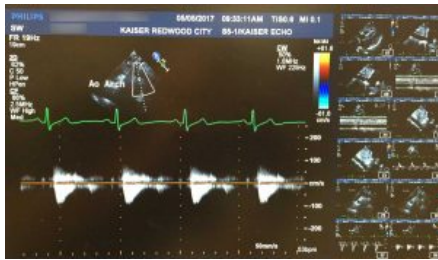


Nobody lives forever, but I'm good for today and tomorrow.



You get older and, at some point, the fact that you're not going to be around forever becomes something you think about. Perhaps for me the concept of mortality is brought home by way of all the testing that's been done on my heart & lungs, trying to get to the bottom of my breathing issues. For example, last week I had an electrocardiogram re-test, to see how my heart looks compared to a year ago. This because I now have a real live pulmonologist looking into things for me, and he had some concerns about the very small amount of "valve leakage" that showed up in my prior test, as well as the "athlete's heart" thing. You can read [all about the phenomenon here](#), but in a nutshell, it's a normal adaptation of the heart to a lifetime of exercise.

But hey, I'm 61 years old, and it's not unheard of for people my age to have some weird undiagnosed heart thingee that drops them like a rock. That's where I have a huge advantage. I've now been echocardiogrammed, stress-tested, scanned and then some. My ticker has been pronounced solid.

But until you get the results, things are in a weird state of limbo, and you're just a bit unsure of how far you should push yourself. What's going on in that ticker inside your chest?

Finally, Wednesday morning (two rides after the latest round of tests) came the news. The ticker's good. No progression at all in valve leakage, nothing else to worry about. But a lot of time in-between the test and the results to be thinking about the future, and even the present. Minutes can pass like hours, and interesting thoughts intrude when you're engaged in things you don't enjoy, as in, this is time I'll never get back!

I'm glad those days are over. I'm glad I no longer have thoughts there could be something that could stop me dead in my tracks, without warning. That doesn't mean I'm immortal though. Nobody is. You keep looking for answers and eventually even the healthiest person will likely find something not-quite-right. But whatever remains isn't nearly so scary.