

The Time of My Life?

Time is so elusive and yet it's our master. Or, is it? Does it even exist? Well, on this planet it does, because we humans invented it. And, like all good inventions, it should serve us well, right? Well, maybe if we only put some time into thinking about it....

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I suppose there comes a time in everybody's life when one begins to see the sands actually running down.

Time is of the essence, you keep hearing. Time is all you've got, say others.

That is, of course, if you believe that time actually exists; which, according to **some sources**, may not be the case, in a cosmological sense. However, on this particular planet, we humans have constructed **a system for tracking change** and we call it Time.

Trouble is, it's continually running out on us....

Hence, it's bit of a downer to reach a certain point and realize that, despite my best intentions or, perhaps because of them, I'm no closer to finishing many of those things that I wanted to do before I cash in my chips.

Where have the days gone? Where have the hours flown?

I go through each day, making up my "to do" lists, developing my management plans, zeroing in on my objectives – and still, things just seem to slip by.

I read books about time management, "saving" seconds here and there – as though time is some kind of bank – but, something's missing, pilgrim, and it's not just my seconds.

Whatever the case, I've reached a point where I want to *know* where all those damned hours have gone.

So, forgetting about childhood, which was a complete waste of time anyway, I counted them up. This is what I found out: *I've only got five minutes left for me!*

Let me explain....

Taken over an average lifetime, there are many things that you just must do, like them or not. Think of this: we spend an average of eight hours – that's one third of your life – asleep. Sure, there are some who do with less. But, do you? Over a lifetime, sleeping accounts for 25.3 years of an average life of, say, 76 years for males (okay, girls, you get a few more).

Or, what about eating? At least three hours per day, day in, day out. Oh, yum ... I mean yuck: that's 12.7 years. Gone for good - or bad, as the case may be.

How much time do you spend in the bathroom and toilet? Especially if you take a book or magazine with you? Zap – in the loo for another 3.2 years. And what about house maintenance, inside and out? Figure on at least 4.8 years spent washing windows, the floors, doing the laundry, cutting the grass, dusting the furniture – you name it.

Hey, what are we up to? Holy Rumolly – 46 years, already.

So what else is there? Try this: at least 1.6 years doing necessary food shopping, and I'm not even including desserts; and all those pesky bills and government forms that you have to read – chalk up another 1.6 years. What about all those colds and flus and little sick days? At least 0.5 years (if not more, then much more for some, or ... *many?*).

Where are we now? Good grief – 49.7 years.

What have I left out? Oh, yeah – all that TV watching. Do you really want to know? Well, cop this: 6.3 years, at only two hours per day. So take *that*, you couch potatoes....

And what about visiting and talking with friends, neighbours and family (only when I have to, of course) and those two weeks of holidays (at least) each year? Well, that's another 3.2 and 2.9 years respectively.

Total so far: 62.1 years. Good grief again! So what more is there? Got any hobbies? And, of course, there's the great Australian pastime of doing absolutely *nothing* on weekends. Another 1.6 and a whopping 6.4 years for just chilling out....

Grand total? Shoot – 70.1 years.

So, there you are: all that you didn't want to know about how time is just frittered away.

You could argue about the necessity of a few of those items, I guess, but I watch TV barely two hours per day, some days not at all. And I suppose there'll be some who manage to interleave some things – you know, eating on the run or TV dinners. Hey, gotta cut corners somewhere, right?

But, those figures are conservative and based on my own personal habits every day, or near enough anyway. So, with 72 of my 76 statistical years allotment gone before I even start, I've only four years of truly productive life available to me *alone* – a bit less one-twelfth of my whole life, statistically speaking.

Which means that, for an average guy with an average life span of 76 years, there's not a lot of time to do some of the really important things that you might want to get done...

Like write that book, or restore that automobile, or walk around the world, or climb all the mountains over five thousand meters.

Ah-ha! The *really* clever ones will notice that there's not much time in there for real work. Maybe the couch potatoes are correct -- maybe we're not meant to work, after all?

And now, also, you know why management is always complaining that not enough work is ever done *anyway*. Did I really need to tell you that?

And, as for sex ... well, now you know just *why* it's called a quickie.

So, what does it all mean? Well, if my life were only one hour in duration, I'd have only five minutes to accomplish my life's goals -- that's if I had any. The rest of the damn time is taken up with all those so-called necessities.

So - now I live each hour as though it's my last because I've only got five minutes every hour to achieve greatness in life, and time is ticking away. I just have to make sure there's some life left in my time.

That is, if it exists in fact, not just in theory.

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