

Age is Relativity

by Dom Macchiaroli

Albert Einstein was probably the genius of our age. Joe Biden is a close second, yet Einstein not only had better hair but a keener knack to think of things that no one else could, or would, or would ever want to, since if they did, their brain would shockingly combust in a fountain of fatty matter, incorrect algebra, and cranial yuck. I wonder if the guy ever went outside and actually played.

It has been said that Isaac Newton (another idiot savant) had to be reminded to eat since he was so super busy inventing calculus and faded sequins. But it would be fun to watch these two geniuses, cerebellum y cerebellum in an all-out pay-per-view battle of epic wits, just to see which one would win the title of Man Whose Theorem Will Confuse And Frustrate High School Seniors More. Alas, they lived centuries apart, even though both attained unfireable tenure at Princeton, and with it a free campus parking space.

But from Einstein alone came the theory of Special Relativity, which isn't about your undeniable, inescapable relation to your jello-calved Uncle Cheeto, but much headier, brainier stuff.

The whole theory of Relativity would be way too arcane to go into in a short essay such as this, since a rerun of Dr. Phil is on in five minutes, and the cat needs to go for his evening walk first. But we can briefly talk about one of Relativity's many subtexts; something really incredibly boring (is that possible?) called "spacetime". Spacetime basically says that space exists in three dimensions, while time itself exists in a Fourth dimension. The Fifth Dimension was a pretty good 60's band and therefore has nothing whatsoever to do with this discussion.

Most people say that time is constant, unmovable, and always

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concise unless your clock runs out of double 'A' batteries. I disagree. I think time speeds up and slows down, depending on whether I am having a "good" time or not.

For a bad example, let's say I just sat down with a hearty trough of nearly five pounds of my favorite ice cream. In what seems a blink of the eye, that ice cream will be gone, my bowl empty. Why? Because time passed more quickly than normal. And maybe also because I vacuumed up the sugary deliciousness with the hungry subtlety of a noisy industrial vacuum the size of a fire hose.

Now, let's say I sit down in the honorary 'Spanish Inquisition' chair at the office of my friendly local overpaid former Nazi dentist for the first of a promised ten-part series of root canals. In this instance, time will pass as slowly as it possibly can, while I painfully and hilariously writhe under a Gestapo dentist drill the girth of a baseball bat while the hands of the gentle doctor's clock move with all the speed of a crippled sloth on antihistamines.

Don't pretend you don't know what I mean.

But we all know time does speed by. And the older one gets, the more errant time seems to race. My twenties, thirties, and forties have literally blown past me in a haze of dust, tuition bills and yellowed photographs. My kids have all grown up. Why, just last weekend, I went to my 30-year high school reunion and still can't believe it has been that long since I was so universally disliked by so many at the same time.

But space itself is a big gigantic room, and time does speed up or slow down, depending on where one is in the cosmos. According to planetary astrometry, and just in our own dinky little solar system, an individual's age changes based on which planet that person might find himself on, since each planet rotates around the Sun at various speeds and distances. For example, if I am on Earth, I would be

around fifty years old. But on the planet Mercury, I would be over 189 years old. And that explains why I don't feel so good. Maybe the Dr. Phil episode will help. Time to walk the cat. My teeth hurt.

