

## The Next Level: Going Deeper

Sunday, May 12, 2019

### Authentic Guitar Playing

Egoless guitar playing means authentic guitar playing, which means total faithfulness to the music.

Authentic playing starts by putting your audience-loving-approval self aside and entering the adventure and discovery of the music itself.

It is good to play guitar as your authentic self.

But what is it?

Naming gives us a feeling of control over the world.

The feeling is true, but the idea is false. (We can control parts of the world—but all of it, never.)

Ultimately, no one “knows” anything. We play each day, each moment “by ear.” And this because every moment is a new, different situation. It never happened before. Every moment we take a step into the unknown.

But such insights come in special moments. It is extremely difficult to maintain such a meditative state, such awareness.

### Great-Guitar-Playing Body

Could my body really be falling apart so much, or is it just a stage?

I’m playing the guitar so well, in such post breakthrough mode, that right now I sense

it is just a stage, a place of change, breakdown transformation that takes place before the new great-guitar-playing body is formed, born, and appears.

And once the great-guitar-playing-body is created, the pains of breakthrough in the rest of my body or “bodies” will fall away and follow.

Maybe I have to build up my body so it is prepared and able to take in this new and powerful light.

But how to build it when it is falling apart?

Or is it falling apart so I can build in on a new foundation? Totally separate and different from the old?

### On “Improvement”

My playing of the “Alhambra” will never get “better.” It will only get “different.”

And it seems, this is true of everything I do, am doing, and shall do.

Monday, May 20, 2019

### Major Brain Surgery

In the drugstore, I picked up a perfect book for regeneration week. As soon as I saw the title, “Never Give Up,” it spoke to me. Written by John Mason, a reverend with many books in print, its subtitle is “You’re Stronger Than You Think.”

After reading the chapter “Fear Isn’t Reality,” which I loved, I moved on to “Our Words Create Our Worlds.”

Victory Day!

A Day to Dance with Joy!

Today is a victory day, a day of celebration.

I won the classical guitar performance fight.

I won the knee fight.

I ran fast and won the ran-fast fight.

Like fruit, ripe and ready to fall from the tree, my victories just fell off, easily and “quickly” (After mucho maturation time, of course.)

Time to dance with joy!

After yesterday’s victories, what should I do?

Mason says the two most likely times to quit are after a defeat and after a victory!

Well, I had three victories yesterday. What shall I do with them?

Mason also says one of the great prizes of a victory is the opportunities to do more.

I like that.

How can I do more?

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Today’s Obstacle

I’m sick today. I have a cold. I overdid it. Too much running combined with swimming, and yoga stretches.

I overdid it, and I’m sick.

What does that mean? Now what?

What happens to all my great plans when I'm sick? Do I give them up, rest, and wait until I'm "better"? Or do I follow my plan regardless of my health, but perhaps do it a bit more moderately?

The latter feels like the right move.

What would my mother say?

She'd probably say, "Rest until you are better."

What would my father say? Probably, not much. But I sense he would nod toward the "do it moderately" approach.

What do I say?

Sunday, May 26, 2019

Returned home from Sarasota on Friday. At first I was happy to be home. Now I could continue the good life I had started in Sarasota. Instead, I am sick with some kind of cold and fever. This started when I pushed my good life style too far, evidently overdid it, exhausted myself, and got sick. (Yes, I was also impatient to get well, so I continued my good life program after only one day of total rest.

The result seems to be I never really got better. Or perhaps a cold simply takes ten days to cure itself, and there is no getting around that.

In any case, I am humbled and stopped by this sickness. Yesterday, starting in the afternoon, I simply slept. Most of the afternoon, into early evening, then all of the night.

This morning I got up feeling slightly better, but not trusting myself.

Am I really better? Or am I once again fooling myself into thinking I am better so I can once again start my new and beautiful new life program?

If a cold really takes ten days to cure, then I am not better but only passing into the next stage of “slightly better.” And I will relapse into deeper sickness if I push myself again.

On the other hand, I could actually be better.

If that is so, best is to experiment, try a bit of my great life new program, try it with a bit, an abbreviated form of running and yoga. See what happens.

Tuesday, May 28, 2019

Woke up this morning with immediate cosmic sadness and depression. Of course, I don't know why. Could be that Laura died, which reminded me of the transience of life. Could be that today I have to go back to work. Could be I don't know.

But cosmic depression is a common occurrence for me, and a given. It's part of my daily existence. And there is nothing to be done about it, no answer to it. It can only be recognized, said hello to, then moved past by diving into my daily tasks.

