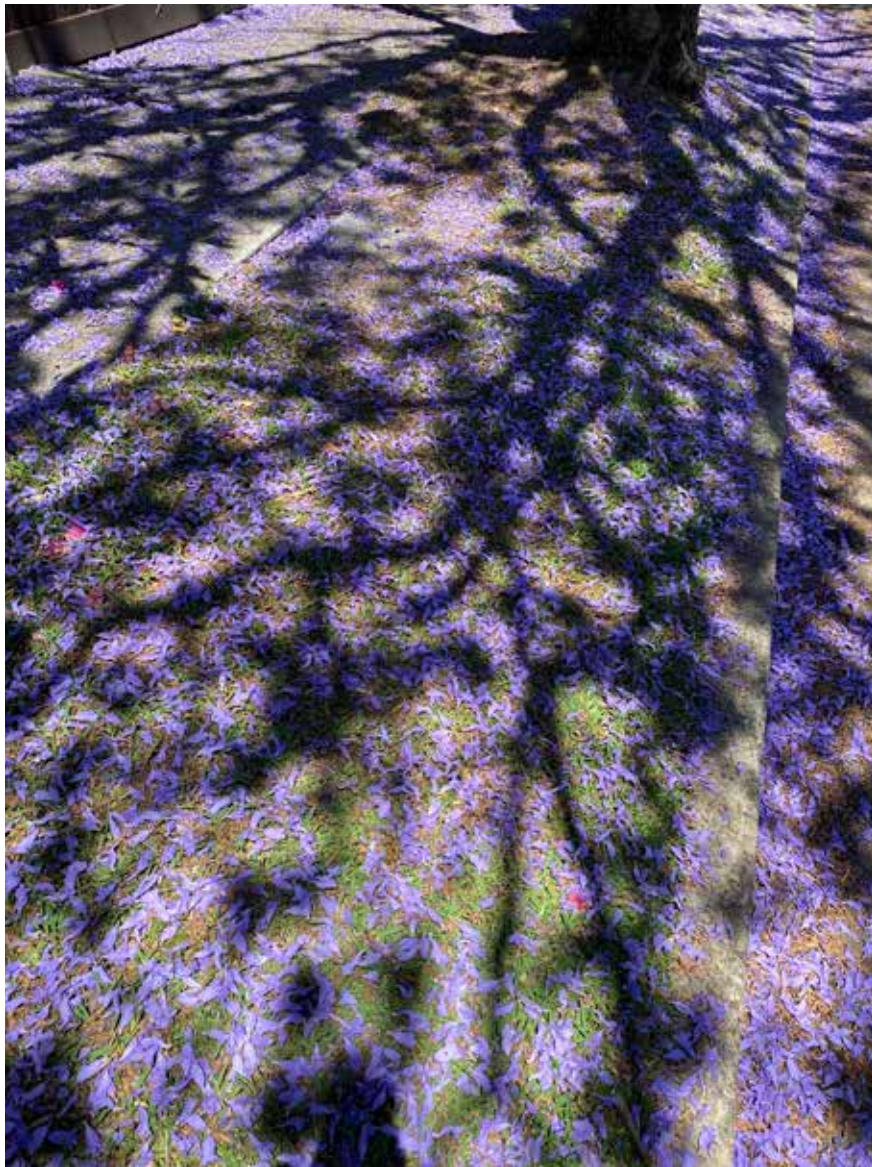


# MIND MOON CIRCLE



Journal of the Sydney Zen Centre | Summer 2024/25



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# This Moment

*Jillian Ball*

Green Tree Python: “What are you searching for, young Frog”.

Green Frog: “More time, Master Python, I can’t find the time to get everything done”.

Green Tree Python: “Where is time, young Frog, where does it truly exist?”

Green Frog looks around with big black puzzled eyes. “I don’t know, Master Python.”

Green Tree Python: “The moment, this moment, is all there is. Be fully awake, fully alive to the now, my friend. Just this...”

Green Frog bowed deeply.



Caption:

*above*, Green Tree Python,  
*below*, Green Tree Frog, Iron Range, North  
Queensland: Photos Jillian Ball



# Zen and Time

Maggie Gluek

**One of my prized** possessions is a Backward Clock. It hails from the Alice shop in Oxford, across the street from Christ Church College where Lewis Carroll made his home and lectured in mathematics. Beside each number is a character from that upside down world ... the Cheshire Cat, the Tweedles, the Mad Hatter and so forth. You *can* read it to know the hour. But you must indeed read it backwards. The 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, for example, lie on the left-hand side of the clock face. And the hands of the clock run (how else?) anti-clockwise. I prefer to behold it as a mind-boggler, to let it unscramble whatever sense I have of time.

An image of the White Rabbit lies appropriately at the centre of the clock. This individual is obsessed with time. We meet him at the very beginning of the story, with the famous Tenniel illustration of him looking at his pocket watch, as he exclaims “Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!”<sup>1</sup> He scurries off—always in a hurry—and Alice in pursuit is led down the rabbit hole. (That curious and intrepid girl!) I confess to significant White Rabbit tendencies, having been anxious for as



long as I can remember about being late and especially keeping people waiting. I'm almost always early, to anything, lacking the confidence to trust my judgment of distance or to rule out Acts of God that could happen along the way. It's generational. My mother decried tardiness and my daughter declares that she has inherited “the early gene.”

It seems ridiculous that we humans—well, some of us—live our lives as if time were a thing we were up against. Or a kind of stage, a context in which we enact our lives, being *in* time as opposed to *being*

*time itself.* Time does not exist as an object outside of the mind. It is an abstract idea, rendered substantive by language. And through language ideas of time may operate as metaphors to live by. It may be presented as something you possess. Some of these metaphors are generous. *You have all the time in the world.* Others render it as limited. *I am running out of time. How will I fit it all in,* that is, into a perceived period of time? Or as something to make use of. *I don't know what to do with my time.*

Constructing a time frame can be a practical methodology for getting things done. But when the time frame is a permanent mindset, with an imagined future encompassing what you or I want—want to experience, have, avoid, achieve, progress towards, attain—it engenders an endless sense of lack or insufficiency, regret, disappointment and despair. Thus, *body is lost, life is lost*<sup>2</sup>, to quote Wu-men. The desired enhancements of the self never arrive, or only temporarily. Everything is impermanent after all. I believe I'm talking about *dukkha*, *anicca* and *samsara*.

And I have to laugh at myself as a regular perpetrator of the grandiose and never-quite-accomplished To-Do list which regularly castigates me. Absurd!

Of course, there are seasons and cycles. Our planet circles the sun. Day dawns and night falls. There is heat, there is cold. Seeds are dormant, plants ripen. We are sustained and usefully informed by measures and systems based on the facts of the natural world. First-nations communities and other peoples who have long lived close to the earth understand

these rhythms. And take notions of time much less rigidly than folks who come from more mechanized and clock-regulated societies. Recently our extended family had a holiday in Fiji. The resort was modest, but still contrasted greatly with third world conditions outside, the villages where the resort staff lived. These people were unfailingly kind to us as well as self-possessed. And moved oh so wonderfully without rush. One woman said to me more than once and with a smile “Slow down ... you're on Fiji time.” I relaxed. Getting anywhere was recognised as beside the point.

The point? Where is there to get to but right where you are? When else can it be but now? No gap is perceived and time forgotten.

*Yun-men taught by saying, “I do not ask about before the 15th of the month. Come, give a phrase about after the 15th. He himself responded, “Every day is a good day.”*<sup>3</sup>

Yun-men points here to realisation. “The 15th of the month is the day of the full moon in the lunar calendar,” writes Aitken Roshi in his commentary on this profound koan. “Everything is full and complete. Nothing is missing, nothing is left over. ... After such a fulsome experience, how is it for you?”

