

# The Game of Time

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By Dorothy Spence

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In the book Finite and Infinite Games, author James P. Carse describes the two types of games as follows: In a finite game, there is always a winner and those who rank below the winner. A finite game has boundaries and limits (space and time as an example). It has a beginning and an end. It has rules that, during the course of the game, do not change. Players in a finite game play to bestow power and titles. Finite games are serious and consume time. *The object of a finite game is to win.*

Players in an infinite game don't play within limits or boundaries, they play with boundaries. Not only can the rules change in an infinite game, they must change. Infinite games are playful and generate time. In an infinite game the players play with strength. Although there can be a finite game played within an infinite game, an infinite game cannot exist within a finite game. *The object of an infinite game is to keep it in play.*

Generating time rather than consuming time. How do you generate time and not consume time?

A finite game is in play when I feel trapped, life is passing me by, I have no time and I feel pressure to continue to do something. An infinite game is in play when I take the time to get curious about my irritation, allow for expansive discussions of inquiry rather than judgment, slow down, expand, ease into each moment and generate time to play.

## A Finite Players View of Time

### Spirituality/Purpose

Time is a precious gift we are given. It can be used in many ways to create special, meaningful connections with your family, volunteering in order to make a better society, and making a difference in your life.

### Identity

I am a 44 year old person. By identifying myself as this age, I am stating that I'm in the prime of my life. Not too old to be unhealthy and not too young to be lacking maturity and wisdom. These views of what is acceptable at different ages are based on societies rules about what happens at each stage of life. It has a strong external reference.

## **Choice**

I make choices every moment about how I spend my time. I am aware of the choices I make about the time I spend at work, exercising, spending time with my children, sleeping, relaxing and wasting time. I have a 5 year plan that has set out my goals in all areas of my life so that the sum of the parts be in balance.

## **Beliefs, Values and Attitudes**

I have a lot of beliefs I hold about time and the value of it. Most of these beliefs are associated with the scarcity of time: Time is money, Time is precious, Time goes by faster the older you get, Time is absolute, Time is linear, Time heals all wounds, Time is a scarce commodity, Enjoy your time with your children-it goes by fast, Wasting time, Time is of the essence, I'm out of time, It took me a long time to get here but I'm right on time, Time pressure, Schedule, Time frame, You can't buy time, Out of time, Now is the time, Your time is up, Window of opportunity, Time line, Do you have the time?, Making time, We have lots of time, Trading time for dollars, Time value of money, A moment in time, Time pressure, If I only had time, Waste of time.

I believe that I should sleep 8 hours a night in order to stay healthy, I should exercise 30 minutes a day, I should work around 50 hours a week. If I work less than that, I have set a poor example for the people who work for me. If I work too long, I also send out the wrong message about balance. My work hours are typically 9 to 6 pm and I don't work on the weekend because that's my relaxing time.

## **Strategy**

I consume time based on where I believe I will get the most value out of it given how I want to live my life. I believe in being efficient of my time. Time management is an important skill.

## **Behavior**

My behavior changes according to how much time I think I have. If I have a lot of time, I will be either relaxed or irritated about what else I could be doing. If I am short of time, I rush and get tense worried that I have a time limit and it's about to expire.

## **Environment**

I have a really well honed sense of time. I can tell you, with surprising accuracy, how long it typically takes for certain tasks to be accomplished. I have a lot of time pieces in my physical space and I am always aware of the time.

# **An Infinite Players View of Time**

## **Spirituality/Purpose**

I play an infinite game that generates time. The purpose behind the game is to stay in play and to continue to generate time.

I have all the time in the world to apply however it holds meaning for me in my life. As I unfold time within and around me, I experience delight and wonder at my ability to be the master of my own time warps, time loops and time truncations.

## **Identity**

I am an entity on the density of matter plane. This is the plane that allows for energy to be manifested into physical space and time (matter). I understand that time is not absolute. I am neither young nor old because I don't live in the time of another. I manifest whatever my thoughts and energy focuses on. I have experienced generating time. In infinite play, time is time lived and not time viewed.

I wonder a lot ...if I am the creator of time: ...who can I become if I create more time for me? ...who do I become when I create less time than I think I need? ...who do I become when I live each moment of time fully present to my potential and possibilities?

## **Choice**

I have chosen to play an infinite game in life. I recognize when I get irritated and impatient that I am choosing to experience absolute time and space. I can choose to experience my life on a plane without time. It is a plane that is about manifesting my intentions immediately without any time passing. I chose to notice my habituated responses and to stay awake.

From where do I choose: the future or the past? Do my sounds represent potential or habit? Do I make the time/take the time to fully express the truth of my experience? Does my language indicate a scarcity (finite game) or abundance (infinite game) relationship with time in this moment?

## **Beliefs, Values and Attitudes**

I believe the game I play is about learning why I notice certain things, react to different situations and to find the fun and humor in every thought that keeps me in play. I am full of vitality when I am playing an infinite game. I have no need to define the boundaries of my work, play, exercise or time allocation. There is no such thing as an hour in the day. There is only an hour of quiet, an hour of reflection, an hour of driving. I work not to fill

up time with work but for filling work with time. Work is not a way of passing time, but a way of creating possibilities.

### **Strategy**

I notice when I am getting pulled into believing that the only things that are real are the ones we can perceive with our 5 senses and we need to control the outcome. I notice when I get tense and irritated. I then remind myself about the infinite game I have chosen to play and focus on NOW.

I rarely feel pressured by time when I am engaged in things I love. I am aware that I can, will and do make time for people and projects that feel like fun and use time pressures as a way of removing myself from things that feel to me like less than fun.

### **Behavior**

I have discovered the meaning of “Not now” when I want to expand and generate time. My behavior is erratic. I change my mind all the time. There no prediction and schedule. I stay in the now and allow that to take me forward.

### **Environment**

When I create space (not now) and generate time, there is movement and flow. There are times when this requires physical movement and times when it’s happening inside of me as energy rather than matter.

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