

Then and Now

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“The one, who contributes for future and also possesses presence of mind, always finds happiness and contentment.”
- Bheeshma to Yudhishtir in the epic *Mahabharata*

In the city of Hillburg there lived a renowned psychotherapist, a counselor, Dr. Gilberne Jonson. He was the most consulted and the most popular doctor among the folks of Hillburg. He was a person who probably had all the solutions to varied moral and social problems. People approached him and were delightedly convinced by the doctor's advice. In a few years he was thought to be the best person to be approached for moral help.

Young Gilberne, an ordinary child from an ordinary family was brought up in the town of Riverwood. As a child he always enjoyed helping others. He was so inspired by the people, who helped others by creating a harmonious atmosphere making them forget their crisis, grief, fear and despair, that he always dreamt to be someone who can bring happiness and hope to society. Paradoxically he never thought of being a sage or a glorified soul but someone who healed others with humour, logic, wit and scientific intellect. From then he knew his purpose in life. He, through his dedication and hard work, became a doctor expertised in social psychology.

In Hillburg now there was none who could match with Dr. Gilberne's intellect and knowledge about society and its adversities. None of his clients were ever displeased or dissatisfied by his counseling. He too enjoyed his popularity. He also realized that through his ideas and work he has touched many lives. He knew that he did not choose such a profession for money or fame but to go to an extent to which he could make his journey of life worthwhile. Now he started realizing that his focus on creating a better time for the world has shifted onto maintaining his level of popularity. He all the more felt committed and responsible for many lives which he had never thought about. Busy Dr. Gilberne counseled many number of clients everyday but one odd day a unique client visited him.

Dr. Gilberne: Hi. How are you doing? How may I help you? *(Very politely)*

The client: I am going mad!! *(In quite a serious tone)*

Dr. Gilberne thought that he will not be able to read his actual state of mind in such a serious tone. So he tried to lighten up the mood.

Dr. Gilberne: Are you in love with somebody else's wife? Or do you see ghosts? Or do you have itching sensations but cannot scratch and soothe yourself?

The client: See this is not funny at all. *(With a strange smile)*

Dr. Gilberne: Okay. Okay. *(With a gentle smile)*

First of all take a deep breath. Drink some water. Please smile. Now speak. *(The client does as directed)*

The client: In a hunger to achieve everything I have created problems for myself. I want to find out ways to deal with the environment and the challenges I am facing. *(Upsettingly)*

Dr. Gilberne: Well! What exactly is your problem? *(With a gentle smile)*

The client: Time!!! *(Worriedly)*

Dr. Gilberne: What? Time? What exactly about time? *(Patiently)*

The client: There is a dire shortage of time in my life. I am not able to find time for my family, friends, children, sound sleep, myself and what not. I can't enjoy small pleasures of life because of my engaging professional responsibilities. I can't manage balancing my personal and professional life. Help me find a way out. All the time I worry about managing my time.

Dr. Gilberne wondered that he had been facing the same problem since long and it was for the first time that he had met someone who had a problem like his. Now he was in a difficult stance to convince the client about how to deal with time. Still he gave it a try to answer him.

Dr. Gilberne: Listen to me carefully. "Time is money." "A stitch in time saves nine." You need to manage time to enjoy life.

The client: Doctor!! I have read this in books. I know that if I don't find time I won't enjoy my life. But that's exactly my problem.

Dr. Gilberne: Yes, Hmmm. I understand. See you need to prioritize your things.

The client: Yes I did but to cater to financial needs of my family I have to work. My priority is family. I want to provide them with all necessities, comforts and luxuries but for that I have to slog myself for twelve to fourteen hours a day. After that I hover around like a drug addict in an ecstasy of trance.

Dr. Gilberne: Ohh!! Ahmm.

The client: I can't take it anymore. I am fed up. I feel like committing suicide.

Dr. Gilberne: Cheer up. Everything will be fine. Hmmm. *(Silence for a few seconds)*

The client: Please say something.

Dr. Gilberne: Hmmm. *(Wondering what to say)* I understand having no time is quite annoying and depressing. *(Silence for a few seconds)*

The client: Are you Dr. Gilberne? *(Annoyingly)*

Or have I stepped into a wrong a room? Are you really the popular Dr. Gilberne whose wisdom and ideas have no match in the city?

Dr. Gilberne: Yes I am Dr. Gilberne. Well I don't claim to be so but my clients say like that about me. *(Silence for a few seconds)*

The client: I am sorry to say that you have disappointed me. I came here with expectations out of which you did not even fulfill one. I had heard a lot about you but you failed to address my problem. Apart from listening to my issues, you spoke nothing. Frankly you have done no good to me. I am leaving and won't pay a single penny to you.

