

# New Normal

September 26, 2019

## Free Time

### Time To Create the New Normal Life

I need time off to create, think, write, put things together, solidify my life.

Maybe the uprooting of my folk dance teaching schedule is no accident, no twist of fate, but created by Higher Forces and thus, in the long run, a good thing. My touring and tour leadership has a break. My October Romania tour is over. I'm free for nine months.

Our next tour to Bulgaria is in August.

What will I do with this free time?

Exercise, write, solidify the new normal life I want to organize and lead.

I could even play guitar, and choreograph new dances.

So be happy with my free time gift.

Wednesday, October 2, 2019

## Love

The “I love you” goodbye.

I feel like a fool saying it. It seems mushy, untrue. Miki criticized it. She hates it. It's not part of my upbringing.

David started saying it. A great contribution, but very hard for me to say.

Can I say “I love you” to myself? Probably not. But it starts there, deep in the self. What progress I would make, if I could! In my knees, body, as a tour leader, guitarist, writer, even language.

Truth is love is everywhere in my life. I just rarely acknowledge or express it. Love is the beginning and end of everything.

By “loving out loud,” will I increase my power? Or get shot down as a fool, criticized, and belittled?

I believe the former—but it is new. I’ll need to try it, practice saying it.

But there is no choice. I’ve done everything else, tried everything else. There is no other place to go.

I am ready to embrace it.

Over the years, I have been more focused on fear and its opposite, anger, than love.

According to Elie Wiesel, the opposite of love is indifference (not hate). The opposite of art, faith, and life is not ugliness, disbelief, or death, but indifference.

Monday, October 7, 2019

Today my philosophy with Big Al is that, although I will forever never succeed, I will forever keep trying.

You have to transform your muscles fibers for Big Al. Neuroplasticity. Does it work? (They say it does.)

How does it work?

(Thousands of repetitions?)

Certainly, it is the foundation of hope.

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

Thumb and Power

Getting Used to Power, Competence, and Good

What is the thumb?

What does it actually mean? What does it symbolize?

As the strongest and most manipulable finger in the hand, it means power. It symbolizes competence and good.

Thus, by focusing on my thumb, I focus on my power. And, in doing so, I become competent and good.

(Hypothenar cramping is cramping my power.)

Do I really want to be powerful, competent, and good? Can I handle it?

In the new normal world I now live in, I have to!

Friday, October 11, 2019

Creating A Few More Journal Pages

Panic Before the Tour

Let's face it: Another trip is coming up (Romania) and I'm not facing the panic and terror this venture creates. The idea of leaving home and facing the world shakes me to my

bones. That's why I'm sneezing this morning, on the verge of a cold and getting sick. My resistance is down, and my fear is up. Evil germs of destruction, powerful poisons of worry, terror, panic, all woven into one grand, jump-off-the-wall, leave-home tremble are invading my body.

Off course this is nothing new. It happens before every tour I lead. And the amazing and surprising thing is, that no matter how many tours I lead, the pre-trip anxiety I feel never changes!

Indeed, much as I hate to admit it, I need the Lord to help me out on this one. I can't do it alone.

What or who will protect me when I leave home and enter the wide, empty, terrifying world beyond my walls? Once I leave the house, I am vulnerable. (Maybe I'm vulnerable in my house as well, but somehow I don't feel it.)

But I certainly feel it before leading a tour. There is a touch of anxiety before even a vacation trip, but it is much smaller. Sometimes there is even none.

In any case, we're not talking about vacations but leadership.

Yes, I need lots of help. My parents, wife, friends, others, none can help me. I'm all alone.

Only the Higher Forces can help. And I need to have faith in Them. I need to hand myself over, put myself in God's hands.

Can I accept this deeply in my heart? Do I dare admit I am so helpless, so vulnerable, a unprotected baby dropped into the universe?

A Reason to Write Fiction

This would require a powerful act of imagination. At the moment, thinking this way feels unnatural, untruthful, unreal.

But the imagination creates reality.

And I've always loved my imagination! And it flourishes best in my fiction! Maybe I should write stories about my travel fears, using the wings of imagination to elevate me, lift me out of my self-inflicted miseries.

Maybe it's a road I should explore.

Reading AloudFor Editing, Poetic, and Performing Purposes

I just read Carlos the Cloud and ended up editing quite a bit. Reading aloud changes everything. And improves it through sound.

Will I now have to read and reread all of the book, aloud before I publish there? Maybe.

Certainly, a new and powerful editing direction. And it combines performance, too, putting it very close to reality.

This is a big, big jump. And may even return me to performing one day. (Wow, what did I just say?). But this time, as a reader.

Monday, October 28, 2019

Combining Fiction and Tours

I love a total change of life, a fresh and new.

Thus this morning I'm thinking about really growing, pushing, changing, and committing myself to my folk tours.

How can I do this, promote and push this over writing?

Truth is, I'm not. I'm still writing and perfecting my writing, especially during this fine-tuning year. But somehow, writing and folk tours have mysteriously combined! What! What did I just say?

Saturday, November 9, 2019

I've finished the Romania videos.

I'm finished with Romania follow up; I'm totally free!

Now, after my ten minutes of wahoo freedom cries of relief and joy, I move to the “Now what?” stage.

I don't like to hang out, stay in the abyss of freedom.

