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“Lost Time”

It was December of 2008 near Christmas time when a boy named Charlie was in his senior year of high school. He had no idea what the future would hold. Everything seemed to be going by so quickly. It seemed like just the other day that he had moved from the big city to a tiny town called Howey in a forgotten suburb of Central Florida. For Charlie, it was a rapid change of scenery. It was almost time to graduate, but he couldn't fathom the thought of how to move forward. For the past few years, he couldn't organize his thoughts and processes and had difficulty understanding his place in the world. In reality, it was time that seemed to keep passing him by.

Every minute of every hour, the clock ticked. With every breath Charlie took, a second was gone. He was a second closer to his fate, or better yet, what could be his destiny. Perhaps his dreams took over every aspect of his life, and the mental images became more lucid but still not a reality. It was hard to figure out, and it was hard to determine whether he was solitary in his aspirations and beliefs. Whether he was or not, he needed to figure out what he needed to do to progress, but fear came raging over him because of his lack of achievement. He saw kids on TV that were successful and rich, and he wasn't sure if it was due to hard work or a matter of luck. They were in their early teens and already achieving fame and glory. Perhaps that was the time period in which those in their youth were supposed to make it. It didn't come for Charlie, but ultimately, it was for him to achieve. With every week that passed by, Charlie had got the notion that failure was destined for him because so much time had passed without him making any

progress with his dreams. He constantly checked the calendar hoping that some magical thing would happen and would achieve success. Each day, a mark was crossed on the corresponding square for whatever day it was, and with every cross came a let down. Magical things just didn't happen. He needed to act, and he needed to act fast. He was less determined to succeed because of his obsession with lost time that seemed to be taking over him. He needed help controlling it, but the help never seemed to come.

Every second that passed by yielded a thought that went unserved—a thought that could have turned into a multimillion-dollar idea. His mind kept him trapped inside like an enormous monster in a tiny cage. He was dying to escape, but it seemed there was no way out. He constantly contemplated the thought of life and what his purpose was. He continuously wondered why the clock just couldn't stop so that he could achieve success even if it was for a millisecond. He knew that to change the next five years of his life, he needed to act immediately. He felt alone whether in reality he was or not. There were many who cared, but he didn't know who to turn to because no matter what someone told him, there was another minute that passed by without any real progress. This, inevitably, was a problem Charlie lived with. He constantly wondered if it was normal for everyone in society or if he was alone in his own little world. It was the most confusing and frustrating thing in the universe for him to wonder.

Eventually, it was Charlie's last semester in high school. The past four years appeared to be a mental voyage of wreckage. He wasn't sure whether the path he was on was right or what his next move was. It was time for him to move on and get his thoughts in order. The possibilities of what could have happened and what could still be were fascinating, and it consumed every square centimeter of Charlie's inner soul. He just

didn't get it. He couldn't figure it all out. Human instincts tend to cause humans to fantasize about what they want rather than what they have. They're so focused on what could be rather than what is. It is sure that there are some who have stronger desires than others and some that are content with what they have, but for Charlie, he was focused on what more he needed and on the failures of what he didn't achieve. He didn't know how it was possible for lost time to beat him up. Every second that passed was a punch—a punch so hard he would knock out every night and would wake up the next day to get knocked out all over again. No one saw the bruises; they were inner. They broke every piece of his body—his inner body, his inner soul. It was invisible to the naked eye, but inside, he was gone—vanished in thin air. Had it been present, it would have been shattered like a thin mirror that fell on the ground—every thousandth of a piece all over the floor for no one to pick up. I guess this was normal. This was for Charlie to pick up and put back together.

Five years later, Charlie sits in his home as huge as can be with a new car, a loving family, friends, an education, and a job. Every piece of lost time that seemed to bring Charlie down was all a matter of perception. With hundreds of supporters later and every second closer to achieving success, lost time will never bring Charlie down again. In reality, there is no time limit to achieve success. It was all in Charlie's mind. It was all part of the plan.