He goes on, “Every day is like the breath. Each point in the sequence of counting breaths is boundless. The sequence of arising, washing up, eating, working, and so on, is transformed by our own transformation. This is the marvelously expanded point of inhalation, then of exhalation. ... The way out of the anguish

of sequence is in the frame of the movie—there in that frame, as that frame.” *One with circumstances, but free from bondage.*<sup>4</sup>

Zen teacher Joko Beck’s rewording of the third noble truth—that there is an end to suffering—resonates here: *Each moment, life as it is, the only teacher.*

The anguish of sequence, your personal narrative, comes with time as trajectory. Beginning to ending, birth to death. Does death exist if there is no sequence? Certainly not as something to fear.

By way of unserious but sincere consideration, let me conclude, reverting to non-sense as a helpful way to encounter the fathomless dimensions of space and time. In *Through the Looking Glass*, Alice finds that everything is inverted. Time runs backward. The White Queen explains that memory works both ways. “What sort of things do you remember best?” Alice ventures to ask. “Oh, things that happened the week after next,” the Queen replies in

a careless tone.” (Later? Can it be?) she begins to shout, “My finger’s bleeding. Oh, oh, oh, oh!” Alice: “Have you pricked your finger?” “I haven’t yet,” the Queen replies, “but I shall soon—oh, oh, oh!”<sup>5</sup>

Oh, oh, oh! When conventional logic and thinking are confounded, the mind is free not to know. That’s some kind of blessing to ground you in the reality of now.

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1. Lewis Carroll, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (New York: Random House, 1946), pp. 3-4.

2. Robert Aitken, *The Gateless Barrier* (San Francisco: North Point, 1990), p. 9.

3. Robert Aitken, “*The Blue Cliff Record, Case 6, Yun-men’s Good Day, Commentary in News from Kaimu* (Newsletter, 1999.)

4. Yamada Kōun, from Teisho on Case 6 Hekigan Roku, [sanbo-zen-international.org](http://sanbo-zen-international.org), p. 5

5. Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There* (New York: Random House, 1946), pp. 73-4.

# Time for Reflection - Being Time

*Subhana Bazarghi*

**We journey through the many** landscapes of time: seasonal time, deep time, geological time, kinship time, ancestral time, sesshin time, study and work time, holiday and family time. The activities of daily life seem to be broken up and portioned out into different parcels of time. If we can recognize a different kind of time, we can come to dwell within it.

I am currently enjoying a self-retreat, come holiday at Binalong Bay part of the Bay of Fires that borders the north east coast of Tassie. I'm in need of a self-retreat, a breathing space that offers time to reflect, walk, wander and wonder. It's timely to have some space before the year kicks in to another full round of retreats and dharma teacher trainings. I've fallen in love with this long ribbon of white beach that curves around the aqua clear waters of the bay, bookended with giant granite boulders with bright orange lichen growing on them like flames igniting the boulders. Rock time is ancient, the granite boulders are estimated to be 400 million years old.

I wake up to spectacular views of the bay from my bedroom window. Today starts gently, soft and pale, there is little delineation between the sea and the sky, they fold into one another, only a soft grey-blue line marks the horizon. It's just a roll out of bed and only 1 minute to have my

toes on the squeaky-clean sandy beach. Swimming each day in the glassy cold sea is revitalising and surprisingly shiveringly addictive. A group of teenage girls standing waist deep in the water near me said, 'It's an ice bath!' On the other side, young ones squeal with delight. Long white foaming horses rush at the beach, they have been lapping at these shores since time immemorial. Each breaking wave reminds me why immersion in nature matters.

My self-retreats daily rhythm is: - sit, followed by my white crane qigong practice on the beach then a mindful walk around the numerous coves of glowing rocks, write, eat, sleep, on repeat. I can feel my bones sinking into the landscape and relaxing.

There is time to reflect about life, my goals and priorities for this year, take more space to write and how to manage this precious gift of whatever time I have left. Time is useful for the conventions of daily living; we live by its drum-beat. I wake up at the early light of dawn, sit at 6.30am, then breakfast is at 7.30am. I estimate time get to work or head to the zendo through peak hour traffic. I'm pretty good with time management, I reckon we are all groomed from our early school days, then bridled to the 5-day working week for decades. We are creatures marked by time and time marks us, living by a schedule, bound

by clock time. It pins us down to the conventional, functional but limited.

We normally think of time as a linear movement from the past to the future. We live somewhere on that tape measured continuum that stretches from birth that is behind us to death in the future with disappearing horizons as we age. We take stock of our age and our identity is measured against the background of this space-time continuum. We have a colloquial expression that time is running out. Whenever I think about that, it jolts me awake, don't waste this precious life. Yet, time is a relative concept, an ingenious construct made up by mankind, incredibly useful for our collective functional living, but the universe does not know time.

Binalong Bay is a breathing space to break out of the strident march of time and listen to the endless roar of the ocean and gaze at its mesmerising shimmering power. Here, I attune to the wild clocks of nature, listen to my inner and outer rhythms. Watch the imprints of my footsteps on the sand that are washed away in the next wave. Mindfully I walk into the expanse of deep time embedded in the sand, sky, water and land. Each breath and footstep pulls me out of the linear and into the living experience of time.

The soft grey cloud cover disappears the hills into the mist. Over the full moon big waves reach the high tide mark and reduce the beach to a thin sandwich, then it drains away at low tide leaving a wide white sandy beach to sprawl out and lounge on. I set up my sandy zafu and gaze at the shimmering sea in wonder. I

am driftwood, giant sea kelp, 10,000 sea shells that once held life. Gulls swoop and squawk over the crashing surf. Windswept bent trees stand in their vibrant green coats against a pale blue sky. My early morning Qigong practice is a point where I am in synch with the flow of life. I'm in harmony with being-time-flowing-moving-breathing with the ebb and flow of the waves. I breathe in the feeling of oneness with the fluidity of the sea. I am living on the edge of beauty. What is not to love here?

Just around the corner from the pristine beach of Binalong Bay is a fragile ecosystem under threat. The coastal reserves and conservation areas are a critical place for protection of shorebirds and migratory birds – Pied oystercatcher, fairy terns. These birds breed between September and April and are dependent on the beach for feeding, nesting, hatching, and raising their chicks. Tasmania is home to more than 50% of the world's population of hooded plovers, pied oystercatchers and red-capped plovers. Sadly, the number of shorebirds and migratory birds is declining. Some migratory birds fly extraordinary distances to feed here. Short-tailed shearwater travels from North Japan. Eastern curlew and bar-tailed Godwit from Siberia to Australia's southern coastlines. Tracking and monitoring the bird's migration is critical to protecting their flight paths and their survival. The survival of these shorebirds and migratory birds is threatened by human development, loss of habitat and global warming. The reserves are also recreational areas, enjoyed by walkers, families, surfers, dog walkers, fishers and others who love the beach.



Time is running out for our dear feathered friends; their habitats are disappearing. It's the same story right along the coast. The National Parks and Wildlife juggle protection and recreation, the notice highlights that, "It is critical that we are all aware of the dependence these birds have on this shared habitat." The birds flight paths are written on the stories of the earth, the airways, the native grasses, wetlands and waterways. Their survival depends on our protection of these habitats and reserves. Conservation is to engage in reciprocity, it is a reminder that we form the future from being good caretakers.

As we were gathering for sesshin in early December at Kallara Conference Centre, in the Strathbogie Rangers, Victoria, I met up with Anne Therese a gestalt therapist and long-term Zen practitioner. She had been recently juggling different time zones to meet up with her supervisor and Zen teacher in Europe. She jumps on-line to connect with her sitting group in California that is also scattered around the world, as well as connecting with friends and clients in Australia. She jokingly said, that their sitting group sits at **standard infinite time**, short for SIT. Yes, sitting offers us the infinite.

When we enter into sesshin, we take off our watches and put aside clock time, step out of our daily regular routine and habits and listen instead to the bells and clappers as the signals for putting on our robes for sitting and walking. There are other rituals to mark the day, clappers for eating our meals, the Hanh to call us to the dojo. When we sit, we enter into the timelessness of the present moment. Now. The present

moment is like an elastic band, it is vast and wide and stretches to eternity.