Character is what keeps you out of the abyss.

And my character says, take a brief wahoo rest. Then best to move on to the next project. (Or else disintegrate.)

Monday, November 11, 2019

Learning and Mop-Up

In my miracle schedule there is learning, and there is mop up. Both are important.

Learning is exciting; mop-up is rather boring, but nevertheless necessary.

Today I am learning in languages: Romanian for one month.

My mop-up is Treasury Choro book, and Carlos the Cloud, which I might rename as: Carlos the Cloud Dances with Eternity (the Sun), or Dancing with Eternity (although I don't mean it that sway, folks might interpret this as death), so maybe best is: Dancing with the Sun. (Sun is obviously symbol for eternity).

Wednesday, November 13, 2019

Yesterday I went over the New Normal cliff and fell into the abyss.

Yes, I'm finally coming down from my post-Romania tour high.

But this time (hopefully) it is a little more than that. Working with Henry has really upset my equilibrium. This started when his Klezmer email list of 3,700 turned out to be a nothing. Plus, he asked me to mail it out, not himself. And after that, did absolutely nothing to publicize our tour.

Once on tour, he was a social disappointment, staying off with his friends, mixing with no one, helping no one, including me, and even was a bit of a hindrance complaining about the tour itself. (I forgot what his complaint was, but I do remember that he complained instead of helped. Amazing. I let it all go in my mind, since I had to concentrate on running the tour. But now that it's over, all these Henry action aspects are coming.

Then after the tour come his the questioning emails about the financial details of the tour, how to run my tours, etc. All total downers. Very difficult. And all the while I'm trying to decide what direction this tour should go, whether I should work with Henry again, whether he wants to work with me. And up to now, I've been putting the final decision in his hands. I sent him a final email, giving my terms and needs, and asking if he wanted either to work with me or run his own tour. So far I haven't received an answer.

And this small space of waiting time has given me the opportunity to think on this a bit more.

And my decision now is: Instead of waiting for Henry's final answer, which may never come, I should make the final decision. And this morning my decision is: It is just too problematic working with Henry. So end it.

### Accepting the New Normal

Accepting that all the things I have accomplished are amazing, that I am amazing, and that the world I have created and has been created around me is amazing, and even that all is amazing, is no longer amazing.

It has become an accepted fact of my life.

Is this a sad thing? A loss of a beautiful way of viewing the world?

Or is viewing the world that way a subtle form of denying my own God-given powers?

I'm not sure.

But this is what is now happening. I have accepted wonder and amazement. Yes, it diminishes the to pop and glow, at least for now. Maybe I'll find a new pop and glow. But I'm still in the boring acceptance of amazement phase.

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Next Post-Romania Stage of the New Normal

Re-Entry Steps

Re-entry steps into my new, post-Romania New Normal World.

1. Business:

Henry problem solved. On to next K/fd Romanian tour.

2. Money.

Investments, stocks. Enjoying my money. Here the big move: What, after all, is the money for? All along, it was, is, will be so that I can freely be and become an artist. Well, I am there now. Hard to believe, but I do have enough money to "retire." But what is retire but to become an artist? Money has always been the means to the end, the means to such freedom. And now I have it. Now I can do it.

So I need the courage to admit I have enough to fulfill this dream, enough to become that artist I always wanted to be, which means enough to become a writer. Which means I need to courage to stop trying to accumulate money through speculation in the market, through the joys and downs of day trading, swing trading, and trading in general. I need to give up my developed addiction to sudden wealth through the market, and penny stock

grand jumps (and mostly grand descents). Truth is, I am a terrible day trader, swing trader, all trader. I have mostly lost money. I even know I am terrible at this, and that it is absolutely not my calling. , Yet I do it, did it, anyway. Now I need the courage to jump off the speculation cliff, to say now is the time to enjoy my money, not accumulate more of it. Of course, it's always nice to have more money. But I don't need it the way I used to. Truth is, I have enough. Which means, time to drop the old ways and move on.

Moving on means selling all my speculative stocks, putting some money into index funds. A smaller amount into interest paying REITS, and the rest into very safe CD's and even treasuries.

There is no question this is my right next direction. It will free my mind and body to become the artist I always wanted to be. So JUST DO IT.

### 3. Writing

What will “replace” the former thrills, ups and downs of speculating in the stock market? Becoming an artist, in whatever way that means. So first is writing. (But who knows what else may follow. Maybe even music, or choreography, or who knows what? It's a side open field, and I am free to go in any direction. But for now, I choose writing.

### 4. Exercise:

Post=Romanian mental bombardier attack and challenge to my left knee. It shows it's time to back to my amazing three-pronged trilogy of calliyoga stretch routine, running, and gym,

Friday, November 15, 2019

Divine Selfishness Wins Every Time

The ultimate motivation question is: Why do it?

The ultimate motivation answer: Because it's good for me.

I don't have to do any of this.

There's no rush.

I can start fresh. From zero. And I can start today!

Back to divine selfishness.

Why?

I know it's good for me.

And thus it is good for everyone else.

Plus, I know divine selfishness works!

The tyranny of monkey mind. The challenge: fight it with focus. One focus at a time.

Possible morning order.

1. Study: Romanian

2. Guitar: 1/2 hour songs, 1/2 hour classical guitar. This method has blown away my old fast/slow classic guitar worries. Fast/slow is now totally besides the point.

