

Time

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Tips of the Day · 2 min read

What is time? Objectively it is a way of measuring the distance between events: morning to evening, the passing days and years, between dentist appointments, work and vacation. But this is not how we experience time. Sometimes time is so slow : at others we wonder where it's gone. So how do you feel about time? How do you experience the passage of time? And how does your relationship to time, make you use time? Do we want to dominate it? Be in control. Are we frustrated when we don't get the things done we ought to have got done in a certain time? Don't feel there's enough time to get all the things done that have to be done? Time as a perpetual rush. Crying out for more time! Or is time fulfilling only when we are spending time with others. Time on my own seems pointless, boring, unfulfilling. Or is time a bore unless there is something exciting going on. The greater the emotional intensity - the romance, the joy, the success - makes time worth living. Does time have to be useful? Always doing something. Doing nothing brings a hopelessness, even a despair. What's it all about if it's not about doing something, anything. Do I feel I have all the time in the world? If it doesn't get done today, tomorrow will do. Why force this whole liberation thing. Meditate, meditate, meditate!!! Crazy. Relax. We're not going anywhere. There's nothing to achieve. Progress! For heavens sake, lets just be happy with the way things are. Let me rest. Let me sleep. I once watched a clock second hand ticking round and round for two hours. I was pleasantly surprised that by the end of it, I felt calm and equanimous. But the time spent to that time was full of a feeling of 'wasting time'. Now if time is a measure between events, our task is a way of being with events in a basically equanimous way. Just as the ocean has a deep, steady flow and the surface is full of movement, so we need to find this deep steadiness and yet stay with the surface movement. So here by time we mean living, we mean life as lived. But it also suggests awareness. For without awareness we will be tossed hither and thither by the waves. Time as flux : time standing still. To be still in the flux, that's the discovery - and the attainment. Or to put it another way - 'go with the flow'. But then we must beware! As one wit pointed out - only dead fish go with the flow! (Christian mystics talk of *nunc stans* and *nunc fluens* - the still now and the flowing now.)

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