And when I do, suddenly the veil of cosmic depression lifts, the fogs disappears.

Strange, but true.

Wednesday, May 29, 2019

Today is my eighty-second birthday!

I spend my eightieth year denying I was eighty. Last year, when I realized I was eighty one, the shock of it destroyed my body and mental state. This year, however, with the advent of my birthday, I have somehow recovered from the shock (it took a year!)and now I am ready to sail into eighty-two.

Note I also added writing and study to my mornings, and, most important if I can stick with it, do my writing and study before I look at emails (which drive me immediately into business mode.)

Sunday, June 2, 2019

### Fine-Tuning My Mind In Nuances Of Pleasure

There is a very fine line between enjoyment and stress, a place where you cross from pleasure into the pain of obsession, commitment, forced, outside pressure, etc. I don't quite have the right word for it, but it goes something like this:

I began the morning with cup of coffee in hand, and reading my Yanshuf Hebrew newspaper. With the first sips of coffee, along with the Hebrew words in my eyes and clicking in my brain and soul, I felt my usual peaceful/adventurous pleasure, a lovely feeling filled with morning wonder. Truly, it is for this feeling that I study.

The feeling continued for awhile, maybe twenty minutes or so. Then I "got tired." Then I saw a line, the "pleasure" line. On one side of the line was pleasure, on the other side stress and the pressure of achieving something, getting somewhere, basically filled with the

force, power, and need to survive in the world. My mind then jumped the line. Pleasure vanished, and in its place came the push, power, stress, and pain.

I went to this spot and immediately lost the pleasure, and descended into stress and mild pain.

What does all this mean? I am talking about nuance. And really the most subtle of nuances, the most nuanced of nuances.

Am I supposed to be in tune with this? I'd rather deny it and plough ahead into the known field of stress and achievement. Pushing ahead, like a blind bull, is my familiar and even preferred method.

However, I am now, and actually have always been, aware of the subtleties. Can I really fine-tune my mind in this manner? I know it would be desirable to pace myself this way. But is it even possible?

### Taking One Day at a Time

Maybe making all these grand commitments to schedules, achievement, goals, directions, road, scheduling daily running, yoga, gym writing, and other miracle schedule events—maybe all of this is the wrong approach.

Yes, it all “sounds” very macho and in control, but is it really? Am I just fooling myself into thinking I have so much control over my mind, self, and direction, that I really recognize what I want and need, that I really “know” myself so well?

Is it all an illusion, created to enhance my self-image and give myself a sense of

power?

Maybe taking one day at a time is best. And most realistic. And even the best way to discover the true self.

Monday, June 3, 2019

Friday, June 7, 2019

### Strange State of Mind

Late afternoon: I'm in a strange state of mind, feeling off-kilter, somewhat sick but not sick, somewhat feverish but without fever. I'm floating along without base or direction, and nothing quite feels right or seems to work.

I can't figure out where I am and why I feel this way.

Maybe there is nothing I can do about understanding or being in this state, and it's simply a question of watch and waiting until it passes.

Playing guitar this morning feels different. I'm playing, not for any particular purpose, not to get better or improve. Rather, I feel that old approach is useless, that I "never get anywhere," and even if I do, it is beside the point. So now I'm simply playing to enter into each note as deeply as possible, to make discoveries of, on, and in these "old note" places.

Sunday, June 9, 2019

The Paradox of Victory

The motivation has been drained out of me not because of losing, but because of winning.

My victories have diminished my drive, decreased my motivation, even destroyed my desires.

Failure and losing used to motivate me.

Now victory has defeated me: winning is losing, and losing is winning.

What a paradox.

Can I turn this around?

I can't go backward. But how to go forward?

Attitude. And awareness.

Well, I'm now aware.

Conscious Right Thumb Reaching, Melody in Bass

Tremolo Control

A new feeling of conscious right thumb reaching in my right hypothenar muscle when I play the tremolo.

Is this an advancement, the next step in tremolo control?

Or another illusion?

First time the words "tremolo control" have ever come up and been written.

Does conscious right thumb reaching go with tremolo control?

Yes if combined with knowing, realizing, and focus on the fact that the melody is in the bass, the thumb, the extended right hypothenar region.

Will this work? It should.

Just tried it again.

It definitely works! No doubt—when the above rules are applied!

Monday, June 10, 2019

A Year of (Post-Spanish Tour) Limits and Boredom

Somehow I am now ready to fail again. But this time I want to!

I have been living within my limits. Maybe that's what age eighty symbolized for me, that I have to now start cutting back, especially physically, that an older person is a weaker person and I must start thinking about fulfilling that miserable definition, and start living within my narrowing limits. What a totally terrible attitude! But I must admit, I had it, and for a year!