3. Exercise

4. Write

5. The bumps of business

Why do ads and sell?

Because its good for me,

And because it's good for me, it also benefits the world.

Divine selfishness wins every time!

Tuesday, November 19, 2019

Being Kind To Myself

Guitar, V, slow Alhambra, Kevin Cole, heart attack, Fallsview, righteous wrong doing, guilt, sadness, a mix of many strange feelings.

Coming out in the gift of slow guitar playing. Slow Gavotte and Musette, slow Gavotte en Rondeau, slow Alhambra with lovely slow focus on the now-released-and-happy index finger.

What does it all mean?

Maybe I'm releasing myself and my sadness, guilt, and constant self-punishment, a self-torture expressed by an inner compulsion, a forcing of myself to play guitar fast in order to ever prove to myself and others that I'm a good guitar player, as good as my masters, namely Segovia and the Segovia crowd (which was the violin, growing-up Jascha Heifetz genius crowd) and thus worthy and good.

It's a puzzle, and indeed feels different.

Maybe today, expressed through the guitar, I'm being kind to myself for the first time.

Wednesday, November 20, 2019

Guitar: Take as long as you like for the "I" finger. No rush. A momentary peek into a fundamental change.

The "I" finger turn-about. Is it possible? Could I do it?

Yes. (But it is so hard.)

Friday, November 22, 2019

A bit of self-disgust this morning. I've lost my way. I've been pushed off my path by events, and monkey mind.

Events are out of control; monkey mind is in my control.

Rewards of finishing (by Treasury book, Romania tour, more): Give me the opportunity to do it again! Do more of it. To start again, new and fresh!

A new new level, and hopefully, aiming for, a new new normal.

Guitar: Keep my tiny (tremolo) focus on three-fingers played even, evenly. Three fingers relaxed and in a unit.

New! Faith in the new.

Have faith and practice faith. Faith in the Power of my focus. (Focus is the opposite

of monkey mind.)

And it works!

Does it really work?

Yes.

A bit of fear, and trembling with belief.

Saturday, November 23, 2019

Began the morning with a bit of self-disgust.

Then I summarized, and moved ahead. . . way ahead!

### Finishings

1. Romania and Henry. Sell

2. My choreo Treasury: Publish. . . and sell

### New Beginnings:

#### The new “Just-Do-It” character.

1. Dan concert idea. . . just a bit.

a. Negatives: Can there really be a new start after 80?

b. Positives: Well, why not? Only monkey mind is distracting and stopping me.

2. Sing my songs.

Do I dare? Yes. But in the past, I couldn't even admit I wrote them. Can't take the

credit. Too much ego.

But here's the new way: I don't have to admit I wrote them! No one is forcing me. In fact, I like hiding behind my created names like Dmitri Zlato, Arany Janos, etc. Just as I don't have to admit I choreographed all my dances, I don't have to admit I wrote my songs, or even my stories! I can bypass my ego with all its self-consciousness and fears. Just do them! Period. No explanation. If asked, I'll say they are mine. Or someone else's, namely Dmitri Zlato, Jimenez del Oro, or another one of my characters. This is the new way. Jump past the ego self-block. Just sing them. Just dance them. Just do it!

Yes, I can do that. Let me new "Jimmy Just-Do-It" character, or Robert the Rustic Robot, or other.

Yes. Just do it and shut up.

Sunday, November 24, 2019

I hate to admit it but Henry emits poisonous vibrations which are simply not good for me. Witness my almost constant nausea.

Nausea is indeed a mixture of anger, sadness, and disappointment.

I'm sad because Henry has talents as a speaker, writer, organizer, plus he's funny.

I'm angry because of the frustrations of working with him, his distrust, and basically doing nothing to promote our tour.

I'm disappointed because after all the time, effort, and work I put into the tour and teaching him about the tour business, it didn't work out.

Result: Even if he agrees to lead a tour under my aegis, I must still say no. This to save myself from his poisons.

This poison has created a cloud of nausea which has been hanging over me ever since the tour ended. No, actually it has been hanging over me since the tout started. No, it has been hanging over me ever since I started working with Henry almost a year ago! In fact, I must admit that his arrogance, negativity, and poison has been sapping my energy, and giving me a stomach ache, ever since I began working with him in January when I realized he would do nothing to promote our tour.

Thus, I have ben “quietly” angry with him for almost a year! 10-11 months of quiet fury, of seething rage at Henry for doing nothing!

I've been furious at him for almost a year!

Well, I'm just waking up now.

Here's the letter I'm sending him:

Dear Henry,

We won't be working together on future tours.

I'm disappointed it didn't work out between us. I'm sure you are, too. But sometimes the mix just isn't right.

I wish you luck in your future endeavors.

Best.

Jim

Truth is, I feel so happy about this Henry decision I've finally made. The poison days are over. I'm finally free!

Monday, November 25, 2019

Aftermath, After Thoughts, After Effects, After All

The Henry incident, working "with" him, has sucked up all my inspiration. Today, one day after I decided to end the debacle, I feel totally drained of energy, inspiration. An empty and uninpired miracle schedule lies before me.

First I thought only after the tour, then I thought only during and after the tour, finally I realized it was eleven months! Eleven months of draining hell have come to a close.

