

# The Passing of Time

Each week is a repetition of the week before. Does it seem like time just keeps happening and there is very little change from one week to the next? Even though each day is different, what has changed? So many of us get caught up in our day to day activities that we are unaware of the passing of time, and our lives become a repetition of the week before. Each week, we are working toward getting things done, so that we aren't overwhelmed with too much to do the following week. Some things really can't change from week to week. Things like being there for your family and friends, doing laundry, getting groceries, cleaning the house, taking care of the bills, the lawn, the driveway; these things are all dependent on you. These things have to be taken care of either by you, or the action you put into motion to get these things done. These things need to be taken care of in order to live comfortably. What about your job, is it boring and repetitious? You need money in order to live comfortably in today's world, but is your job a repetition from one week to the next, or are you working toward something?

There is nothing wrong with a little repetition in our lives. In fact, it can make things more comfortable because change is difficult, and without repetition everything would be new. Without some repetition in our lives we would soon feel overwhelmed. Do you remember the song that goes something like this- "If I only knew ten years ago that ten years from now would be today...." The implication here is that ten years have passed and can you say that your actions over the past ten years have gone to good use? What progress have you made in the past ten years of your life? Have your actions and efforts gone to good use? Are you closer to whatever it was that you were working towards?

Life is a wonderful experience. If we put ours to good use, we can accomplish our dreams. I know many people that are truly happy about where they are in life. They may have worked hard to get to where they are today, but they worked toward where they are today instead of waiting for their aspirations to come true. I also know people that never seem to have enough of whatever it takes to make ends meet. They wish they had a better house, a reliable form of transportation, warm clothes for the winter, a dental plan, etc. No matter what you do, no matter what your means are, you can always work toward something, just as a college student may also take on a part time job, even if the pay isn't so good. They know that this is just one of the many steps that will need to be taken in order to accomplish their long term goal, so that their aspirations can come true. The passing of time in this case is wisely used because it is put to good use.

In order to accomplish something a goal must be known. If there is no underlying purpose to the effort then how will you know when you're done? Here is another example; you might not be a golfer but I think this will make sense. A golfer goes to the driving range to practice golfing (a passing of time). This golfer wants to be able to play better (desire), but has a problem with accuracy or getting the ball to go where he wants it to go (uncertainty of how to work towards something). The ball seldom goes in the intended direction (a goal, target or end result). The golfer is frustrated because so much time has gone into wanting to be a better golfer (time management or passing of time) but he doesn't ever seem to get any better. This golfer places a ball on the ground, takes a club out of the bag, and hits the ball as hard as possible (action and

effort). The first ball goes to the left. The second ball goes off to the right. Each time the golfer does the exact same thing (passing of time), sets the ball down, takes a club, and hits the ball as hard as possible (repetition).

This happens over and over (repetition without reward). Then for some reason, the golfer hits a great shot (excels in something). The golfer turns to a bystander and says, "Wasn't that a great shot"? The reply comes back, "I don't know, what you were aiming for?" A goal must be known in order to know when it's been reached. Without a target or goal how will you know when you've finally done it, when all the work (practice and time) has paid off?

I look at everything that I do in much the same way. A chance to experience the fullness of the experience, a chance to do the best that I can do, at that time, in that place, in that moment. To be totally present, and give one hundred percent of my abilities to whatever I do. The big picture is no different than the little one. Why waste time and effort only doing as little as it takes to get a job done? What possible benefit could there be to doing less? Where's the pride? When you do anything, it's a reflection of you, and your character. What if everyone signed their name to whatever they did? Do you think the quality of their actions would be any different? A job well done is a job worth doing.

I want to clarify a point about doing things, and how you do them. According to yogic philosophy, the way to do whatever it is that you're doing should be without expectation, with non-attachment toward the fruit of the action. This makes sense when it comes to simple things like helping someone in need, making a donation or picking up someone else's litter, but how can you work toward a goal with non-attachment? First you need to understand the spiritual and religious implications that go with this statement. The statement was for a suggested lifestyle thousands of years ago when the only worthwhile aspiration was for the Atman (self) to find union with Brahman (the Absolute, the Supreme Being, the Creator). So, if you are to actively work toward finding or achieving this union (with the absolute) then all of your actions, and everything that you do, are geared toward obtaining this goal. Your actions serve a greater purpose.

Following these guidelines ensures that you are acting unselfishly, and that you're not seeking immediate personal gratification. Your actions are steps toward a distant goal. The gratification comes from living righteously, and knowing that all of your comings and goings will lead you toward your ultimate goal. It's possible to use that analogy within today's lifestyles. Dharma (the way), and karma (action that follows the dharma) are very similar. Your dharma is when you follow the way that was meant for you. We all have a special quality about us that is ours and ours alone. If we recognize our unique ability and follow it, that's dharma. Mother Theresa's dharma was to share her love unconditionally and help the world to be a better place. Her karma was that she lived a long and prosperous life. If she had acted differently she may have had a different life all together; it's impossible to know for sure. At the opposite end, a gangster or a big time drug dealer may think that their dharma is to be rich and powerful but their karma is usually bad (instead of helping the world, they selfishly take), and their lives are usually relatively unsatisfying and short.

So, look at whatever you do and how you do it, to make sure that ten years from now you don't wish that you had it to do all over again. Follow your dharma and you'll know the way. Let all of your life's experiences bring you closer to your goal. The passing of time is a perpetual progression towards your life's destiny when your actions are without expectation.

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