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C - Band

Lit Log #1

Time Flies When You're Having Fun

In Part 1 (pg 68) of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Chief Bromden describes the passage of time in the ward. He talks about how the Big Nurse is able to change the passage of time, just by moving the hands of the clock, "The Big Nurse is able to set the wall clock at whatever speed she wants by just turning one of those dials in the steel door; she takes a notion to hurry things up, she turns the speed up, and those hands whip around that disk like spokes in a wheel." He talks about how difficult it is for all of the patients to adjust to the passage of time, how sometimes it moves so fast they have to do their routines 10 times a day, and sometimes it's so slow they can't get up from their chairs. As I first read this, I took it literally. I believed the Big Nurse was truly changing the clock, and making the patients adjust to whatever time she changed it to. But, as I continued to read, I saw that there were specific moments when Chief Bromden noticed these time changes happening, "...when you got somebody to visit you or when the VFW brings down a smoker show from Portland—times like that, times you'd like to hold and have stretch out. That's when she speeds things up." When Bromden said this, I immediately thought of the phrase, "time flies when you're having fun", and my own experiences with time.

I've begun to notice I have an odd perception of time, and sometimes my memories are blurred, especially when time seems to be moving fast. Like Bromden, I often experience time passing too quickly when I seem to be enjoying myself most. Over the summer, I spent a month in New York City. It was the

shortest month of my life. Though the days felt long— they were filled with lectures, filming, and editing— at the end of each week, it felt like only a day had passed. I was confused by this, how could my days feel so extremely long, while my weeks and months went by in a blink? At the time, I pushed it off as the fact that I was preoccupied with work and wasn't paying enough attention to what was going on around me. As I read the passage about time in the ward, I realized that maybe my perception of time just had to do with how much I was enjoying the activities I was participating in. During the days in New York, I had work and classes from 9 am to 5 pm. I walked about 13,000 steps around the city each day, in over 90-degree heat. My days were exhausting, I was tired, hot, and extremely busy. The lectures I sat through were only from 9 am to 11 am, but they felt like hours longer. I sat there, just like Bromden, and I felt as if I was glued to my chair. I would check the clock, and it wouldn't move. It felt like hours had passed, but the clock showed only minutes. The clock ticked slowly, until the end of those two hours, and when it finally hit time for lunch, the clock began to move again, even faster than normal time. At the cafeteria, it was like the clock was moving 2 times faster than normal. Before I knew it, lunch was over, and it was time to head back to class. By the time it was 5 pm, it felt like I had been in the classroom for days. When I finally began the walk back to my dorm, time quickly sped up. While I hung out with friends, watched TV, and ate dinner, time continued to move faster and faster. My perception of time changed drastically, depending on how much I enjoyed the activity I was doing. So, time was slow during the days when I was in classes, watching a presentation for multiple hours. But, at the same time, I was doing what I loved, in a city I loved, with people I loved. I was getting to create things I was extremely passionate about, learn things I was interested in, and connect with people who shared a passion with me. Though each day felt exhausting, the experiences I was having were amazing. So while my days were long, my weeks and months were a whirlwind of friends, movies, food, exploring, and all the other new things that I got to experience.

I'm lucky because I spend a significant part of my life with time flying by. Chief Bromden very rarely gets to have these experiences where time speeds up. He lives the same routine each day, with nothing exciting or enjoyable happening. He sits in a chair for hours on end, simply observing other

people, and having nothing to entertain himself. It makes sense that time seems to always move so slowly for him, because he isn't able to have any fun, and time only flies when you're having fun.