As I look back, I ask myself: Could I have done it any differently? I don't see how. Thus, as long as I wanted to organize a Klezmer/Folk Dance Tour of Romania, there was no other way. No other Klezmer expert rose up or came to mind. When Zalman Mlotek couldn't do it, there was no one left but Henry. And I thought, since Henry had organized and run his KlezKamp for so many years, he would know business, know how to advertise and get his people to register. He even offered a 3700 person email list!

The first (and perhaps final) hint came when he said not he but I should be the one who sends out the emails from his list. As I remember, his explanation, or rationalization, was that it was my tour and it would be better coming from me. This certainly didn't sound right to me, but, I didn't want to insist that he do it. Plus he said he didn't know how to send it, that his assistant did all the emails. So I contacted his assistant, worked with him, got the

email list, and learned how to use MailChimp to email out all 3700 names. I ended up email them about 5 times. Result: Three or four responses saying how nice such a tour would be. But not one registration! Then I found out that most of Henry's KlezKamp email list was old, email addresses missing and useless. Thus who knows how many people it really reached.

That was my down period. I realized I was all alone in this venture, that it would be up to , and Lee F to get people, and that, if they came, they would all be from my own email list. Ther was no way I was going to expand my market, and I had originally hoped.

That was the point I could have quit. But of course I didn't since I had already committed myself to the tour. So I continued to promote it while quietly seething at Henry for doing nothing (and making a good profit by getting paid pretty well in the process. A free trip plus \$100 per person!).

Well, the result was: we ended up with 30 people (28 paying), so that even after all expenses, I still ended up with a good profit.)

So, where am I this morning?

A beautiful miracle schedule sits before me. Present business is good, miracle schedule events are good, I have “free” time for a couple of months. All good stuff.

But nevertheless, I am still totally drained, and free of any inspiration. Now that my seething hell of anger and rage is over, do I simply need a period of rest, recuperation, and mental reassembly?

I feel like I've just been hit and run over by a tank. Okay, but it is done. I know it's

time to move on. But how does one recover their inspiration?

Waiting?

Dive right in regardless?

The latter sounds like the best and healthiest approach.

Just do it. Dive right into the miracle schedule.

Turn off your mind, shut up, and do it.

And start now.

Okay, I will.

“Just do it” is working.

New Enthusiasms and Inspirations

in my Upcoming New Normal World

1. Promoting, advertising, and selling my upcoming “Treasury of International Folk Dances choreographed by Jim Gold”

This sales approach, actually trying to sell my own book, unabashed, unashamed, unselfconscious, and in happy exuberant mode, is totally new!

It is part of my upcoming New Normal world.

Wow!

To promote, advertise, and sell my “Treasury of International Folk Dances: A step-

by-Step Guide Choreographed by Jim Gold” with enthusiasm, inspiration, exuberance, and happiness is a major mental and psychological accomplishment. It is something I have never done, or been able to do before!

Imagine, to have love and enthusiasm for my own work. (Well, I’ve always had it, but only in secret.) And being able to admit and express this happy exuberance in public!

To go public with exuberance for my creations! Wow!

Tuesday, November 26, 2019

Deep sadness this morning as I am not fulfilling the promises I made to myself.

As I say, the inspirations and directions I had before my Romanian tour have all but disappeared. Feels like I’ve somewhat lost my way, and can’t get back on track. I had it all together before the tour, Now, I’m drained and lost.

Is this really true? Or is it a mere “feeling?” No doubt, the latter. But still, I must deal with it.

Why do I feel this way? Partly, it was dealing with Henry. But partly, and probably more correct and important, it is, was dealing with success. Yes, Henry is over, but success is not.

Why do I feel successful?

Money is good, tour was good, article in Jewish Standard was good, finishing and upcoming publishing of my choreo book is good. My life is mostly, even all in order, that’s good. Lot of goods here.

But lots of goods mean lots of endings. I'm finished with my choreo book, finished with my Romania tour, finished with Henry, even with money, although I'm not "finished," I'm not necessarily inspired to make more, at least now. And the stock market speculation in small and penny stocks seems to have also come to a close. Seems I even succeeded there, that is, since I've lost so much money in the penny stock process, I've succeeded in giving up my hopes for their quick and instant rises. So that hope and pleasure is also gone.

Plus, I've given up my pleasure in exercise. That is a big deal. How did this happen? Again, no particular reason I can think of. It has somehow and simply drained out of me.

So that's where I stand this morning. Kind of nowhere.

Maybe I have to clean out my stable before I can move on. Maybe this down and empty feeling is part of the cleansing process. We'll see.

In any case, for today, just because I feel miserable is no reason to stop doing all the "good" things I do for myself. I'll just have to put my brain aside, shut off my mind, and dive in.

Do all my miracle schedule events, my business, all without inspiration or enthusiasm. Just do them. And shut up.

First thing I'm doing, after a bit of a.m. Hebrew and journal writing, is business, namely, opening my email. No enthusiasm, hope, or inspiration, but I'm doing it anyway.

Friday, November 29, 2019

Remembering Balance

Is my miracle schedule more important than my business?

No. But my miracle schedule is the foundation of my business. And just like a house cannot stand without a foundation, a foundation is useless without a house.

I must do both.

