you know. To see it, you have to live in the details.

Experience the texture of the carpet and the walls. Drink in the color of mud puddles and the complex design of the swirls of gravel in the street. Taste your food before swallowing it. When someone talks, listen at all the levels you can. Pay attention. Cherish the moment. Watch the details. Make this moment significant.

Experience the significance already there.

That...is how you stop time.