Live within my limits, and thus succeed constantly: How totally boring! Now I am ready to start pushing beyond my limits, to start failing again. How exciting!

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

Lately, I've been waking up with the same obstacles.

I'm embarrassed to write this, but I will anyway. I need the catharsis, explanation,

and outing of these miserable thoughts.

It goes like this: I wake up, feel aches and pains mostly in my legs, but often back, neck, or whatever. Then I focus on them, get depressed, spiral down into thoughts of my body is decaying, getting weaker, that I'll soon be frail, unable to function, my business will vanish, my wife will die, I'll be alone and almost helpless.

And this depressing downward spiral starts only because I have some morning aches and pains!

Thus, if I can somehow handle my aches and pains, which, these days reside mostly in my legs, I'll be much better off, and have a better attitude.

### Sales

All my married life I've been in sales. And resisting it. (I wonder if all my pre-married life I was in sales too but didn't know it.)

Somehow I'm good at sales.

Today, after I spoke to Deborah about my tour business, and she said it was unusual for a company to find leaders to make their own sales, find their own customers (and if they do and can, why would they need you?), and that I should organize a tour for another leader, with the idea it is my job to find the customers.

When she said that, I got a slight stab of energy in my stomach, the first one in ages. And the idea it was time for a new, expanded self definition rose up. I suddenly felt energized, and with a new direction.

Maybe I like sales! Maybe I was even born for sales! I have a sales personality, and that's why I'm good at it, why I could survive as an artist and entrepreneur all these years.

But I ran away from such a definition by saying always I hated to sell, wished I was free of it.

Why did I even say such a thing?

Because I saw it as a disappointment to my parents, and even my old self-image. But today I relish in it. It hit the ceiling in happiness when a client registers.

Maybe it's time to embrace this new self, which is really my old self released from its heavy-chained put down burden.

Maybe sales is my form of running wild on my lawn! Imagine that! Can't believe what I'm saying. But I just did.

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

### Sense of Humor

#### Going Around in Circles

With my new Sarno TMS focus on life, will my aches and pains ever change?

What about cosmic depression?

I woke up this morning feeling empty and meaningless. Am I a depressive? Maybe.

Only goals lift me up and out. And I have none this morning.

My New Leaf Journal is so true. Every day I turn over a new leaf, start again.

Yesterday's victories or defeats are forgotten and meaningless today. Every time I wake-up in

the morning, I must start all over.

Amazing. I had so many goals, directions, and hopes yesterday. Now they have all just dribbled away.

Waking up with realizations about how my body and mind work is good. But it does not whitewash cosmic depression.

Goals do! But goals are all simply mental structures, inventions I create to stimulate and direct my mind. Without them, my mind will indeed eat me up! And it is doing exactly that this morning, assailing me with directionlessness and meaninglessness. Again, this is nothing new. This is my life and its daily, weekly, or monthly pattern.

Life is so mental.

What to do? Grab each day afresh.

This is a new day. I hate to do it, but even in the empty mental fog, evidently, I must grab some kind of goal. And I have so many good ones! I just have to remember them and return home.

Home? An interesting word. Are my goals home? Maybe. Because without them I am lost.

But if they are only mental inventions, does that make them unreal? False?

Or is reality itself only mental?

And am I fooling myself by grabbing onto them?

If reality is mental, only perceived and created by the mind, then yes, my invented dreams, hopes, and goals are all very real indeed.

I believe it.

What else could it be? Even physical reality, the material world around me, what materialists call “reality,” is first perceived and even defined by the mind.

And deep down, even though I was brought up secular, surrounded by and absorbing the communist view of the world with its “smart,” “we are the chosen,” Marxist dialectic, through my love of violin and music, I have learned I am basically and fundamentally, not a materialist, but a spiritualist. I believe that, using mind and body as its instruments, spirit runs the world.

That is why my invented dreams, hopes, and goals are reality!

If I have to invent life as I go along, make it up, as it were, if it’s all up to me to invent and re-invent the world every morning, then life itself is my own invention.

But dare I take such credit? Isn’t that a symptom of hubris? What about God and the Universe? Shouldn’t He get the credit? On the other hand, if He invented me, we’re a team, partners, and we all work together, creating and recreating the world each morning.

This is indeed a loftier view than the lonely, solo idea of me alone creating the world by myself each morning. I’d much rather feel I’m not alone in this venture.

These are great questions.

On the other hand, since the thoughts above start and end with my mind, suppose it is all a fake. If so, this would feed my sense of the absurd, and with it, my sense of humor.