Zen master Eihei Dogen in his masterwork Shôbôgenzô offers us a new vision of our sense of time. In his essay on Uji (Time-being) which is one of the more profound, complex philosophical essays he wrote where he explores the relationship between time and existence. Uji is about the inseparability of time and existence in the present moment. Time is all-inclusive, all-elusive and eternal. Dogen also teaches that time is luminous awakening and that all moments of being-time are dependent on each other. He invites us to examine time as it is lived and to see time as a flowing process rather than a commodity to be used up or used by. If you are prone to a philosophical bent, here are some extracts from Uji for contemplation.

An ancient Buddha said, for the time being stand on top of the highest peak,  
For the time being, proceed along the deepest ocean.

*At the time the mountains were  
climbed and the rivers crossed you were present.  
Time is not separate from you and as you are  
present, time does not go away.*

*Do not think that time merely flies away as the  
only function of time.*

*If time merely flies away, you would be separated  
from time.*

*The reason you do not fully understand the time-  
being is that you think of time as only passing.  
In essence all things of the world are linked with  
one another as moments.*

*Because all moments are the time-being, they are  
your time-being.*

Dogen's last line, 'all moments are the time-being, they are your time-being' resonates for me with Indigenous wisdom of the dreamtime. We live on Australia's ancient landscape, a vast labyrinthine library of deep time. Mountains and rivers and rocks, dessert plains tell the story of creation, the age of the earth. For indigenous people, time is an experience of kinship – a relational conversation with the trees, wind, rivers, rocks, creatures and great earth. I remember Aboriginal Elder Uncle Max Dulumunmun Harrison saying, *'You white fellas live by watch time. Black fella lives by the rhythm of earth time - the seasons for fishing, gathering tubes and the dream time.'* Earth based wisdom is the living legacy of the Aboriginal dreamtime.

***That which was, that which is and will be, every when.***

The Dreamtime, or Dreaming, is a core concept in Aboriginal identity and cultural consciousness that represents the idea of "everywhen". It's a time when ancestral spirits created the land, people and other life forms, and yet is alive here and now. The Dreamtime is a sacred concept, a continuum that includes the past, present and future. It's a holistic vision that connects people, land and spirits which are passed down through stories, art, ceremony and song. The term "everywhen" was coined by Australian anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner in his 1956 essay, 'The Dreaming'. Stanner said that, "One cannot 'locate' the Dreaming in time: it was, and is, everywhen".

Deep ecology and deep time are both concepts that consider the history of

the Earth and the relationship between humans and nature. Deep ecology is a social movement that promotes an Earth-centred view of the world, it is a way of thinking about geological forces, evolution and the cosmos. Deep time refers to the grand piano of time, the stars and galaxies that adorn the night sky which can span billions of years. Together they invite us into a different relationship where ecology, cosmology, culture and spirituality are again woven together.

In an unravelling world we must begin to reimagine our most foundational ways of being and what is more foundational than our consciousness, time, our relationships with one another and a shared habitat for all creatures? Sadly, most of us feel separated from the fabric of the cosmos, the web of life and an earth-based wisdom. The vast mystery of time has been distilled into a tool of control and functionality. What kind of time does not travel in a straight line but in a circle? Can we listen more deeply, move in tune with the Earth? Can we enter into the lived experience of being-time, walking, sitting, grieving and loving.

Living on the edge of this shimmering blue expanse at Binalong Bay, I have had time to prepare for the funeral of my dear friend, acclaimed author, wise dharma teacher, creative writing teacher Joyce Kornblatt. I cannot help remembering one of the most moving pieces of music that was played at my ex-husbands Brian Slapp's funeral. He loved Andrea Bocelli, the world-famous Italian tenor, who sings, 'Time to say good-bye'. The lyrics and Andrea's beautiful voice reduce me to tears

every time. A funeral, is a time-honoured sacred space, to grieve and celebrate the unique and precious life of loved ones and friends.

*Time to Say Good-bye, I'll go with you  
to countries I never  
saw and shared with you,  
now, yes, I shall experience them.  
I'll go with you  
on ships across seas  
which, I know,  
no, no, exist no longer;  
it's time to say goodbye.  
with you I shall experience them.*

Bay of Fires, Tasmania, Photo: Subhana



# All Moments are the Time-Being

Gillian Coote

**‘The reason you do not clearly**

*understand the time-being is that you think of time only as passing. In essence, all things in the entire world are linked with one another as moments. Because all moments are the time-being, they are your time-being.’ Dogen<sup>1</sup>*

Time can be measured in seconds, minutes, hours, weeks, months, semesters, years and, more poetically, by the full moons, the seasons, what trees are in flower, what animals and birds are breeding or migrating, and our birthdays. But although measuring time is useful, what is being measured, really?

Digging into this question might heal us from the epidemic of sickness in our society that arises from time-pressure, exhausting our adrenals and kicking in anxiety and depression. When Tony and I were on pilgrimage with Thich Nhat Hanh in India, I vividly recall him saying to our group when some were desperate to go sari-shopping in the local market, ‘Why be in such a hurry? We’re all heading for the same destination!’

Heading for the same destination, indeed, but how will we travel – what will we see and hear? What will we be deaf and blind to? How will we embody the Buddha’s Way? Each of us makes our Bodhisattva Vows. Each of us has the intention to slow down,

to practice compassion and loving kindness, to respond rather than to react.

Slowing down is a practice, especially in the time-poor universe most of us live in – hurry, hurry, hurry – so inured to the pressure of time that we’re unaware of the accelerator triggering adrenalin that surges through our bodies. We’re too intent on beating the clock, ticking off the to-do list, cutting it fine. What we forget is that under pressure of time, our responses become reactions, and that we may lash out in reaction – forgetting that actions – verbal or physical – which erupt from a place of greed, hatred or ignorance, add to the toxins in our society. We vow to abandon them, but let’s not forget what primes them – what conditions give rise to them.

Let’s notice the greed arising for experiences or things, knowing how an over-busy life engenders impatience and irritation, and vow to do less, to consume less; on the roads, let’s vow to be mindful of Thay’s words: ‘Why are you in such a hurry? We’re all heading for the same destination.’

Let’s vow to rest more, to pause, to breathe and to smile. To recognise when we’re overdosing on social media and watch less, listen less, read less. The media cycle will continue without us.

Let's vow to recognise when we feel impatient – even when we're doing zazen there may be moments when we think, 'I could be doing – whatever – instead of sitting here wasting time on a cushion.' Wasting time? Wasting time is impossible because you ARE time. All that we can waste is ourselves, our precious lives. Why would we do that? Each moment of our life is the only time we are actually alive. We have time because we are time.

Joanna Macy, the American Buddhist scholar and change-maker, and still teaching in her mid 90's, has created these five vows, or commitments, which may resonate with some of you as the New Year unfolds. They are essentially no other than the Bodhisattva Vows and Precepts, created for participants in her 'Active Hope' workshops.

Moving through another New Year, I vow to myself and each of you:

To commit myself daily to the healing of our world and the welfare of all beings.

- To live on Earth more lightly and less violently in the food, products and energy I consume.
- To draw strength and guidance from the living Earth, the ancestors, the future beings, and my brothers and sisters of all species.
- To support each other in our work for the world and to ask for help when I feel the need.
- To pursue a daily practice that clarifies my mind, strengthens my heart and supports me in observing these vows.

Our practice opens up the capacity to absorb whatever comes our way and hold it so that we don't endanger others. That's why we maintain our daily practice of zazen.

Dogen Zenji said, 'Don't think that time merely flies away. Don't see flying away as being the only function of time. If time merely flies away, you would be separated from time. The reason you do not clearly understand the time-being is that you think of time only as passing. In essence, all things in the entire world are linked with one another as moments. Because all moments are the time-being, they are your time-being.'

This moment!