But I must start with my foundation.

Thus I must start my day with my miracle schedule. That must be build first before I can move on to my business, or build my house.

During my “Romanian period” the balance was disturbed: Too much business. Too much focus on tours, Romania, and Henry.

Now is the time to right the balance, lean a bit the other way, and during this quiet period dive into my miracle schedule full swing. I’ll do that.

But if I can remember the idea of balance, that eventually I will swing back to my business, that would be good.

Sunday, December 1, 2019

Life has pain, and sometimes life is pain.

But sometimes the pain turns into pleasure and this can happen by diving straight into it. As I did on my long run!

Hebrew: No more underlines. Try to remember the words instead.

Why sadness? Why depression?

Breaking up of my commitments. Loss and lack of focus. I'm not working hard enough, fighting to be better and be my best, I'm dribbling away from the daily challenge, energy down, sliding, and lost. Thus sadness and depression.

How to fight sadness? How to repel depression?

What is the road back: Dive in. Fight the downstream currents. Grab the challenge.

Jump into the fire up. Light up again!

Make it harder. Fight the pain. Divert, change, transform, metamorphosize the focus into a higher goal.

Turn discomfort into glory, pain into heroism.

Monday, December 2, 2019

### Easy New Land

I like it. Writing, first thing in the morning, in my journal, a my spiritual practice.

Miracle schedule event as my spiritual practice.

“Milk my muscles” to death. . .and rebirth.

Faster, faster, more, more. See what happens.

I did it in gym, now in guitar.

It's frightening how it works! How it propels me “easily” to the next level.

(Can I) use my fear to jump.

Scary, but it's also so easy to dump the barriers. What's the problem? It's just a new

world full of light and air. A grain beyond New Normal. It needs another name.

That takes care of the guitar. If the guitar is taken care of, what's left? Nothing. I'm free. I have arrived at the happy place.

I've passed breakthrough lane. Entered Easy New Land.

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

I'm missing my sales connection and energy charge. Hmm.

### Directing Energy

It seems that the "natural" tendency of energy is downward. Gravity pulls it toward the earth. This certainly seems true of mental energy.

If not given something higher to aim for, the mind slants earthward, downward.

That's why the best attitude and approach is to each day aim to do better than the day before.

This philosophy directs the energy upward, away from depression and toward joy.

What did I do yesterday to make my day better than the day before? I added squats and guitar playing.

### Two Great Questions

1. Am I on the (creative) path to something absolutely marvelous or to something absolutely mediocre?

Artists create.

I am an artist.

Artists are on the creative path and the creative path can only lead to something absolutely marvelous. (Otherwise it is not the creative path.)

2. What “impossible” thing am I believing or planning for? A beautiful Alhambra and excellent knees.

I’m on the path.

I could live in the land of the Marvelous Alhambra.

Knees, too. I could live in the land of excellent knees. I just added squats.

This could be the New Normal.

Change “could be” to “would be” the New Normal, to “can be” the New Normal, to “will be” the New Normal, to is the New Normal.

On the creative path.

Alhambra and excellent knees are the New Normal.

Does saying so make it so?

Maybe.

### Let Curiosity Win

I have to let myself into this new land. I have to allow myself in. I need permission.

My own permission.

I need permission for myself.

I have the key.

Why do I need permission? I don't know.

Maybe I'm afraid to enter. Fear. it. It's strange, unknown, I'm not used to it. All possible, and probably true.

But so what? I'm there now.

Just turn the key and go in.

See what happens.

Let curiosity win.

A land of optimism and joy. Does such a land really exist?

Doubts are coming back. I'm slipping. . .back into "reality," or at least the old familiar reality.

But this is a new land, a new normal. It's a place I'm familiar with because I've visited temporality. But only visited for short periods of time. Never for long periods. And I've never stayed there permanently, never lived there a long time or made it my long term "permanent" resident. (As we have done so in Teaneck.)

So now I must give up my doubts and move in. Give it a try. See what happens. Let curiosity win.

That's what this break between tours is for, this "vacation" period. To find a new experimental place to live, and give it a try.

Moving is possible.

But changing residents is more difficult than I thought.

There is so much furniture to either bring or replace.

It will take time, and getting used to the new neighborhood.

At this rate, it may even end up being fun playing classical guitar!

What a beyond victory that would be.

Beyond Wahoo itself.

A simple acceptance of the New Land.

Fun. Imagine that!

The ultimate victory is found in fun.

Well, in classical guitar playing at least. But perhaps in other things as well.

Note: It is called "play" or "playing."

Classical guitar playing.

I rarely get sick.

But maybe this transformation is totally exhausting, and that's why I'm so tired,

sniffling, sneezing, getting chills, and on the verge of getting sick.

### Function and Purpose of Trading Penny Stocks

Maybe penny stocks are my form of play. Maybe I need to trade them as my form of play. And since I need to play that way, I can at least try to keep my losses low.

Maybe trading penny stocks is one of my “hobbies,” my needs, and thus one of my expenses.

And since I will mostly be losing money, try keeping my “expenses” low.

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

### Art and Commerce

Sales pushed me out of myself and forces me to relate to people. Art is a higher calling, but without sales, I might end up alone, high upstairs, in the closet, lost and isolated in my artistic garret writing the great American novel.

The happy result of sales is money.