I like to laugh. So maybe a sense of humor is the best way to approach the world.

Could I laugh at the absurdity of cosmic depression?

Could I laugh at my TMS creations?

Could I laugh at the crazy world I create?

And would it be a bitter laugh, or joyous, or both?

Inventing the World: Are We Alone?

I'd say our view of the outside world, even the world within us, starts within our hundred billion-celled brain.

Please the Audience. . . or Else!

Evidently, it's a DNA thing, or a survival tactic. But whatever it is, I have it.

So perhaps now I should play "Alhambra," "Leyenda," and all the rest (folk songs, too) with the cold realization that pleasing the audience is my permanent need and desire.

(Actually, there is no "perhaps" left. I've done "perhaps" and "maybe" most of my life.

Perhaps it is a "been there, done that." Time to move on to Please the Audience. . . or else!

The Audience as a Friend. . . That's a New One!

Or else what? Obviously, it's a threat. I'll be hit on the head, smacked, crashed and crushed, destroyed, not killed but totally humiliated. They have almost total power over me.

My only window is the word "almost."

On the other hand, since their power over me has always existed (only I've always

fought against it, used it as a lever for growth, a wall to bounce against and learn), maybe I could look at them differently. See them, the audience, no more as the opposition, the critic ever ready to pounce on me and criticize me into oblivion, but rather, as a friend.

A friend? The audience? That would indeed be totally new. And of course, a new invention of my mind.

And if the audience is my friend, that opens up a whole new world.

Thursday, June 20, 2019

### New Focus

Drop the whole idea of fingers, and give my right thumb the love, focus, and preference in deserves.

Note the traumatic feeling of sadness and loss, losing my finger focus and tremolo, when I focus only on my thumb.

### The Stage of Grateful Amazement

Tremolo: Melody is in the bass.

Why have I resisted this truth for so many years?

Is the question even worth asking? Or is asking the question itself a form of resistance, distraction, and old neighborhood put down?

Actually, I know it is.

I could also choose to be grateful. I finally know the essence of the tremolo. I finally got it.

This stage in my life could be the stage of grateful amazement.

Seeing the tremolo melody in the bass is also a symbol of a life attitude itself. Don't sweat the small stuff, don't be distracted by the tickling treble notes, the minor distractions and disturbances that pickle my day, that flit by. Remember and focus on the big stuff: love, unity, connection with all people and things, oneness, etc. Let the small stuff roll by, like the finger-tickling notes flitting by in the tremolo.

Saturday, June 22, 2019

### Bass Paradise

The anger of being pushed out of the paradise of the bass. Bass, where the beauty flows. The rage of being pushed out of bass paradise.

Note the blur of vision in my eyes, the rising rage,

I am holding myself out.

Should I blame myself?

Or should I blame someone else, like my mother?

Or is blaming, whether myself or others, simply another excuse, another way of avoiding jumping past the flames and into the center where the burning bush ignites walls of paradise, destroying its barriers, and let myself enter bass heaven as a spark?

Sunday, June 23, 2019

Performing for my Friends

Performing is about opening up my soul to the audience.

Somehow I now see the audience as my friends. And I see myself pouring out my soul to “them” in a pub in Ireland.

Do I dare? Actually, I’ve gone beyond this question.

Why? I know I need them. I need my audience for risk and energy. Performing for them, opening up my soul to them, puts me at risk. And risk give me energy.

Yes, people are a risk. And risk energizes me.

Sure “they” could criticize and crush me. But somehow, that fear has diminished, just about disappeared.

Indeed, it’s a new phenomenon: Somehow I now see the audience as my friends. I want to risk pouring out my soul to them.

And the risk I take opening and revealing my raw soul to my friends energizes me.

What’s the difference between the worrying I used to do about tours, performance, all, and the new view that jumping into its risks energizes me?

Worrying (mostly about how they will react if things don’t work out) used to shut me down. The risk that things might not won’t work out, and because of these deficiencies, they, the audience, will criticize me and crush my soul, has somehow fallen away. The risk I take of performing before them, giving them the best, worst, and neutral of myself, all of myself,

opening my soul to them, now wakes me up. It alerts me, energizes me, even excites me!

Amazing transformation.

From risk shut-down to risk energizer. From closing off my soul to the world, hiding in my creative (teenage) violin chamber, escaping from the humiliation of performing my violin in the public of our living room, to seeing it all as energizing.

The critical vision of Ma uncomfortable in front of her family with my playing, and Pa's so-called indifference—somehow these goblins have fallen away. They are even transforming themselves into my friends who want to hear what's happening in my soul.

