

Dear Humanity,

This is a complaint. A complaint addressed to you - and to myself. To all of us - villains and heroes, wise folk and simple folk, engaged in this drama called life. On this stage of ours, will we keep going on living with this suspicion, that we might not be who we think we are?

I would like to take *the time* to reflect on this question. I would like - at least the time - so that tomorrow can offer us a choice. Do we consider another way? Do we allow ourselves time to reflect upon who we wish to be -- or do we go on pretending it never bothered us?

I am sometimes asked - when did I come *here?* - or how much time did I spend *there?* I try to give some sort of an answer - but the truth is - it doesn't matter to me. When I think of an orgasm, I don't remember how long it lasted - but I certainly remember how good it was. Some of my fondest moments as an adult are not only orgasms but also how I discovered them in the first place --The attraction, the intimate energy of resonating hearts. -- There are other dimensions.-- Running through mud with my son, hearing the laughter of a Jalalabad arms dealer - trying to swap a lost chicken for a Kalashnikov. -- These too, have been some of the highlights of my life. Also, times spent drafting novels, or the words I am putting down on this very paper now. -- How do we measure these? How do we measure the duration of a hug, the touch of lips in a kiss? --- We don't. -- They simply expand the universe in ways we do not know or understand. And hopefully we never will -- That *is Kairos* -- Kairos is *forever time!*

Ancient civilisations realised that the construct of time is but an abstraction of our mind - so they distinguished between *Kai-ros* and *Chro-nos*. Chronos was and *is* and will always be the arms forever moving on the clock.

This has already been said --- What has already been said - is that we must slow down.

Our attention has become a valuable commodity. The false promises of technology have created a giddy rush which enables us ways of communicating, meeting and interacting that minimise or even eliminate our basic need for physical contact. Our book, the book we're all writing is given to the world in *real* time and only showing what we want the world to see... This at least to the human billions, to the world which lives its life - neck bent on their smartphones. We see them every day. On the train, in the shopping centre, at the lights. They are so many of us, if not most of us.

In this abstraction of our physical stage-- we are losing part of who we are -- **WE**.

In our arrogance, our performance has become a delusion. We indulge in our imagined self-importance and we are, without intention, losing sight of where we wish to go.

This is a call for patience -- No, not for this reading -- but for patience with life.

Patience renders time as an opening flower. Without it, we do not see the small things that matter, we do not take the time to relish the wonder of everything we cannot explain. Without patience we will *never* replace our fears with curiosity. Without patience we cannot replace old ideas.

However, it is entirely plausible to assume that we haven't paid attention to the teachings of time.

Clock time is the contemporary cigarette, and together with technology -- it has formed a carcinogenic brew that is breaking our souls. Many of us have become slaves to Chronos and our escape is to spend hours staring at a five-inch screen. Why not allow ourselves the time to ask defining questions -- perhaps the most important of them: 'who--am--I'?

Who are we? When we're not sure about who we are, we become scared. We rush to find answers in the same way we react to discharge our pain. You only need to take a good hard look at our world. Every time we've been this scared our leaders reflect our fears. Too often, we choose the most self-serving and fallible of characters. Trump, Boris, Scomo - with many others do not even come close to being leaders. They are but reflections of what many of us have become – lacking in empathy – without any far-sighted ideas or common goals for humanity. We have brought them to these positions of power wherefrom they can laugh at us - while we point our fingers at them – and demand they renounce their apathy and face the global challenges before us. But can we do this without first examining ourselves? How can we compose humanity when we ourselves are confused and scared? How can we ask for a better world when we are in pain... Lost? Through our established doctrines and ideologies, through our religious righteousness, we have separated ourselves into factions of opinion, hatred, anger and blame. We are being seduced by the meretricious appeal of technology ---- without stopping to think what a good life really means. And - we are letting this Moloch-like convenience consume even our children. Our success *is* also our failure –

Let's face it, we are scared and, in our pain, running away from each other – instead of finding the courage to stand up for what we really believe in, what we really want.

We are sharing this abundant, abstract and bizarre experience called life. In between the darkness, in the time we are here -- we must make the assumption that our situation is perfect. We presume we have some sort of privileged place in the universe – well knowing we're situated on a crust of rock and water, rotating around a fireball – drifting through the infinity of whatever space might be. We're all of us right in the middle of the relationship we call *existence* -- but we are pretending we are not. And perhaps, just perhaps ---- it's because we're always rushing – And this is what we must stop doing. Being furiously busy should not be seen as a tribute to life!

Mankind, womankind! Dear humanity, we are capable of so much better!

We are quickly becoming a mindless crowd, living in near proximity to each other - but without any real sense of connection. We are driven by the noise, speed and artificial urgency of what we cannot see, touch or feel. But I'm confident we can change. We will get used to it. It's not going to be easy, but I believe we can be courageous enough to make the hardest move - and that means making different choices. We must not only challenge the way we act but also the way we think and how we feel. It's all part of our relationship with life. We can have a true sense of belonging that reflects our primal instinct for connection rather than separation. If we slow down - we can find the space to unravel our identity, to put forth our visions. We can handle our technology with our hearts more than with our heads -- and treat each other and our environment with love instead of with hate.

Let us come together and write a book that we can proudly share with our children. One of compassion and time for one another - one of love for ourselves and love for the only world we have. If we courageously take the time to redefine the foundations upon which we build our lives, I believe we will begin to understand what it truly means to be free.

Dear humanity: Let us stop the madness, let us slow down. Let us rise up -- take the time to come together and find the courage to look each other in the eyes – and embrace.