And money both protects and excites me. Money buys safety. But it also brings power and excitement.

Thus sadly, it seems, sales and money push me to connect to people.

Thus sales connects me to the outside world.

Sales, along with the money it dumps into my coffers, brings me safety, power, connection, and excitement.

Yet, I always feel at is a higher calling, and this een thought creating it isolates me.

Ideally, I would create art in order to bring it to people, to “sell” it to them.

And in truth, this is what I do.

However, I always (used to) feel a grand separation between art and business, between artistic creation, the highest form that can be, and sales with the money it brings in.

Yes, I can explain this separation and the disdain I feel for sales and money, as caused by my upbringing. These indeed seemed to be my parents values. “Seemed” I say, because maybe deep down, they weren’t. After all, my parents were both public school teacher and principals and thus had a steady secure job.

A steady secure job is something I have never had. Yes, I always wanted and needed security, but I’d never wanted to attain it through a steady job. The artistic life was the one for me, and this was all the heroism of its insecurity.

And that’s the life I chose.

Luckily, I also had to make money, and this forced me out of my artistic cocoon to meet and deal with the public.

So I am definitely a split personality, divided between art and commerce, ever worshiping art while disdaining sales and money. The only “improvement” I can see in my attitude is that I disdain sales and money less than I used to.

Wouldn’t it be nice if I could love and worship sales (and money) along with art, unite art and sales into one grand world ball? Wouldn’t it be nice if I could turn schizophrenia into unophrenia or monophrenia?

But although I have made “progress” on this attitude and issue, I am still not there

yet.

My New Normal Land is still in conflict.

I know intellectually that Art and commerce go together, that on a higher, the highest of levels, they are one. But intellect and emotions have yet to fuse in the grand One.

Well, once in a while it happens, but it is rare.

Thursday, December 5, 2019

### Happiness, Bliss, Wisdom

#### Remembering and Maintaining the Yogic Trance State

I'm not there yet.

A burst, a sudden chill of happiness burst through my veins.

How do I arrive at, maintain, and remember such a high state of vision?

It is a godly yogic trance state.

Evidently, I don't have the expertise yet to maintain or remember it. I'm not there yet.

I can know, and even maintain it for a few seconds, maybe, if I'm lucky, even a minute. But how to build it up, maintain and remember it over long periods, that is the question. And no doubt, biggest life challenge.

To attain and maintain this attitude is my *matara*, my goal.

### The Attitude

The Attitude is the substratum, the base, the bottom; it is also the top, the pinnacle, the ultimate height and connection.

Thw Yogic trance state.

It's not about money, leading tours, former folk dance weekends, dance classes, security, stocks, or day trading, It's not even about worldly fears and short-term accomplishments or temporary goals.

It's only about remembering and maintaining the Attitude. The high trance state of what yogi's call Bliss. Others call it God, Reality, Nirvana, whatever want to call it.

I'll call it The Attitude.

Everything else is below The Attitude. Thus, in a sense, it is besides the point. "Beside it," next to the Point, on the side of it, secondary, vaguely seen, pleasantly envisioned. but not bottom-line.

Friday, December 6, 2019

### A Visit with Divine Madness

### Benefits of Falling Off the Cliff

I went deep into myself, so deep that I fell off a cliff, and, in the process, lost the world.

Now I'm back. What happened? Why? And does it even matter why?

First, what did I gain? What benefits accrued to me? If any. Well, on guitar I gained big time and mucho.

Is or was it temporarily? I hope not. We'll see.

How did I reach that point?

I'm not sure. But part of it was the "I don't give a damn feeling," I'm playing as fast as I can and fuck the world; all my internal and external critics can go to hell. Yes, I guess I was mad, angry, maybe furious. A divine madness descended upon me, and, in that mad process, I succeeded. At least temporarily. I said "Fuck 'em all" and (as a result?) my guitar playing just flew! It was totally great. I had days of amazement and awe. Truly, I was in another world, a world of shining excellent, power, and glory.

But to get there, I had to temporarily leave this world. My wings were made of divine madness.

Now, after a session with Rick, I'm back.

The (temporary) guitar benefits were and are obvious. Perhaps I needed that break, that vacation from the world, that brief time to fly in the air and fall off the cliff in order to reach, to touch, however briefly, that high place of excellence and power. I needed to step back in order to step forward.

Well, it's over now. I'm back. We'll see what happens.

Will it last? We'll see.

### My Thanksgiving Gift: Divine Madness

This brief visit was a result of the vacation I needed and promised to take after my Romania tour ended. I knew I had a spot of down time from mid-November to January

with no tour or sales pressure.

It took two-three weeks to recover from Romania. This put me almost exactly into Thanksgiving “vacation” time. And that’s when I gave myself the vacation from everyone and everything. And this opening gave me the internal freedom to receive the gift of divine madness that descended into my fingers and spread immediately to my guitar playing.

It felt vaguely like rage, but a bit beyond that, too.

I was mad, afflicted by divine madness.

Now I’ll simply try to be thankful and appreciate my gift. After all, it was Thanksgiving.

### Return

I return to earth.

And with my return come earthly self-doubts:

Is the biblical creation story true? Or merely a myth?

Did divine madness really descend upon me?

Am I worthy of such visit? Did it really happen? Is man really a semi-divine creature? Am I?