It's all an inner transformation. (In the outside world, nothing new is happening.)

Why now? Who knows? And who cares? The point is the leaf was ready to fall from the tree. And when it's ready, there's no stopping it. Just as before it's ready, there's no starting it. Cooking has its own natural rhythm, timing, and process. When the meal is ready, it's ready. And not a moment before then.

The trauma of the sensitive soul. . . just ended, the protective wall crumbled. After fifty years, or perhaps most of a lifetime, the leaf fell off the tree.

### Wake-Up Call

Terrible day yesterday, after Sharon's Bunratty's criticism call. "Why did you take out these events, the ones that caused me to register?" It totally threw me. Why?" It pushed me back into a "wake-up-to-focus-on-my-tour-business-and-life" call. It stirred up all my energy. Perhaps a needed pre-tour call.

My Enemy is My Friend and Vice Versa

Perhaps Sharon's call threw me so much because it was my first test that the audience is my friend, that all my friends are coming to Ireland. The ultimate test of the Hebrew word for friend - "rea", which means both opponent (enemy) and friend. My opponent (enemy) is my friend, and my friend is my opponent (enemy.)

How does that work out?

Well, in the case of Sharon, when she "attacked" me "correctly" in my opinion (because I did drop an advertised event on my brochure), I suddenly saw her as an adversary, an enemy. And I had to defend myself, which, in this case, meant explaining myself. I also had to re-examine my Ireland program, and focus all my energies on it to see if it was all right, all together, Thus, Sharon "woke me up." She woke up my sleeping tour-focusing energies. For this, I have to thank her. Thus, while seeming to be an opponent (enemy), she was actually my friend.

Alhambra: An Optimistic Piece!

The accent in "Alhambra" is on the second and third beat! This keeps things off balance, while driving them forward!

The essence and "meaning" of the "Alhambra" is: Move and drive things forward!

When the melody of life is confusing, vacillating back and forth, going up or down in an off-balance process, the best thing you can do is drive forward!

Depression, alienation, whatever are all besides the point. Move! Go for it! Daily

push things forward. Up or down, it doesn't matter.

Thus, "Alhambra is quite an optimistic piece, an off-beat and up-beat (up two beats) philosophy of life.

No wonder I love it.

"Gavotte en Rondeau" also has an upward slant, only more subtle. A slight breath, a light push upward before collapsing again, and starting the fight anew.

Thursday, June 27, 2019

Old age is a mountain.

To find your limits go beyond them to the impossible.

What is the impossible?

1, Physical improvement with age. Running, yoga, strength.

Freedom, Overwhelmed, Relish, Choice

Never Again Overwhelmed!

What is freedom but the freedom to choose.

And indeed, I am free to choose.

So why don't I feel free. Why do I feel so burdened and overwhelmed? Good questions.

Is it "simply" poor organization?

And I'm a good organizer.

So why can't I, don't I, apply my good organization talents to myself?

Why do I let myself be pushed around by these external events and calls? Is it an old neighborhood thing?

Whatever it is, it's time for a change! I need to take control of my life, take control of my choices.

Friday, June 28, 2019

### Depression as a Form of Self-Motivation

Choose to be depressed. Or choose to organize.

Is my morning depression a choice? And do I choose it because it is "romantic?" Or is it simply unstoppable, an integral part of my nature? Somehow I think not, but I'm not sure.

In any case, since I'm not, which means it could go either way, why not choose the driving idea that I can actually do something about it, change my old-neighborhood way of thinking, choose not to be depressed. And to do this, I can choose organizing my day.

That is a tremendous challenge, but one absolutely worthy of taking.

### Energy Management

As forms of energy management:

Worry about money is form of self-motivation.

Worry is agitating; depression is calming.

“Wow. I Am Good At This!”

As I contemplated offering “Tunes in the Church” in Galway to our group, I thought: Make it an optional event. Then I thought, “Wow, am I good at organizing and planning this tour business stuff!”

Encouraging and inspiring. Indeed, I could use this view, especially in the dark hours before a tour.

The Alhambra/Arpeggio Purpose and Challenge

Perhaps “Alhambra” is a lifetime challenge that I will ever grapple with and never solve.

Perhaps it has a different purpose for me. Perhaps it is not for being played in public, And this would be true for all the arpeggio pieces. Perhaps this is not simply my God-given talent. The challenges of “Alhambra,” and arpeggios in general, were given to me for another reason.

No doubt for some form of personal growth. But what, I don’t know.