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1. Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen, edited by Kazuaki Tanahashi, pub. North Point Press, 1985

*This article was previously published in MMC Newsletter (2018)*



# Finding Time

*Helen Sanderson*

**Time drags, time flies, time waits for**  
no man (or woman).

In the book, *The Soul, A history of the Human Mind*,<sup>1</sup> Paul Ham lists different calendars. There is the Common Era calendar which we know as BC and AD, the Buddhist Calendar which starts 1/1 542 BCE supposedly the date when the Buddha attained Parinirvana, the Byzantine, the Chinese, the French Republican calendar, the Gregorian/Christian, the Hebrew, the Hindu, and the Islamic Calendar, all different.

When did the world begin? When was it created? How long did it take? Seven days as the Genesis myth describes, and some people still subscribe to today, or billions of years ago?

The indigenous people of Australia's creation myth includes the rainbow serpent, moving across the earth to create the landforms in that time known as the Dreaming which is both past and present and becoming.

These issues of calendars and time from the beginning are hard for me to grasp. My brain can't manage it. It's like talking about money, not in the millions, not the billions but the trillions. Unfathomable. Actually, time any time is hard to grasp. As soon as I think I have a pocket of time to grasp and use, it departs, runs through

my fingers like sand. What happened to that minute, hour, day, week, year, life? Before I know it, I have entered the realms of the aged. I don't quite believe it but the body doesn't lie.

"You know", my body says to me, "you are getting on...take it easy! Have a rest in the afternoon, my dear. You are tired." Of course, I reject that voice, and growl at it and time's inexorable march.

Time poor, I have always felt time poor. Not enough time to achieve what I want to achieve whatever that is, and now not enough energy! I fear I am whingeing which is both boring and unattractive. Gimme more time, gimme more energy, gimme, gimme gimme.

However, a reprieve for you, dear reader.

Recently I had a discovery about time and memory. I was bushwalking down to Maitland Bay in Bouddi National Park with friends. It was years since I had last been there and I was happy I could still do it. It is a steep walk down to the bay and an even steeper walk back up to the car park. But on the way down, fairly close to the top there is a large rocky lookout, a good place to stop.

And there I was back with my father, who died in 1970, sitting on that rock. I remembered his heart was not good then

so that's as far as he went and waited for us to complete the walk. It was probably around 1968 as he died in 1970. And here I am in 2025 back in 1968, the receptacle of that time past but not lost.

I continued past that rock with my friends to Maitland Bay, noting the changes. Just before the beach, an absence. What happened to the loo that was there, the eco loo? I felt indignant at its absence. Happily the water course still wound in behind the beach, creating a marsh. I could hear frogs in the reeds. And once again I was down there with family. My mother, my husband, and others all gone, walking that beautiful windy wild beach.

This little reverie on time is transforming to a reflection on memory. My friends were staying with me at my little cottage at Hardys Bay. When they arrived I gave them a short history of that house and the changes that have occurred since my parents bought it in 1965. Firstly, it cost almost nothing..unbelievable in today's terms, and secondly there was no road there then, so we had to walk along a track up to the house.

The house has undergone various transformations. Importantly the toilets have changed. Initially we had a wonderful contraption called the Lily Hydrea Solvinator. What a creature that was. It was also known affectionately as the chocolate wheel. People celebrated it, wrote odes to it. We used to burn toilet paper in a bin next to it which served a purpose of keeping the mosquitoes away while we looked at the view.

Believe me I was happy when that went.

And we did an extension of about 1 metre which made the house more spacious, if you could call a small fibro two bedroomed house with a bathroom in the laundry spacious.

These and other improvements I described with pride to my friends. And I introduced my friends to the people whose pictures were on the walls.

So the past became present. Time not yet erased. The past a continuum living in me, for now.

I have now reached that time when at least one good friend is having trouble with memory. Time becoming a bother especially present time. The distant past is still largely available, but the present is like a sandy shore with waves flowing in and out erasing it. Time past, time present, ungraspable like the breath going in, going out.

I have a friend in California, USA. He is in gaol. Most of his life has been consumed by gaol yet he is not consumed. More than 30 years of gaol time. He rang me on Sunday to wish me a happy birthday. We talked for 15 precious minutes, singing happy birthday to each other. "What is important", he said, "is the present." Then he elaborated, "Connecting to each other while being present."

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1. Ham, Paul (2024) *The Soul*, Penguin 2024.

# Overblown Roses

*Glenys Jackson*

She held one up, twirling it in her hand  
as if to show me how the world began  
and ended in perfection. I was stunned.  
How could she make a rose so woebegone,  
couldn't silk stand stiff? And how could a child,  
otherwise convinced of her mother's taste,  
know what to think? It's overblown, she smiled,  
I love roses when they're past their peak.

'Overblown roses', the words rang in my head,  
making sense as I suddenly saw afresh  
the rose now, the rose ahead; where my mother's flesh  
and mine, going the same way, may still  
be seen as beautiful, if these words are said.

Mini Khalvati



Photo: *Glenys Jackson*

# Line in the Sand

*Suneeta Peres da Costa*

**The moon is very faint tonight, in its** final quarter, but it is still possible to see the tide, high, coming in, and ripples of black water as the waves break one by one on the shore. Inevitably, the line in the sand will disappear, whether now or tomorrow when the seagulls descend or the children race over in their eagerness to get started on their sandcastles. The man who has drawn it is himself now moving away, walking towards his old beach shack to prepare his evening meal – some mussels and bread, he thinks, and one of the bottles of stout his neighbours had given him in exchange for a gift of smoked fish some days ago. In one hand he holds a piece of driftwood he has collected which he may whittle into something later in the evening. When all the things of the day – his dinner plate and fork, his tackle and rod, his clothes which he has left in a heap on the bedroom floor – have been put away, he will climb the stairs to his small attic workbench and begin to sculpt the timber. Mostly the figures he makes are of naiads, sea nymphs, mermaids even; water creatures that nevertheless bear the same countenance, the same earthy features, of a woman, real and familiar, whom he knew long ago.

Although the calendars that hang in the house of the man who has drawn the line

in the sand are outdated, from bygone eras, and while the clocks tick without any particular urgency, he has a sense of time, of evolution. Lately, looking at his own hands as he works, he catches sight of the veins which are prominent and the tanned, wrinkled skin; he seems to perceive all the things which have passed through them: all the things they have held as well as those of which he has let go. At such moments, he is apt to recall the face of the woman whose features he has etched over and over and begun to wonder, were they to ever meet again, would she still recognise him? Blowing away the sawdust, he has studied the details and contours of his workmanship, only to find himself moved less by the likeness it describes than the light streaming through the open window. And abandoning his tools, his materials, he has stood up to contemplate the canopy of Northern stars and gazed at the decisive position of Cassiopeia.

The sky is again cloudless, the firmament vast and clear. It may therefore be the same tonight or it may be different – for all the reasons known to him and those he is destined to discover – so that when he lies down to sleep it may well be the line in the sand, rather than her face, which he encounters in his dreams.





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'Line in the Sand' appears in Suneeta Peres da Costa's debut poetry book, *The Prodigal*, out now from, and reprinted curtesy of, The Giramondo Publishing Company.

The poem was written on the unceded lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and the Dharawal- and Dhurug-speaking people.

Special thanks to Janet Selby for arranging to include it here and grateful acknowledgement to the editors of *LIMINAL Magazine* in which it first appeared.

You can read more about Suneeta's writing at: [suneetaperesdacosta.com](http://suneetaperesdacosta.com)

# Time after Time

*Brendon Stewart*

**For each of us some time ago,** we were the consequence of a time of conception. None of us asked for this to happen it just did and we each set off on an adventure, a mysterious adventure to be sure; an adventure that will run its course, sometimes we call it a life-time: ‘the eye appears and flow appears’; the I appears and flow appears.

Did the earth move, did time stand still, possibly, but however it was for mum and dad be grateful, rejoice in being the ancient turtle coming to the surface.

A Koan for the time being.

It hardly seems like yesterday to use a time-honoured cliché when the world waited anxiously for the Y2K prognostications to collapse the power grid, the internet and the world banking systems, leaving aeroplanes in holding patterns high in the sky and setting us all adrift into the end times.

