

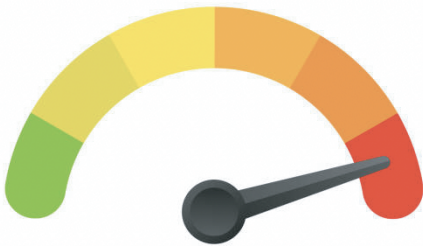


# How We Experience TIME

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# The Older We Get, the Faster it Moves

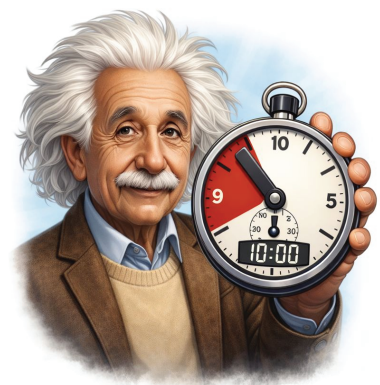
Einstein was asked to explain relativity or time. He explained it by having the person think of this scenario: Imagine you are deeply in love. The person you are in love with must go away for 2 years. You have 10 minutes with them before they leave. How “long” will it take for those 10 minutes to pass?



His next scenario was: Imagine you are standing in front of a hot stove. Someone takes your hand and holds it against the stove for 10 minutes. How “long” will it take for those 10 minutes to pass?

As we can see, while both scenarios were 10 minutes, that chunk of time is not always experienced in the same way. The 10 minutes at the stove will feel like an eternity. But the 10 minutes with your love will feel like seconds. How we experience time is greatly dependent on the life event.

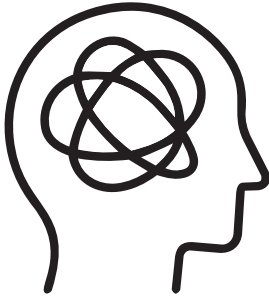
Einstein’s point was that time is not real; it is a construct in our mind and therefore it is something we experience. So why does time “seem” to move faster as we age?



Mathematically, we generally experience time by the square root of our age. So what we experience or perceive is that each decade goes by faster than the previous. It is all based on how our brain works.

# Your Two Minds

**You have two minds operating at all times; the conscious and the unconscious.**



The conscious mind can manage about seven bits of information at a time (plus or minus two). This is the reason phone numbers are seven digits. Phone numbers were traditionally based on the number of digits the average person can remember.



The unconscious mind, however, can manage thousands of bits of information at one time. With this massive capacity, the unconscious mind becomes a pattern recognition machine.

An example is your drive to work. When you first get in the car, you do not decide or think about how to start the car. You have already established a pattern for doing this, as well as one for buckling the seat belt, exiting the driveway, and driving to work.

During the drive, you are not thinking about how to get there. Your unconscious mind is doing almost all of the driving while you talk on the phone, listen to the radio, or contemplate what you need to do when you get to work. Even choosing the exit from the freeway is done at an unconscious level.

The reason for this is that your unconscious mind has recorded this event many times and has committed it to memory. So while you are busy listening to the news, your unconscious mind is safely driving you to work. It is operating without conscious thought based on pattern recognition.

# Novelty = Time

The same skill that allows us to drive and talk on the phone is at the root of why life moves “faster” as we get older. Because the more things or actions we repeat, the more our mind tunes them out. In short, repetition shortens time, but novelty extends time.

Notice how you can remember your favorite vacation with vivid detail, but if you have been back to that same place more times, the memory is not nearly as clear. Because the return trips were not novel. The same goes for TV commercials; once you have seen a spot about 15 times, your mind literally tunes it out as if it is not there. This is because your unconscious mind says, “Skip this; we already know what this is and how it ends.”



Think back to when you were five or ten years old. It seemed to take forever for Christmas or your birthday to roll around. Summer seemed to last such a long time. The reason is that when you are very young, nearly everything is novel. Life is full of first-time experiences.

# Novelty = Time

Studies show that the average person that lives to the age of 80 will have “experienced” 25% of their life in their first 10 years, when everything was new. However, as we get older, we start to repeat the same things over and over. And as we enter into those final decades of life, many people tend to become extremely routine, essentially living the same day over and over.

The key to living the longest, fullest, experiential life is more novelty. When we travel to new places, make new friends, try new foods, or push ourselves outside of our bubbles, time slows down and consequently, we get more out of life.

Life is not just about the years lived; it is about the experiences gained within those years. There are many 40-year-olds that have already outlived some 80-year-olds.

What is your next novel experience going to be?





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