Classical music is my love. Classical guitar is its secondary hand-maiden. Violin was first! But performing it not, and has never been, my talent.

Perhaps it was given to me to learn about Love, to appreciate Magnificence, Beauty, and melt-down Glory.

If I never play classical guitar in public, the pressure and hope of some day doing it, is off.

After eighty, it's all about deepening and returning to your roots. Perhaps I should go back to violin. And even classical music. That, after all, was my primary love.

On the other hand, folk singing is my talent. Like folk dancing, folk dance teaching, and even leading tour, weekends, social directing, whatever, although it has its hassles and tensions, it is “easy and natural” for me. And has been ever since I led the “Boys against the Girls” in Tryon Park at Barnard School when I was 5 years old. (Or was it 6?)

Even conducting the orchestra at Music and Art. I don't remember feeling uncomfortable or afraid, only excited. Again leading. Leading, taking charge, saying simply, “Let's go!” is my natural talent. As I say, even though it's got its challenges. Difficulties, and problems (what doesn't?), but it nevertheless comes easy. No problem. Why, I don't know. I didn't work at or practice for it. Max Finestone realized this when he asked me to be social director at Chait's when I was only nineteen years old. And when, a few years later, I took the job, it was easy for me—fun, with lots of humor, strange twists, and standing-on-my-head yogic crazy. And I enjoyed the crazy.

Thus, leading, organizing, directing are my talents. My training in classical music made folk singing, and later folk dancing, easy. But it never made performing on the classical guitar, violin, or any classical instrument easy! (Again, note how easy it was for me to “perform” on the gaida.)

Performing classical music on any instrument was never easy and natural. (Unless of course, it was a joke, like playing the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto on the gaida.)

Truly, my attempt to play “Alhambra” in public has been a fifty-year wild goose

chase.

Can I finally put this wild goose chase to rest, give up all hope, and more important, all desire, to perform classical guitar in public?

Saturday, June 29, 2019

### Classical Guitar and Folk Singing

#### Reviewing my Folk Songs

Somehow I see myself performing, being called to the stage (by my group) in the Ireland pubs and folk singing for the crowd.

I feel a bit uncomfortable with this thought, but it is a true one. Why do I feel uncomfortable? Only by the word “performing.” But now performing no longer includes classical guitar. So the word no longer fills me with terror; its frightening aspect has fallen away. Thus, performing is not longer poisoned. It is even “comfortable” in the sense of “easy.”

Wow, does this mean I will fall easily into folk song performing? Maybe.

Does this point to a possible new “performing” direction?

Sunday, June 30, 2019

### It's All A Performance

I am going to perform as a folk singer. It starts with Ireland. (Where this came from, don't know. But it came. And after 80. It's crazy.)

I see my new life as one big performance.

I perform, not only as a future folk singer, but now as a folk dance teacher, tour leader, socializer, guitar player, always. It's all a performance. Period. It's all a performance.

I wonder why I never saw it that way before.

I was trying to hide. From the barbs of criticism.

But somehow I no longer need to hide.

Monday, July 1, 2019

The Answer to Pain

Pain is not going to kill me.

But it sure does annoy me.

Psychological pain: pre-tour tension pain: physical pain: left shoulder guitar/computer pain; knee pain: stair walking and lower back pain.

I can't say this of any other pains, at least this morning.

Pains are mountains; they block every path. And they keep coming. On and on, forever and ever. And they will never stop.

Whether psychological or physical, whether TMS or "real," Doesn't matter. They won't ever go away.

What to do about this?

Deal with it, accept it.

Dive into the pain. Swim with the sharks.

Are pains failures? Psychological failures, both?

Well, why not? Why not view them that way?

What do failures do?

They either discourage and destroy me.

Or they annoy me, get me angry, very angry, and motivate me!

I hate failures. But I may need them.

And of course, I can't fail, unless I am reaching higher than I know, beyond the known to a place I've never gone.

#### Guitar: Am I There? I Am There

I could call my left shoulder pain my "Alhambra pain."

And once I solve the "Alhambra" problem, my left shoulder pain will go away.

But now I am playing the "Alhambra" focused and well.

Shouldn't the left shoulder pain disappear?

Well, it has diminished a bit, and this while playing the "Alhambra" correctly.

In my post-80 freedom state am I onto something?

I think so.

#### Neighborhood of Fearlessness

I can't go "home" again.

Can't go back to the old neighborhood.

I'm "trapped" in fearlessness.

Trapped in the next neighborhood of Fearlessness

Fearless guitar, fearless "Alhambra," fearless tours, and lovely folk dance.

There's no place to go anymore because I am there.