### What is Divine Madness?

(The Privilege of Divine Madness)

What is Divine Madness?

It feels like anger, a quiet fury building.

But it is more than that.

Slowly the mind seems to shrink under a (thunder) storm of blinding rage.

Maybe rage is needed to energize the soul, toughen it, push it beyond daily fragility, and give it the power to break earthly bonds, and thus open itself to Higher powers.

Isn't that what just happened to me?

If yes, I am so privileged.

### Benefits of Divine Madness

Divine madness gives me confidence in my powers.

Without it, I am a mere shell, lost in my ego of self-doubts.

Divine madness tells me my writing is great, worthy, important, and should be published and disseminated throughout the world.

Divine madness is what I need before each folk dance I teach. It gives me (brings me) the power of improvisation and the energy of on-the-spot creativity.

Inspiration from Divine Madness is what I pray for when I prepare and especially when I am leading a tour.

Sometimes you need anger to break the chains, free the mind, and open the gates of love and creation.

So don't feel bad or guilty about anger. It's part of the game.

Saturday, December 7, 2019

A big bout of depression and panic. Or was it panic first, followed by depression?

It all followed yesterday's adventure into divine madness. Somehow as I was driving to Darien to teach my folk dancing, I ws also followed by some kind of panic. I didn't quite understand why. I sensed it had something to do with divine madness, the and combination of fright and glory that divine madness brings.

The fright, really a terror and panic, comes from the lose of control that takes place when you jump off the cliff in fall, float, or fly over the chasm, abyss of divine madness. The glory and wonder come when you "finish your event," in other words, fly successfully over the abyss and feel the joy of accomplishment, the glor and wonder of supreme achievement. "I did it!" I faced the abyss, dared to jump in, I'm still alive, and even better, I'm now standing onf firm ground shouting my wahoo of victory!"

Well, yes, that's what I felt after the folk dance class. Despite, my fear, aches and pains, worrides about making it through another night, etc I again managed to run a great folk dance class, a party really. Everyone had a great time, including me! And although after the class I could hardly walk, and was ready to hobbled to my car and hobble home, instead I ended up stretching for a half hour after the class. The stretching brought wonders to my body, slowly all the muscles loosened, the aches and pains dribbled away, I ended up looser

and now even happily and easily drove home! Really another victory over my body. But I softened my victory lap with the fear of old age, body disintegration, how will I make it through the next days, weeks, and years, and an assortments of negatives to dispel my good mood.

Am I my worst enemy as well as my best friend? Maybe.

Such is the schizophrenia artistic life built on the earthquake tremble, awe and wonder foundation of divine madness.

Evidently, if I want to take the change of jumping into the abyss of divine madness, giving up or losing all control, even fore those few terrifying, sun-struck, wondrous moments, the opposites of panic and glory will be my pay off.

This is just the way it works. Suffering and glory rule the universe.

If this is true, and it seems to be, then I wonder if my flying divine madness guitar can be mirrored and matched by flying folk dance feet. (note the word “tremolo,” Rooted in tremble, shaking, fearful, etc. Maybe its not called tremolo for nothing!)

Could the pain I feel in my legs be due to resistance, to holding back from the fear of jumping into the abyss?

Yes, there is pain in the legs. But doesn't it disappear when you jump? Hmm. Something to now experiment with. Going for a run is a good place to start.

There's also the strange expectation that publishing my book or books will somehow dramatically change my life. Truth is, publishing my book was hardly noticeable. And basically changed just about nothing. Same thing with the great Jewish Standard article on my Romania tour. Except for a momentary blip of wild interest and acceptance, nothing much has changed or moved. A large momentary blip.

This is both surprising, disturbing, relieving, calming, and, in a sense, maintaining my anonymity is freeing, helpful, and calming. Truly, when I am not noticed, the pressure is off. Thus anonymity, lack of fame, being unnoticed and unknown, is a backdoor blessing and a cheap way to purchase freedom.

What am I saying?

1. Being an anonymous choreographer, although, a quiet blow to my ego, gives me a tremendous amount of freedom, and this gives me the pleasure of running wild and unobstructed on my lawn.

Thus, maybe I shouldn't/can't push my books.

Or my choreographies, or any other of my creations. The very word "my" freezes my ego in a vice-like double grip combination of fear of criticism) and the desire and love of acceptance.

Being a fictitious character may well be the way to go.

Sunday, December 8, 2019

One Doorway at a Time

Thumb, Confidence, and Power

My life story:

My own quiet rebellion against authority (Segovia, etc) expressed in my resistance to letting thumb dominate, pushing my independence by forcing my fingers to dominate. And this rather than letting the true base, the true bass dominate, the foundation as played by, and expressed through, the thumb.

Symbols:

Thumb is power, fingers are weak.

By letting thumb dominate, I am accepting and expressing my own inner power,

By dropping self-expressed weakness through fingers, by letting them slide into the background, I am releasing myself from seeing myself as weakness; by dumping the weak fingers approach, not letting it dominate me, both in public and private. I am saying no longer shall I let my indecisive, lack of confidence, doubting, wavering, faltering, weak sided self dominate my public and private appearances. I shall let my dominance, the wise, strong, self-confident self out the door, let it into the public square. Walk out of my house holding with my thumb high!