Doctor Gilberne couldn't speak up a word. He felt low about the fact that he couldn't help the person who sought him for some help. All the more he thought about the serious problem of time, which he too was facing. He was so paranoid by the conversation that he couldn't concentrate on other clients anymore. He started thinking that the opinion of that client could affect his popularity and future income.

For Dr. Gilberne that incident was an eye-opener. He realized that he did not work on the issue of time. Now he was upset and felt humiliated for his naiveness about time. He couldn't sleep that night. He decided that he would go back to his home town Riverwood with his family.

The next morning Dr. Gilberne and his family left for Riverwood. During the entire journey he read a book about time management which he had already read sometime back. Now he had a purpose to explore the idea of time.

That evening Dr. Gilberne thought instead of isolating himself he should go out around and think upon time. He walked a mile from his home and sat on a roadside bench. While he was observing the landscape and thinking about time, he saw an old gentleman walking along the roadside. When that

gentleman came near the bench Dr. Gilberne was happy to see that it was Father Andrew. He was the Principal and Father of the school in which Gilberne studied.

Gilberne stood up and began a conversation.

Dr. Gilberne: Good evening Father. I am Gilberne Jonson. I was your student and passed out from our school in the year 1990.

Father: Oh! Yes Gilberne. *(In a soft tone)*

How can I forget you? How is your girlfriend Martha? Once you said in the confession box that you followed Martha and she disliked it. How are you my child?

Dr. Gilberne: I am good. Father. *(In a subtle sad tone)*

Father: You seem to be disturbed. What is the matter dear?

Dr. Gilberne: Father! I am a social psychologist or maybe I was but I couldn't help one of my clients who came to me with issues of time. I couldn't change his state of mind. I couldn't motivate him for betterment. I too am a victim of time. How would one balance his personal and professional life? Today I am with my family, only because I am not at work, but I worry about tomorrow what will happen if I stay here and don't work at all. What is the real paradigm of time? How does one deal with it?

Father: Is that a problem? May I speak something about time? *(With a subtle smile)*

Dr. Gilberne: Yes please Father.

Father: Gilberne My child. *(Smilingly)* Your science and logic may not completely agree with my spiritual philosophy but I will surely speak everything about which I want to.

Listen. First of all it is our each one's perspective which determines the way we behave and respond to life. Each one of us living has the aim to be happy and contented. Indirectly all our love, ambitions, dreams and desires lead us to happiness and contentment. Our happiness and contentment depend on our vision of success. And our vision of success depends on TIME. So if we expand our vision of success we will be able to elongate time. Time systemizes our lives. Our lives don't systemize time. You go and work so that you can spend a better time at home. You don't go home so that you go to work.

They say time is the best medicine which heals everything. But nowadays these ambitious materialistic people are in a race to heal their own time. They don't allow time to heal them but they rather try to heal time. They either want to remain ahead of time or they want to be laid back and remain behind time. They never think positively to be parallel with time. In our good old days we read less and thought more about our time. And now they read more to have degrees and jobs but don't even bother to think about their time.

I don't disagree with the fact that time is important in life but it is a tool to systemize life and not a problem as you are taking it. I know the value of second, minute, hour, month and every unit of time but I also strongly believe that now it is only time and its needs which make people work.

I know each one of us has a desire of a glorious future, something better than the present but if we don't channelize our vision of success and don't take life as it comes then we will surely have issues with time. Each one should accept that he and only he is capable of leading his own life and to deal with its fate. No good comes to the man who thinks that he is not capable of living his own life.

Gilberne can you see that beggar family?

Dr. Gilberne: Hmmm. Yes.

Father: What do you see?

Dr. Gilberne: They all are smiling.

Father: What else do you see?

Dr. Gilberne: They seem to be quite happy. They are enjoying themselves and their time.

Father: They don't even have good food or clothes or shelter but they have faith in themselves that they will survive and live happily as they are now. But not everyone in the society has the courage to think in this way. Your past days are lessons which refine you, which develop you.

Every man should have conviction about his endeavours and to accomplish it, then he can even surmount mountain-high obstructions. If there is a loss of faith and hope it results into a difficult time which brings worries for future. These worries don't let you work neither do they allow you to enjoy the present time.

I hope you now have a little understanding about time. With this I will take your leave. I also hope that my ideas and understanding will help you to be a better contributor to society as a person and as a social psychologist, a doctor.

Father Andrew smilingly left the place. After walking a few steps he came back to Dr. Gilberne.

Father: Gilberne stop worrying and enjoy your stay in the town and never forget Alice Morse Earle has wisely written "*Yesterday is a history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift and that is why it is called present.*"