As I played my first "Alhambra" in the fearless manner, I had vision of my mother looking over my right shoulder from heaven, smiling down in encouragement. She always wanted me to be happy, and she was finally seeing me in a contented place, playing beautiful music, relaxed and contented.

And she was smiling down at me with and in encouragement.

Maybe this is what she always wanted, but I was always stuck in my own stuff of rebellion, trying to find out who I was, that I was blinded for years and unable to see it.

Now I could have true love and appreciation of my mother, that she loved me, and wanted me to find my own way, and be happy in my house and on my own path, which she now shares with me.

Creepy: Seeing my mother just above my right shoulder smiling down from heaven with encouragement was creepy, indeed.

Was she calling me to join her in heaven, meaning my death here on Earth is imminent?

Or was she calling me from heaven to encourage me to begin a new chapter on Earth, meaning the death of my "old neighborhood" existence and entering a new life in "Fearless neighborhood."

I'm hope it's the latter.

Tuesday, July 2, 2019

Life in Fearless Land

As my right index finger plucks the Alhambra guitar string I now want to linger on it, feel the flow of wonder and beauty, as it is now filled with love.

It's saying "Jimmy boy, you can make it. You're okay. I love you. No problem. No problems. Nothing to fear. My love will be with you forever. It will flow through your index finger into all your guitar playing, and from there extend to tour leading, folk dance teaching, and whatever else you do. I am sending you chords of love from heaven, and they are yours forever."

That is what Infant Vision is all about.

Wednesday, July 3, 2019

Practice my Fearless Trinity

So where am I this morning?

The fact that I have to take a pill for my skipping heart is annoying.

But the annoyances are mild. Suppose I have to take it for the rest of my life? Well, I take vitamins. Not that great a deal if I add a pill. Only my pride is hurt a bit.

Also Dr. Stone said I should learn to enjoy life. Ha, that's a tough one. I like the self-torture and self-punishment of pushing myself to the limit. Where does enjoyment come in? Unless that is the way I enjoy myself. Hmmn.

Is stress why my heart is arrhythmical, is skipping beats? Atrial fibrillation.

Does pushing myself to the limit cause stress?

Or does holding back cause stress?

Does holding back cause more stress than diving in?

Or vice versa?

All good questions.

Or does pushing myself to the limit and holding back have nothing to do with my heart beat one way or another?

Good questions. Ask Jonny.

Meanwhile, knowing this new situation, what should I do? How should I approach my tasks?

### Hold Back or Dive In?

Does pushing myself to the limit and diving in cause more stress than holding back?

Possible answer: Both create stress in their own unique ways. It's a matter of judgement.

So forget this vaguely useless question and move on. Handle each situation as it comes up, and make the immediate judgement on what degree to dive in or hold back.

It feels like it's the end of an era.

Time for another leaf.

Seems it will be about entering the Fearless Land.

Seems like I'll call this new leaf: Floating.

Friday, October 4, 2019

### Investment and Speculation

I'm too emotionally involved with my stocks, and the stock market. Should I consider changing my investment strategy?

Put most assets into CDs or something stable?

The "rest" for speculation fun.

### Time for a New Vision

A strange morning. I am a bit down, but don't quite know why.

Seems like my "old vision," which included mucho stretching for knee healing and more, has run out of gas.

Or maybe I'm down a bit because my "old vision" has been fulfilled, has succeeded! My my old vision has gone as far as it can go, and it is now time for a new vision! According to my historic patterns, this explanation for my down feels right.

Once I succeed, after the initial "wahoo!" of success, I start to go down. Fulfillment of vision leads to a few moments, minutes, even a day of joy. Then it is followed by emptiness, depression, and the "Now what?" feeling.

The drained and drainage feeling. And it's what I have this morning.

What does it mean?

The old vision is completed, done, and gone. It has fulfilled its limited purpose. The "new normal" has succeeded and is now established. I am bored with this new normal. And

empty.

My soul yearns for the limitless.

Thus it is time for a new vision.

Okay, got it.

What will that new vision be?

### Best Way of Life

(The Stretching Life)

That's why I felt "very inward" yesterday. I was digging around the bottom, where my old vision now lay in its graveyard. I didn't quite understand what was going on. But now I do.

I also realize what happened to my body over the past few years. I had decided to test it. I wanted to see how long I could go without my yoga stretching, without stretching after folk dancing, running, etc. I wanted to see how much of my old life style I could destroy before I would be forced to recognize and change it. I was exploring and testing. How far can I go without exercising? How strong am I? What are the limits of my strength?

