

Do we appreciate every second we have?

by Mark Pavilons

We all know that time is fleeting, and our life measured in years is but a brief experience.

Jim Croce once pondered whether he could save time in a bottle. Nice idea, but we're not that lucky. And quite ironic, since the song Time in a Bottle was released after he died in a plane crash in 1973.

If only Jim, and the rest of us, could find a way to make the days last forever.

Samantha Sotto once wrote that if we accept time for what it is how it flows and how we flow with it we wouldn't be constantly checking our watches.

Quite right, Sam.

One day recently, I left for work without my watch. As a watch-lover who owns dozens of timepieces, I thought I'd be lost and feel out of place.

Not so. While I glanced down at my naked wrist two or three times that day, I didn't feel the urge to constantly check the time. Time had no real relevance that day and I preferred to be somewhat lost, drifting in the moments that carried me, one after another. It was almost blissful.

I really can't explain it, but maybe, for a rare period of time, I was connected, in tune with something greater.

Maybe just slowing things down a bit can be delicious treats for our souls.

We humans measure time by the way our planet spins around and traverses around our sun through our solar system. And yet we've only realized hours, minutes and days for a few thousand years. What did our hominid ancestors do all day, without worrying about time?

Those who are fascinated by ancient cultures and the truly remarkable monuments they built, wonder how they did it. Well, one reason was they had nothing but time! They didn't have to be at work a certain time and had no concept of TGIF.

So they spent their time wisely thinking, doing, creating, building.

We've found out that cultures, some tens of thousands of years old, understood how the stars moved in the night sky. They figured out times of the day and growing seasons, just by being present.

Our ancient ancestors may never have celebrated birthdays, but you can bet they bid farewell to their kin in fine, ceremonial fashion.

They created some truly remarkable structures, temples and obelisks. Some still confound us to this day.

I love TV shows about ancient mysteries and the wonders they left behind. Maybe they created such things to toy with us, knowing that in thousands of years, their descendants would be scratching their heads. They had the last laugh, for we are still perplexed by many of mankind's creations.

Did they possess some super knowledge, or merely worked hard, night and day, to understand, build and believe? They have proven that without distractions, we as a species can do great things.

Alas, some of that has been lost over the centuries.

For us, time didn't exist before we were born. But it did, for some 14 billion years by the best guess. Yet, the late Stephen Hawking said time didn't exist prior to the Big Bang that created well, everything.

The mysteries of space and time have yet to be fully understood or discovered. We puny humans may very well be in store for some shockers in the years to come, as our reach extends into the cosmos.

Each one of us is given some great blessings ??irst the gift of life and then a certain amount of time to enjoy it.

A wise man I saw being interviewed online said there are only three important days in each of our lives ? the day we are born, today, and the day we die.

Today comes every day and that's when can fully enjoy ourselves, before it slips into the past and vanishes.

It seems there's never enough time and that's why we need to respect it, trust it, embrace it and not fritter it away.

There are some science fiction story lines that depict humans with a running clock on their arms, counting down the minutes until they cease to exist. ?They're only given a set amount, based on their station in life and society. And yes, they can beg, borrow and steal more.

But if our watches ran backwards, counting down our precious moments, perhaps we'd be much more mindful of our daily routines, actions and expressions of love.

Some days, like those marvellous warm lazy days of summer, pass slowly. People can also come and go so quickly, like those Dorothy encountered on her journey.

Our brains record everything, even though we can't access every memory. As time creeps up on us, our reflections become less crisp, more foggy. Some memories vanish forever. And yet, neuroscientists remind us our brains, like a supercomputer, can store around 2.5 petabytes of information. That's the hard drive storage equivalent to about 3 million hours of TV shows.

If only we would pluck out certain, special moments, and live them over and over. I?find myself shedding a tear from time to time, wishing I could find myself back on that beach with my wife, or holding my children for the first time.

Adults have been shortchanged when it comes to time. Heraclitus once observed that ?time is a game played beautifully by children.?

When we dream, we can live an entire cerebral lifetime in just a few minutes.

Oh, how I wish I could take my consciousness with me when my time here on earth is up.

?We are travelers on a cosmic journey, stardust, swirling and dancing in the eddies and whirlpools of infinity. Life is eternal. We have stopped for a moment to encounter each other, to meet, to love, to share. This is a precious moment. It is a little parenthesis in eternity. ? Paulo Coelho