But here we are, a quarter of the way through the 21st century, oh, doesn’t time fly.

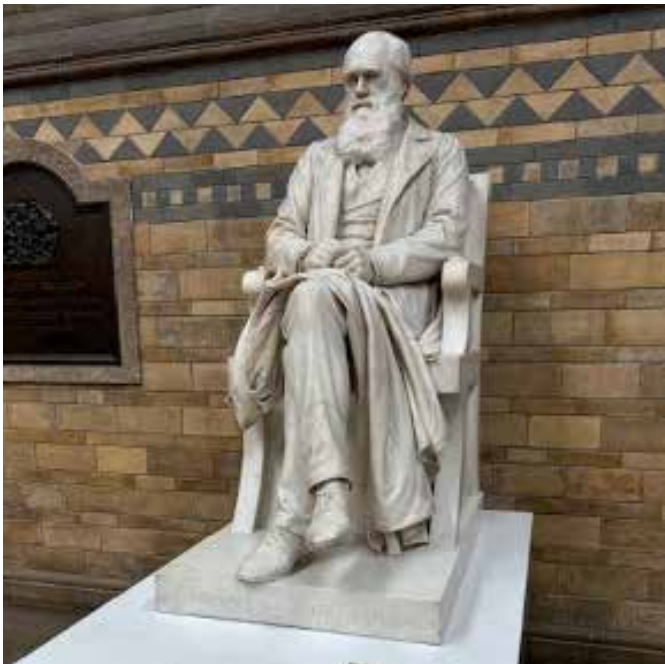
Dogen and time and yes, the mountains appear as do oceans, they are here now for those who see in time; they are not here for a dead person, time doesn’t exist for the dead; except possibly for some soul trying its luck somewhere in the seven realms of hell. But mostly I think the dead have no truck

with time. Time doesn’t exist for the dead; but it certainly is a play thing for the living as for example when we remember the dead or recite the Heart Sutra and try to imagine complete emptiness, or maybe what it’s like to be dead; no sensation, perception, mental reaction, consciousness; no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, no colour, sound, smell, taste, touch, object of thought; no seeing and so on to no thinking...

Time qualifies our living experience. The mountains and oceans remain even when we aren’t paying attention, and the morning star shines on when baby is crying at dawn, oceans rolls in and out lifting and ebbing moored boats and mountains catch clouds.

Einstein might be called on here or Stephen Hawkins and his almost indecipherable book on the theoretical cosmology of time explaining why the midday news bulletin didn’t theoretically happen. But I think the most helpful scientist is Charles Darwin who clarified the nature of existence and the rolling-on complexion of life. Time is the change agent, it’s indifferent to consequences, there’s been no right or wrong over evolutionary time, just changes.

And it’s helpful to remember that Nirvana is right here before our eyes, this very place is the lotus land; and to help even further the whole universe is moistened with nectar; it’s endlessly fertile.



“Nirvana is where you are, provided you don’t object to it.” (Alan Watts)

We have tried to get a handle on time by structuring it as history. So many books have been researched and written that purport to clearly outline the history of everything from the big bang all the way through time to the Large Hadron Collider, the most powerful accelerator in the world apparently. It spends its day smashing protons into each other producing even more massive particles, such as the Higgs boson and all that jazz I suppose, or the top quark.

I didn’t know any of that and what’s a top quark and yes even maybe, a bottom quark?

Shakyamuni, “the sage of the Shakya clan” was born of a woman and man, just like you and me. I dare say he cried at sunrise keeping his mother busy and distracted (missing that star), he played and got up to mischief. As he grew he became bamboozled by all that he saw and heard thereabouts eventually setting off seeking answers. (As you do). Shakyamuni spent

his life-time coming to understand and articulate the noble truths. It’s always important to remember that the Buddha had a life spent in time before the Bodhi Tree event.

Will the zillions of pictures gathered each moment on our mobile phones provide a more accurate data-set for the historians? The time seems to have come about whereby our every moment is worthy of recording, no child’s innocent smile at play or someone’s poor car parking skills go unnoticed. Among the many things psychologists talk to themselves about is that there seems to be an epidemic of loneliness pervading the whole universe. A time of loneliness while all about narcissism keeps many of us so up ourselves that we haven’t noticed much of our world is burning.



We are each in time with our own mountains and ocean, we are each in time with our own loneliness and with our own narcissism, we are also each in time with our own best nature and the best nature of our family and friends.

# The Miracle of the Present Moment

*William Verity*

**It was on the third day of my first** ever sesshin that the kensho came like unexpected spring rain.

Half-awake on the verandah at Kodoji, the first bird call pierced the dark before the dawn, shortly followed by a growing chorus welcoming the first glow lighting the horizon, marking the miracle of another day.

As the mind awakes from samadhi slumber, the voice utters the words that are both as obvious as the world appearing before me, and as true as the ocean depths beneath and within.

“Every moment is the present moment.”

Like every other realisation, the truth came with astonishment that it needed to be uttered at all. Of course. It was always thus and on one level I always knew it was always thus.

How could it be any other way?

“Every moment is the present moment.”

So simple, so profound, so life-changing.

The regrets of the past and the anxieties of the future can also only exist in the present moment. Now.

And while the remembrance of times past,

or the planning for time future, are both perfectly acceptable activities, they can only ever be an expression of the present moment.

And if that is the case ... then – as Thich Nhat Han reminds us – the attainment of happiness comes from having the courage to truly let go into the only reality of the present moment.

If you contemplate the image with this article, which is the representation of a sculpture in the White Rabbit Galley in Chippendale, you can see it in two ways.

In one way, the way of Zen is upward and every step is of equal substance (and there is nothing once you reach the top).

Or you can see the image out of time – as the eternal present moment – as a structure that just is. With no upward and no downward. No steps to be taken and nothing to be attained.

Make Mount Fuji take three steps.

Let's celebrate the miracle of the present moment. Just this.

Isn't that enough?

Caption image *left*: “*Though we practise Zen upwards, every step is of equal substance*”.





# The Dharma Gate of Time

*Peter “Joshu” Thompson*

**The Dharma Gate of Time** through to the Timeless field of Being is perhaps the most common gate and way that people first awaken to the imperishable body of Emptiness or The Dharmakaya Body. Whilst sitting or practising in any way, we suddenly realise that clock time as we know it, does not exist in the bigger REALITY, the Timeless REALITY. It is a product of thought and the human thinking mind. Cats, mice and dogs do not have wrist watches or doctor's appointments to remember to be on time for. They are always present in this total moment of NOW. Our thinking minds are always trying to take us out of now to past or future...And yet this moment now is the doorway through which we enter into the Timeless Eternal NOW !

My first deep opening to this timeless reality happened after I had been doing intensive practice in 1990 with Tange Harada Roshi in Japan (first half 1990), with Aitken Roshi in Koko-an, Honolulu, Hawaii (second half 1990) and Hogen san, back in Australia. I was crossing over Woodlark Street, Lismore (between Molesworth and Keen Streets) in 1991, in the middle of the day. I was midway across the road in the middle of traffic on both sides, when the reality came to me in a flash, that in fact nothing has ever happened. It immediately occurred to me that it was like a dream that all these events seemed to have happened (and

continue to happen) in time when in truth NOTHING has EVER happened! Events happen like drawing in water with a stick... the water immediately reforming after the instant patterns are made...

Everything is just a stream of time bound images appearing on the basic screen of the ever-present Timeless Reality. The background screen of our true nature is essentially unmoving timelessness...I remembered Hui Neng's first exclamation on his first deep awakening - *“From the first not a single thing is!”* This formless, timeless field of benefaction is the true REALITY - the only reality. I am now also reminded of the Third Patriarch's words from his great dharma poem, 'Faith in Mind', All changes in this empty world seem real because of ignorance.