Well, after the miseries of last year, where I reached the point where I could hardly walk, go down or up stairs, squat, and every dance class was a terror, with constant worries about knee pain, and even visits to the doctor about arthritis, etc. I finally reached the end of my search.

Result: I must stretch. My old way of life, with its constant and daily yogic stretching, is the best way of life! There is no denying or getting around it. Also, my miracle schedule life is the best way of life for me. Period. I know that now without reservation. No more testing or

experimenting. I just know. Period.

### Four Areas of Miracle Schedule Competence

#### New Depth Directions

Okay, I'm ready to move on. I'm ready for my next vision.

What is it?

I don't know yet, but I'm looking.

Maybe it's simply returning to my roots, but going deeper. Yes, that feels right. After all, I know that following my miracle schedule is the best life for me.

So continue following it, but go deeper.

How?

My first route seems to be: How to handle and deal with yesterday's two new ideas:

1. I can edit my NLJ.
2. I can play guitar. (I can play Alhambra, etc.)

If I can edit my New Leaf Journal, and play Alhambra and along with it all the rest of my classical guitar pieces, where and how do I go on from here? Aha, that is the new question.

I love the searching challenge.

In these formerly non-competent fields, how to live knowing I am competent?

Editing and guitar are my new challenges.

And I can even throw in dancing. I'm videoing each dance class, then studying the videos. All to improve my dancing and teaching style.

Add to this the known realization that I must stretch. I now have four areas of miracle schedule competence.

This makes four miracle schedule areas of competence:

Editing (writing), classical guitar, folk dancing, yoga (with running).

Not bad for one morning.

Where does study and Hebrew fit in? Nowhere at the moment.

### Publishing My Creations As A Good-In-Itself

New idea: Maybe publishing is a good-in-itself.

{Publishing my creations signifies completion.

Also, as opposed to sales, I have complete control over it.

Also, once I publish, I do have a limited market, namely my folk dance and traveler email list.

But mainly, publishing my books is a good-in-itself. And by removing the extraneous compulsion that I “must” sell, publishing my creations gives me a feeling of satisfaction and completion.

If I add this new idea of publishing as a good-in-itself, to my miracle schedule competence list, I have had quite a morning of new depths directions.

In fact, I now have five new depth directions.

1. Editing
2. Guitar
3. Folk Dancing
4. Yoga (stretching and running)
5. Publishing

This new view of publishing, as a good-in-itself for me, is a gigantic knock-out, life-changing realization. It puts control of my happiness completely in my own hands! And this, rather than in the hands of the audience, that is, the people that must purchase my books in order to give my creations value.

By publishing, I am making myself happy! Period.

I enjoy, nay love, seeing my work in print! Period.

I am taking of my own happiness into my total control! Period.

And indeed, that's good enough for me.

### Giving Myself the Gift of Fun

The Professionals Call It "Enjoyment"

The Religious Folks Call it "Joy"

The Freudians (Psychoanalysts) Call It "Pleasure"

Like trading stocks, speculating, publishing my own works is simply for my own pleasure, my own joy and enjoyment. Because it's fun. Period.

What a wonderful development and realization.

Could teaching folk dancing, and even leading tours, ever reach such a level?

Well, teaching folk dancing almost does.

Could tours ever do it?

Maybe that's asking too much.

All is One, but maybe not yet for me.

Yet it is something to aim for, something to consider.

Who knows, some day I might reach heights of realization I never dreamed of.

(Or is this hubris? Will I be punished for even thinking such things?)

But is it really so bad to hope for such happiness, such fulfillment? Who, after all, would be punishing me?

I doubt it would be God since He loves me.

My mother? My parents? Other?

But they loved me, too.

So who are these imagined punishers? Why do I fear the arrogance of hubris?

Good question. I have no answer.

Maybe I have no answer because no answer exists. Maybe this is all a result of my dream, my way of viewing things, my mishegas, neurosis, and broken vision.

Maybe I "deserve" happiness. But nobody is going to give it to me but myself.

So it is up to me. I must, need to, want to, would like to, give myself the gift of happiness. And if I don't do it, no one else will.

This means breaking the final wall: Letting myself enjoy leading my tours!

Wow, what a gift that would be.

I could start with Romania.

Give myself the gift of pleasure and enjoyment

Give myself the gift of fun leading my tour to Romania.

The moral of all this is:

Give myself the gift of fun because no one else is going to give it to me.

Why do it?

Why take a chance on something new? Or old, for that matter?

Because it's exciting and its fun.

At my stage of the game, there is no other reason to do it.

At my stage of the game, there is no other reason to do it.