

[!\[\]\(c8d96c8885d3000a912c2582004aed63_img.jpg\)Someone has caused time to speed up. I swear, it's going by faster today than it ever has before. Or it certainly seems that way.](http://commons.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Les_Paul.jpg)

Life. It plays out fast, like an arpeggio, a stratospheric Eric Johnson guitar riff when all you really want is one Albert King note bent a tone and a half that takes forever and ever and ever. You want it all to slow down to the level of a Howlin' Wolf slow Delta blues and instead, the pace of life starts to reflect a Steve Morse jam punctuated by triplets and double stops, embodying a my guitar wants to thrash you persona.

Life as music. Or music as life. The two have occupied parallel universes for me for many years.

And it is with thoughts of time and music and life in general - that I write today. If moments were notes, then we'd be playing a lullaby at birth, progressing to a Metallica song by the time we are 40. And it only gets faster as we go.

Maybe it's because our lives contain more quality than they used to, that we occupy our fleeting moments on the planet with events that bring joy, peace, and harmony to our world. Maybe it's because our lives contain more distractions than they used to, moments that are gone before you know it, only to end up as time you wish you had back. Maybe it's just because we get lost in our world, our job, our friends, our loved ones more than we used to with time just ticking away, nanosecond by nanosecond.

I wish I had that answer. I am sure it's a question, a conundrum, that has left the greatest thinkers pondering for eons.

We live to survive our paradoxes says Gord Downie of the Tragically Hip in Springtime in Vienna. Somehow, I think Gord is onto something here.

Living in the moment seems to be the challenge of our daily world. Simply being is a reminder of the noise in the system, of distractions that drain our lives from us, of menial tasks and activities that serve more as filler material than they do as value-added benefit.

Days of our birth provide us with another reminder of our age our mortality our wisdom our growth and our gradual (and sadly, eventual) demise. It's been said that death is what defines life. That's not meant to be a sad or morbid thought, nor one full of remorse or hindsight. But there does come a time in a man's life when he realizes that he might just be into the third quarter now and somehow he missed the first half and the halftime show (which, by the way, was the Rolling Stones singing Time Is On My Side. Thanks Mick and company). And now, there is a pause to realize that yes, the third quarter is here and wow, if there's going to be a rally, we can't leave it to the fourth quarter now, can we? And we certainly don't want to bank on overtime.

As we get older, we start to take note that more of our generation, more icons, more peers, begin to display their mortality. Case in point those same Rolling Stones. Last I looked, Mick Jagger was still running around a world stage when I last saw them in Austin in 2006, he was as mobile as he was in 1989 in Toronto. But the harsh reality is the Glimmer Twins are now both 66 years of age. Les Paul, one of the greatest guitar players of any era, passed away on August 13 at the age of 94. Funny how I can think back and remember my grandfather giving me his Les Paul records so that I could explore this great guitarist when I was in my teens, passing his collection (and memories) on to a budding musician. It didn't mean much at the time, until I had gained enough perspective to really comprehend what it all meant to the world of music.

I've always enjoyed guitar players like Les Paul and Eric Johnson and Stevie Ray Vaughan and countless others, those that now remind me that their riffing away is like time

passing me by, reminding me that life is on warp factor 7 and somehow when Kirk called down to Scottie he did actually have the necessary dilithium crystals, Captain.

Wow. Sometimes it feels like we hold on for dear life, just to enjoy our dear life.

With time, we (hopefully) gain perspective and insight ♦ two wonderful things lacking in the world of the young. With any luck, age brings out our wisdom. We learn to see past some of the pointless issues, remain passionate about the things that really matter, and keep a level head about all the rest. Well, maybe. Well, how about most days we do. And I can certainly attest that each day brings a better understanding of all the water that has passed under the bridge I call life. And not all of it is water that you need to keep swimming in.

The parallels between music and life are intriguing. Perhaps music lends rhythm to our world, our lives, our personal timelines as we know them. Perhaps life adds meaning to music, the synchronicity of a certain time and meaning personally imposed upon a lyric or a note. I know that I can hear a piece of music and put myself in a specific place, event, or emotion at the drop of a hat. Music is the melding of time and emotion and events and thoughts - unbeknownst to the songwriter.

As I celebrate another year on this planet, the ♦third stone from the sun♦ as Hendrix proclaimed, the thought crosses my mind (albeit briefly) that the days of my youth are past, that although I am more self-actualized than in my younger days, my reality is one of ♦ time passing time, time dragging me along, kicking and screaming, learning and loving as I go, hoping and working towards a better world, and wondering about what it all means to a man at age 44, let alone 66 or 94 or beyond. Wondering about a legacy. Pondering the past. Foreboding the future. Realizing that although I am far from old (in mind or body or spirit), I have ♦ aged. And then, taking a split second or two or three to just try to understand for a fleeting moment what it is all about, what all of this really means.

I♦ve always been one to believe that one note has the power to speak more than a dozen, if it was the right note at the right time. Robert Johnson♦s tonal inflections, Albert King♦s searing bent notes, so eloquent and so right. It♦s like the Zen of being, that special space that the blue notes sit in. And perhaps the most valued moment in time, the one note that we plan in the now ♦ is, as they say, the present - in more ways than one. It♦s a present that I graciously and gratefully accept today, embrace with all my being, and breath in with the essence of my world.

For in the present, the now, the one blue note bent up one full tone ♦ I stand and smile, a birthday but just a milepost on the highway of life, the autobahn of moments, and the crossroads at which to bend down on my knees and watch ♦the risin♦ sun goin♦ down♦.

♦

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