This is all a confirmation of the Advaita Vedanta teaching that all of this world is in fact a dream...Our own awakened bard, William Shakespeare also often expresses beautifully this notion that life is a dream, and that time is an illusion...His character Puck ends *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with these words:

*If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this and all is mended-  
That you have but slumbered here  
Whilst these visions did appear...  
And this weak and idle theme...  
No more yielding than a dream...*

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, time seems greatly warped and elongated to the point of standing still, as lifetimes of events and relationship complexities all seem to impossibly unfold in only one brief night!

Also in the *Tempest*, Shakespeare, through Prospero, expresses the illusory nature of this time bound dream:

*Our revels now are ended.  
These our actors, as I foretold you,  
were all spirits,  
Are melted into air, into thin air  
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous  
palaces  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit shall dissolve-  
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
leave not a wrack behind  
We are such stuff As dreams are made of  
and our little life is rounded with a sleep.*

Unlike Mahayana Buddhism - Chan and Zen seeing the insubstantial nature of time and form, Advaita Vedanta tends to want to remain there in that realisation. They realise that form is emptiness, that time is timelessness. They tend to want to remain there in what they call the REAL or REALITY beyond the dream of this relative world of Samsara. This is the empty circle stage of the Eighth Ox-Herding picture.

In Zen we call this being stuck at picture number eight as “being stuck in Emptiness”. We say that Form is Emptiness - but Emptiness is also Form and aim to come down off the top of the mountain and return

with bliss, bestowing hands to the marketplace to act and function like a bodhisattva saving all beings, sharing the Dharma assets. Yes, time is an illusion, form is an illusion. Yes!

However now we return to Time and Form and work within those relative confines, to save all beings, now - never losing sight of the Timeless and Formless REALITY. Form is exactly emptiness ...Emptiness is exactly form ...

Many great contemporary teachers have seen the Dharma Gate of time as the most

important and easiest one to teach...eg. Zen Master, Hogen Daido Yamahata (who later began to teach the use of the single syllable word NOW instead of MU), J. Krishnamurti (‘The Future is NOW’) and



Eckhart Tolle (‘The Power Of NOW ‘) ...Our own multitudinous Buddhist teachers, Mahayana , Hinayana and Vajrayana have all stressed the *traditional* upaya (skilful means/technique) of Gotama Buddha, that is to focus on the vehicle of the breath because breath is always now...

This is a way to practise - to bring the mind always to this present moment - NOW. Through this gateway of each breath now, we are able to enter the Eternal NOW ...

# The Woman and the Heron

*Shauna Murray*

First it was a dark shape crossing the skylight. I am in bed with a mystery illness, RAT unidentifiable, my head heavy against the cotton pillow, hearing muffled footfalls from far away.

I am startled by the sizable shadow, as it coalesces into a form. The unmistakable sleek silhouette, long straight beak, tall knock-kneed stance. A bird, but no ordinary bird. The incongruity of it, my amazement. A white-faced heron leaving its quiet billabongs and pleasant lakes ... for the mess of inner city TV antennae and grimy rooftop concrete tiles? Even pigeons shun my roof.

I turn my head – and notice the other two. I wonder how long they watched, waiting for my head to turn. It's a comedic moment. Content in their TV aerial perches, contemplating the grey heaving skies, the darkening day. I watch with them a long time. They rarely move.

The next morning, luxuriating in bed, remembering with wonder. 7:30 am. A gentle tapping at my skylight. Here again! We seem to be old friends.

I know what to do. I pull out my yoga mat and zabuton. This morning, do as the heron.



# Manifest

*Greg Try*

There is a knowing absence at the centre of things.

She has better things to do than commune with me.

And yes, I transgressed; I was boorish, boring and (you said) stalkish.

Who was I kidding? Completely out of my depth.

She saw straight through me in an instant.

Her luminous, divine presence was denied to me.

You fill me with a holy dread.

I wish I could invoke your presence, to shake off my terminal demoralisation.

And then suddenly many years later - -

There you are. Right in front of me.

It takes a minute for it to register; for me to recognise you.

It's been such a long time, but here you are!

You manifest entirely as yourself.

It's quite miraculous and simply quite ordinary.

# Time: Zen, Dogen, Cosmogenesis

Caroline Josephs

**I have been stirred, excited,** compelled to share these snippets from my recent discoveries...that seem ultimately to concern all of us, the planet, the universe, the cosmos, the oceans, the fish, the animals, the natural environment, all culture within the book by Craig Foster, *Amphibious Soul*. I first discovered the reference to another great work of writing: *Cosmogenesis* by Brian Thomas Swimme which took me back to Dogen....I hope you all enjoy traversing this exploration!

## Living on the Rhythm of Living Nature –Zen Uji ---

*In Zen, time and space are lived as integrated space-time ... Dogen speaks of “being-time” (u-ji) to indicate their inseparability; being cannot be living nature. That is, “here and now” is one experience hence “not two”), and so should be designated as “here-now. (adapted from Wikipedia).*

The Japanese keyword **uji** has more meanings than any single English rendering can encompass. Nevertheless, translation equivalents include...*Existence/Time, Being-Time, Time-Being, Just for the Time Being, Just for a While, For the Whole of time is the Whole of Existence, Existence-Time, Existential moment....*

“Time-Being” carries a slightly different connotation — typical of Eihei Dogen

(lived 1200-1253). The *Shōbōgenzō* commences with a poem (four two-line stanzas) in which every line begins with **uji** (有時):

*“An old Buddha said:*

*For the time being, I stand astride the highest mountain peaks.*

*For the time being, I move on the deepest depths of the ocean floor.*

*For the time being, I’m three heads and eight arms [of an Asura fighting demon].*

*For the time being, I’m eight feet or sixteen feet [a Buddha-body -Dharmakaya- while seated or standing].*

*For the time being, I’m a staff or a whisk.*

*For the time being, I’m a pillar or a lantern.*

*For the time being, I’m Mr. Chang or Mr. Li [any Tom, Dick, or Harry].*

*For the time being, I’m the great earth and heavens above...”*

Zazen is a way to connect with the present moment. It is a way to be with time-being.

Katagiri bases his teaching on *Being Time*, a text by Eihei Dogen to show that **time is a creative, dynamic process that continuously produces the universe and everything in it**, and that to understand this is to discover a gateway to freedom from the dissatisfactions of everyday life. He guides us in contemplating impermanence, the present moment, and



the ungraspable nature of past and future. He discusses *time as part of our inner being*, made manifest through *constant change in ourselves and our surroundings*. And these ideas are by no means metaphysical abstractions--they can be directly perceived by any of us through meditation.

Dogen, *Moon in a Dewdrop*, ***Each moment is all being, is the entire world***. *Reflect now whether any being or any world is left out of the present moment*. p.77.

Do not think that time merely flies away. Do not see flying away as the only function of time. If time merely flies away, you would be separated from time. The reason you do not clearly understand the time-being is that you think of time only as passing. **In essence, all things in the entire world are linked with one another as moments**. Because all moments are the time-being, they are your *time-being*. (p.78. Dogen, 'Moon in a Dewdrop'.)

The time-being has the quality of ***flowing***. So-called today flows into tomorrow, today flows into yesterday, yesterday flows into today. And today flows into today, tomorrow flows into tomorrow...self and other -- are already time..) ***This being so, the morning star appears***, the Tathagata appears, the eye appears, and raising a flower appears. Each is time. (p.78. Dogen, 'Moon in a Dewdrop'.)

*Only story can give a sense of what could be called the dance, or the dynamism, or the spirit of things*. 'Cosmogenesis' p.211

And, another excerpt, on 'dance' from Arnold Haskell, *The Wonderful World of Dance*, Arnold Haskell, Doubleday NY,

1960. p.29.

*Dancing is deeply rooted in Hindu life and thought. Traditional belief says Siva set the **world in motion, with a dance**...Priests declared the **stars moved in a dance**.*

And now, on 'Cosmogenesis'-- by Brian Thomas Swimme.

