

# Time and Timelessness

by Leslie Temple-Thurston

Since we are so caught up within the notion of time, it is especially important at the moment to realize the possibility of balancing this out by spending periods in timelessness. Our lives are very overextended as we whirl and spin through time, sometimes experiencing endless turbulence and confusion. I encourage everyone to practice opening to timelessness. This is done in meditation. Meditation slows down breathing, the heart rate, metabolism, and thought. This slowing of the body and mind actually slows down time. Although we experience time as a linear perception, which we believe really exists, time is not real at all.

Time seems at the moment to be greatly speeded up. Time is linked to change. We are perceiving time to be an intense part of our lives because we perceive change happening so rapidly. Without the perception of change, we might not perceive time. For example, look at some of the changes that occur around us continuously. Night and day is one cycle which reminds us of the passage of time. So, too, are the changes of the moon. Larger cycles are the changes of the seasons. Our bodies are subject to constant change as we grow and age.

We know that time is happening because we see the changes taking place to ourselves and to the world around us. We see the landscape change and the faces of cities and of our neighborhoods change. People die and pass on. Children are born. Buildings are torn down. Lately, it seems as though even the seasons are not behaving in a regular, predictable way.

We perceive change and associate that change with the passage of time because we think in a relative way. We relate one thing to another. We relate one moment to the next moment, and then we compare the two moments. The relative mind compares in order to know something. We compare this moment with what we hope the next moment will be. So, we create a past and a future in our minds. Actually the past does not exist except as a memory. The future does not exist except as a hope, a desire or an image, a dream that we hold in our minds. We are very active perceivers of change, and we participate dramatically in the passage of time. Try to imagine how you would feel if all change stopped, frozen in time, if the sun did not move across the sky and winds did not blow. Would we perceive time then? Not in the way we do now.

If you understand how we create time, you can actually create timelessness for yourself. You can stop the world. You can stop time. It is not particularly difficult once you realize that you simply need to turn off the one who perceives the outside world of change. The inner perceiver will begin to perceive the state of timelessness and stillness which is present within us constantly. With practice, turning off the outer perceiver is an entrance into the vastness of eternal timelessness.

In the early stages of meditation practice, all you can hope to do is detach from the perceptions of the mind, not engaging them or making them real. Eventually with a little practice, by closing the eyes to meditate, you can stop the world and the perception of time.

Our seeing the passage of time has to do with perceiving through our senses. Our senses tell us that it is time to eat, that the food tastes a certain way, different from yesterday, that the

meal is over, and then we move on to another moment. Our perception through the senses is superficial. The rapid passage of time seems to be most prevalent at this surface level. It is only as we begin to perceive with the deeper soul consciousness that we see time differently, more slowed down.

I am sure you have noticed how easy it is to get swept away by the flow of time at the moment. Our lives become linear and tumultuous when there is so much change happening. It is essential to expand one's perceiver to become capable of simultaneously perceiving timelessness. We develop tunnel vision when we are caught up in time. We seem to careen down this tunnel at break neck speed without much peripheral awareness, never stopping to smell the roses at all. We are likely to become limited and narrow in our perceptions and ultimately extremely bored with a life lived this way. I suggest frequent stops to smell the roses. I mean this in the sense of deliberately creating timelessness, moments of deliberately practicing timelessness during the day, for example during meditations. Soon, you will find yourself living in timelessness as well as in time.

We are each quite capable of holding a simultaneous awareness of the eternal, present moment, even while tracking our lives of change and linear time. We simply have to learn to hold it. This is an all-encompassing state, being present with the passage of time and with the perceptions that create time, yet also constantly rooted in timelessness. When there is an awareness of being in timelessness moment by moment, time does not deceive us. Time can be a very cruel task master. It is necessary to master time rather than be mastered by it. So, when in meditation, become quiet, shut the eyes, block out the whole world of sensory perception, and go inward. Timelessness is found within yourself. We are perceivers of timelessness, just as much as we are perceivers of time.

The advantage of seeing timelessness is the presence of a profound balance which stays with us at all times. Being able to experience both sides of any polarity, in this case time and timelessness, enables us to live in a very balanced state. When you live in a balanced state, you are present; you are Presence. Everything has a fullness, expansiveness, and is all inclusive. Finding that balance is a key to riding these huge waves of change that are coming in continually now. We are learning to surf the waves and have a good time with the waves energy, rather than being dumped, tumbled and rolled. The more you learn to keep your balance, the more enjoyable this whole period of transformation will be. It is really an extraordinary time that we are living in. Each of us has the capacity within ourselves to live it to the full and extract the benefit from every experience.

©2010 Leslie Temple-Thurston, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA.

All rights reserved.

You may use or reproduce as long as the text is unaltered and appropriately credited.