

The Roman philosopher-statesman, Seneca, who was asked by Emperor Nero to kill himself, writes (“**On the Shortness of Life**” translated by Gareth D. Williams) around 50 AD that *“It’s not that we have a short time to live, but that we waste much of it.”*

“Life”, he tells us “is long enough, and it’s been given to us in generous measure for accomplishing the greatest things, if the whole of it is well invested.” He thunders further on in the book: *“Men are thrifty in guarding their private property, but as soon as it comes to wasting time, they are most extravagant with the one commodity for which it’s respectable to be greedy.”*

As the essay unfolds, we feel Seneca pouring from the depths of his soul. Seize the day, he says. *“Even when you’ve seized it, it will still slip away; and so you must compete with time’s quickness in the speed with which you use it, and you must drink swiftly as if from a fast-moving torrent that will not always flow.”*



“Time flows” — painting by Deepa Krishnan

Matthieu Ricard likens time (“**On the Path to Enlightenment**”), to “*gold dust*” and cautions us not let it run “*through our fingers*”. He writes: “*Every moment of our lives has tremendous value.*” He encourages us to “*be aware that every second of our life is inestimably precious*”, and asks that we “*make the best use of it for our own good and the good of others.*”

In “**The Writing Life**”, Annie Dillard reminds us that this hour, this minute matters. “*How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives. What we do with this hour, and*

that one, is what we are doing.”

Peace ☐

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