First some others' commentaries on this startling book:

From a famous Zen writer, Joanna Macy -- author of *World as Lover, World as Self*:

In this book, without warning, a star-inspired mathematician summons us, squabbling bipeds of an overheating planet, to **see ourselves as the evolving universe itself**. The grandeur of that calling would seem ludicrously beyond our capacity were it not for the trust our guide elicits. Perhaps what moves us most is the wild generosity he helps us to see at work in the cosmos, and evident in the self-offering of the [super]nova that birthed our own solar system.

And, John Grim, Senior Lecturer, Yale University, and co-author of *Ecology and Religion*:

Cosmogenesis is a remarkable story threaded into the dynamic unfolding of our emerging universe. The weave here of **poetics, spirituality, and science** is exquisite. Swimme's narration will carry you along in his poignant journey toward universe-as-teacher. You will discover your **personal entry into**

## **a cosmos speaking through you.**

And now from “*Cosmogenesis*”, an Unveiling of the Expanding Universe, Counterpoint, Berkeley, California. –2022...from the book itself:

*Georges Lemaitre, the Belgian mathematical cosmologist, invented the theory envisioning the **cosmos expanding from a powerful explosion at the beginning of time.** His 1931 paper hypothesized that a “primeval atom” had erupted in the distant past and sent matter flying apart.* p.57.

More quotations:

This was not a universe of inert objects... Before I began to think, I regarded atoms as the rock-hard foundation of the universe...p.115

The origin of the universe was fourteen billion years ago, and **here, now.** Giving birth, even to my lips, even to my experience of my lips, giving birth instant by instant to the universe.

Modern science has discovered that everything in the universe is in movement, every thing is evolving. The stars. The galaxies. The planets. ...We live in a cosmogenesis, **a universe that is becoming**, a universe that establishes its order in each era and then **transcends that order to establish a new order.** p.216.

Industrial society sees the universe as a **collection of objects.** That view has frozen modern consciousness. But we find ourselves in the midst of the worst destruction of Earth’s life in sixty-five million years. We have brought about a

mass extinction of life. p.221.

Sun is generous as every star is generous. ***It transforms its mass into light.***

***Four million tons of the Sun are converted to light in each second.*** If in each second, the Sun is deluging us with light and if that light has powered every act of human love and generosity-- since the beginning of humanity, shouldn’t we be free enough to call this bestowal of light ‘generous’? p.227.

We are a living sentient planet. We we are carrying further the creativity that brought forth the stars and galaxies. ...We live in a time that offers a significance only matched by the ***birth of life itself four billion years ago.*** p.227.

The universe created humans. Our solar system, with its Sun and planets created humans. Our Earth, with its rocks and oceans and clouds, created humans. This creativity reveals the nature of the universe. A form of cosmological intelligence drew star dust together and laid down pathways to human intelligence. The words of the previous sentences sound as if they come from a dream, but they are **scientific fact.** Our of its dark depths, the Virgo supercluster of galaxies ***invented fish who*** over a hundred million years constructed the fundamental forms of the vertebrate brains.

Though such statements bewilder our modern minds, immersion into time-developmental experience allows us to take in the stunning truth. ***The process of the universe is primary; we ourselves are constructions of the universe’s process.***

When scientists discovered cosmic, biological, and cultural evolution, they demolished the notion that we are ontologically separate. We are not separate from the universe. The universe and Earth **constructed** us. (Thomas Berry speaking to Brian Swimme). p.226.

Brian Swimme continues to speak with Thomas Berry:

“Each decision we make is a universe decision because each decision is made possible by the long sequence of decisions that precedes it”, says Thomas Berry... .”The dynamic energy of early Earth was rushing to bring about the endless forms of life. Dynamism is primary; conscious life flows forth from it. The **discovery of cosmogenesis** forces this reversal upon our thinking” p.227.

And finally, from Roshi Robert Aitken, one of my most important Zen teachers, from 365 ZEN: Daily Readings, edited by Jean Smith, HarperSanFrancisco, 1999.:

All things reflect, interpenetrate, and indeed contain all other things. This is the organic nature of the universe, and is called mutual interdependence in classical Buddhism. Affinity and coincidence are its surface manifestations...**The other is no other than myself.** This is the foundation of the precepts and the inspiration for genuine human behavior. p.293.

I am so excited by my discovery of Brian Thomas Swimme’s great work!

We are venturing forth we Zennies -- into the current unknown Uni-verse and Cosmos!



Paint, Collage, Work in Process: *Goddess of the Dance - Siva, with Morningstar*  
Caroline Josephs, 2025

# Holiday Time

*Diana Levy*

How we moderns manage time is to denote and measure it by numbers. The date 9/1/2025 was seared into my brain as it meant the start of walking the Three Capes Track with daughter Ruby and Jill Steverson. It is a four-day walk, with three nights in huts. Numbers meant a lot. *Which day did we fly? What time could we check into our hotel? How much did our packs weigh? What is the lightest equipment in terms of kilos? When does the bus leave downtown for the drive to Port Arthur?* This walk was important to me, being a test of whether my aging body and especially my damaged medial collateral ligament could handle walking day after day. It is several years since I attempted to carry an overnight pack. Haiku time, (to coin a phrase) is on the other hand momentary – just this moment of being alive in nature, witnessing through every sense door. So here is an account of the walk, blending whitefella time that divides our days into measurable chunks, and haiku time.

## Day One

At Port Arthur we went to look at the experimental Separate Prison where convicts of this nineteenth century penitentiary were housed in isolated cells. They were given one hour a day to exercise alone in a tiny triangular yard.

*a heron surveys  
the old ruined prison  
from its peak*

It's only now I can see the contrast. We were about to walk for hours a day in the wide world, supported (rather than supervised) by Rangers of the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, for pleasure. Next we were whizzed around Port Arthur in a Pennicott's tour boat....wow!

*dolphins  
fixed for posterity  
in a phone*

The skipper took us into the Southern Ocean where dolphins and seals were feeding on a bait ball ( a circle of panicked fish who have been driven up to the surface). Gulls squawked ineffectually. A sated seal lay on the surface with one flipper raised like a sail. The boat finally dropped us off at Denman Cove, where we three had a swim in the cold

water and then set off for the first hut, Surveyors. Once the entire group of walkers had arrived a Host Ranger gave us a briefing, and she recited a bush ballad by heart...wow! But that night I privately had doubts about my ability to finish the walk because of the pain in my left foot.

## Day Two

*they dance to my sweat  
a cabaret  
of flies*

The distance to be covered this day was 11 kms. We took our time. Ruby and Jill botanised. The first real effort came with Arthur's Peak, which was rewarded by a view down to the entrance of the harbour, and Cape Raoul.

*sea eagle circles  
way below  
rising on thermals*

Oh, my feet! Going down the (beautifully crafted) stone steps I realised I had to make changes to my sock-and-shoe arrangement. For about the tenth time that morning I had to have a good rummage in my pack.

I rested my foot, still and quiet, while Jill and Ruby took a sidetrack to a lookout.

*"the coast is clear"  
wallaby bounds  
onto the track*

*lunch with flies  
who do not sample  
my cheese corn thin*

*beside the track  
enormous fungi -  
plod on*

That afternoon on arrival at Munro Hut, I simply crashed onto the bed and fell fast asleep. Later we had the luxury of a Kodoji-style hot shower. Was it this Ranger who told us of the adventures of early bushwalkers who forged a way through the difficult vegetation, being smacked by wind? And here we were, shelter, kitchens, board games and comfy beds

in the same 8-bed room with the same people every night.

### Day Three

The number of kms in this day was big: 19.

*droplets in the she-oaks  
cloud hangs  
soft song of the wind*

On this day we walked along the dolerite cliff edge out to Cape Pillar.



Painting, *Cape Pillar*, Janet Selby, 2022

*in the chasm crevice  
a tiny yellow flower –  
birth and death*

In zen we realise: *there's nothing to hold onto*. This was physicalised when climbing The Blade. I have a fear of heights. At its narrowest, this column of rock is about two metres wide. I asked a fellow walker, Ryan, to keep watch at my back, and Ruby to keep watch at the front as I stepped across the spine which fell away hundreds of metres on either side. *I did it!*

This day was utterly spectacular. At the end of that day I wrote: *the trees have sore feet/ the birds have sore feet/ that's why they sing*. And I noted that we had walked for seven and three-quarter hours.

### Day 4

Most people walk out to Cape Hauy and then into Fortescue Bay on this day. My foot would not hold out for 14 kms, so I opted to eschew this Cape and simply survive the walk to the end. The weather was beginning to close in. Cloud descended as we ascended Mount Fortescue through a section of gorgeous green rainforest - rocks mossed over, myrtles and ferns. Sap oozed from the old growth eucalypts.



*black fright mutual  
it slithers  
into grasses*

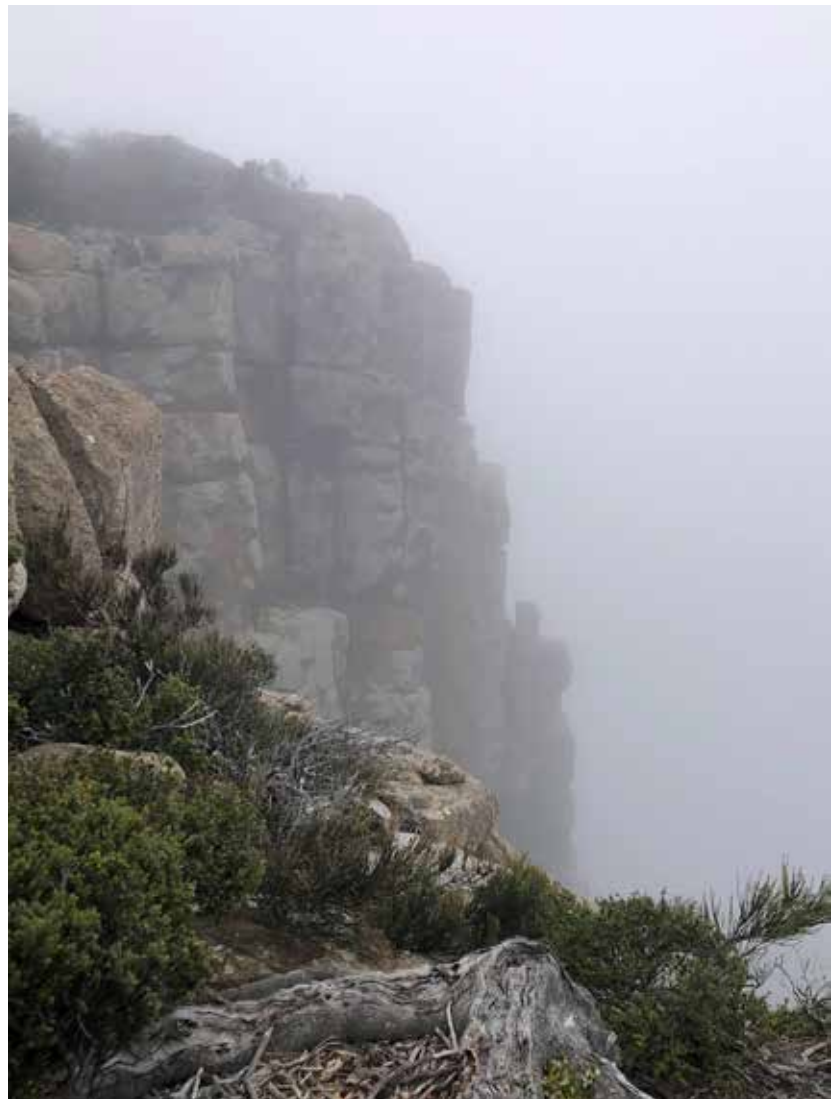
At the crossroads where a pile of packs of our fellow walkers lay, the heavens finally opened. Ruby covered her pack and walked off to the Cape, Jill was out there somewhere. They both arrived at the final shelter which was full of bushwalkers, gear everywhere, modesty gone as people changed out of their wet clothes. We had been so lucky, fine weather until the last half a day. But ten-year-old Gem who had been in our bed room exclaimed to her mother, *That was the worst experience of my life!!!*

Now a huge change of gears occurred, from the spaciousness of just this step to whitefella time. The bus. What time. Can we get our wet selves onto the earlier bus. What is the phone number. Where is Jill. Hurrah! We all made it onto the early bus!

Photo: *Jill Steverson, 2025*

*We saw these birds:*

Cormorant  
Sea eagle  
Crescent honeyeater  
Grey thrike-thrush  
Thornbill  
Wren  
White-faced heron  
Kelp gull  
New Holland honeyeater  
Yellow-tailed black cockatoo  
Bassian thrush





# Joo Time Brick Wall

*Lisa Myeong-Joo*

[illegible]

RAM DULAR  
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# Time: Lyrics to a Song

*Brian Gutkin*

Are you living or are you dying,  
Woe, oh, time.  
Falling or are you flying,  
Woe, oh, time.  
Never get your head around it,  
But it's really good when you've found it.  
Time, time!

You say you've got plenty tomorrows,  
Woe, oh, time.  
But what you're living today is borrowed,  
Woe, oh, time.  
Even though you never sense it,  
You're always right up against it.  
Time, time!

Forget all the science and theories,  
When your time's up it's pretty damn serious.  
Time's of the essence regarding our presence,  
It's the place where all of our fear is.

You're always trying to deny it,  
Woe, oh, time.  
'Till one day you're dying to buy it,  
Woe, oh, time.  
That they tell you it's only a construct  
Doesn't help you when you haven't enough.  
Time, time!

Though you don't feel it flying tonight,  
Woe, oh, time.  
It's travelling faster than light,  
Woe, oh, time.  
It feels like you're standing still,  
But look back and you're over the hill.  
Time, time!

But if you can see there's no me or mine,  
Then you will have no need for time.  
If you can see there's no me or mine,  
Then there will be no need for time

If you wish to hear a recording of this song, please contact Brian for an MP4 to download.  
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# The Naked Truth of Time

*Jillian Ball*

‘You can’t understand what it means to be alive on this earth  
until you understand what a moment is.’

*Ruth Ozeki, For the Time Being*

Roshi Ozeki’s playful, fictitious Zen nun Jiko, encourages us to flesh out the exquisite small particles of time in each moment through snapping our fingers. Jiko tells us that one day is made up of 6,400,099,980 moments.

According to Roshi Ozeki, Master Eihei Dogen, in the Shobogenzo, describes a day as consisting of 6,400,099,180 moments, with a moment, consisting of sixty-five instants.

I was re-reading Roshi Ozeki’s reflections on time while travelling around the Kimberley where time and place are simultaneously ancient, eternal, and profoundly present.

This was particularly so at Dimalurru National Park WA (Tunnel Creek), where we swam and walked through the 750m limestone tunnel formed by a tropical reef 350 million years ago. We swam and walked carefully, slowly, mindfully in the darkness with reverent silence. Our headtorches paused briefly on small freshwater crocs sleeping on the banks, ghost bats, fruit bats and bats of no-name soaring above and stalactite rock formations hanging delicately from the walls.

Each moment slowed with the mysterious unknown of each step. The beauty and fragility of life here were foremost in our mind as well as the sign at the tunnel entrance ‘DANGER: Beware of crocodiles!’ Then, totally unexpectedly, an arc of sunlight shone into the cathedral-like cavern through a small crack, lighting the azure particles of limestone as luminous water droplets fell into the darkness below, gently, gracefully, slowly, slowly... a moment of sixty-five instants.

All things  
appear  
and disappear  
in a moment  
as a moment.  
Is this the naked truth of time?



*Tunnel Creek, Western Australia.* Photo: Jillian Ball, 2024

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References:

Katagiri, Roshi. *Each Moment is the Universe*. Shambhala Publications, 2007.

Ozeki, Ruth. *Tale for the Time Being*. Cacongate, London, 2013. Appendix A.





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