I am letting my strong side, my confident, powerful side out of the bag, out of the closet, and into the public thumb arena.

That's the psychological leap, jump, step forward I am taking. I'm dropping, giving up my classical music and classical guitar lack of confidence shield (the old protections).

I'm crossing the Alhambra threshold, stepping into the new land of confidence and

power; I'm walking through the door, stepping into the next New Normal world with my thumb wide open!

Now I have wish and a hope: Tat this new thumb confidence, or rather this new confidence and power as expressed through my thumb, can also flow into my writing and my choreography, and even into the creative things I do, and getting credit, well actually giving myself credit for creating these things. I can't push or force others to give me credit, thus I can't get credit from others. And truth is, although it's nice to get, it really not as important as the ability to give myself credit. To give myself the confidence and power. . .and credit. (Ultimately through the Higher Power, of course. Otherwise it becomes arrogance and hubris.)

Confidence. power, self-worth, classical guitar mastery, all expressed through the grand symbolism of Alhambra, and the physical mechanism of my thumb. Okay, this would "take care of" lassical music and classical guitar.

Now what about writing and my choreographies? Maymbe yes, I want credit, recognition, love and acceptance for them as well. Yes! I want it from others. And I have been denied it for so long! Of course, a good part of that denial comes from myself.

But I am hoping this self-denial pathway is coming to an end. I'm hoping my grand thumb can squash and destroy this self-denial pahtway and open the door to laughing sunshine, glorious, high-minded amazement and happiness and even worship. (Yes, a bit of self-worship or worship by others wouldn't hurt. . .but again I must ask, if it came now, could I take it? Or would I push it away, deny it, and move back into my protective violin

chamber, the shielded cave that protects me from the sunshine of glory?).

Note the blinding headache that just hit me.

Evidently, I am ready for thumb-wielding, classical guitar confidence.

I am also ready for choreo confidence.

And even for my stories, and book writing confidence.

Well, one doorway at a time.

### How would I live my life with this new confidence?

### What would I do differently?

Music, choreo, and writing are the three areas I want and need recognition both from others and from myself.

(Tours, money, stock market, exercise are somehow not included here. Maybe they are my forms of relaxation? Ha, now there's a new twist!)

### Tired of Hiding

Maybe I'm just tired of hiding.

Maybe that's been the cause of my grand fatigue. (Over the past few weeks, or since post-Romanian Thanksgiving break.)

Tired pf hiding. After so many yeas of struggle, my walls have finally fatigued, tired, cracked, and collapsed. Nothing left to do but run wild on the lawn and shine in my creations.

Is that what will now happen?

True, there is nothing else left to do. Will running wild be the boiled down distillate?

We'll see.

### A New Attitude in the New Normal

#### My Creations Are Worthy:

#### Remembering This Heals/Helps Me As Well As Others

The only way out is to see my creations as good for other people. Good for others, helping others, getting out of myself, my ego, and viewing my creations as good for others., Helping others, healing others.

And strange thing is that deep in my heart I do believe this is true. Deep in my heart, and intellectually as well, I believe my creations are good for others.

My choreographies heal others, bring them joy, fun, beauty, and happiness.

True also for my writings, my books, my songs, classical guitar playing, my tours, weekends, guitar lessons, etc.

In fact, almost everything I do and create brings good things to others. I know that. I even believe it. Now I just have to practice training my mind to remember it, focus on it, focus on getting out of my ego, out of the life-time and up from childhood habit of putting myself down, to get used to remembering the hard fact that my creations help others.

Remembering that my creations, my dances, writings, guitar playing, tours, folk dance teaching are good for others. Remembering this is my only escape from the debilitating

effects of my put-down ego.

On Selling My Books, Choro and Others

I Must Sell My Books, Choro and Others

I won't make much money from my book sales, whether it be my choro book or other books.

Then why sales? If there is no or little money in it, why try? (I can make more money, do much better selling tours.) Why do I have to sell my choro book, and my other books?

Why sell them?

Because if I don't I'll get nauseous and a headache. In other words, I'll get sick. Mentally and physically. Therefore, there is no other way out. I have to sell them. Period.

Monday, December 9, 2019

A new chapter.

I like it.

Is it good for others?

Can I even think this way? Yet it would save me.

Yes, the beginning is I have to like it. And I know if I like, some other will too. But making the jump to the concrete thought that others will like it, no matter what. Or rather,

that even though they may not lie it, it will help them, it is nevertheless good for them, is a giant leap for me. Isn't it very arrogant and smacking o hubris? How dare I claim that, even though they hate it or are indifferent to it, it is helping them.

Well, truth is I'll never know if it is helping them, goode for them or not. I can only imagine that it is or isn't.

But truth is, it is good for me top imagine that what I do is good for them, helps them.

Thus, it once more come back to me, to the way I think, the way I imagine things.

What's different? In this new case, I'm no longer thinking will they like what I do, but rather what I do, rather they like it or not orare even indifferent to it, I still imagine that it is goode for them, will help them.

And by imagining it helps, is good for them, has value for them, this imagining helps me.

Basically, I am imagining beyond my ego.

Is this kind of imagining new for me?

Maybe.

Can I even do it? Can I fool myself into thinking this way?

I know it will help me, even cure me. Maybe.

Am I putting myself down by saying can I "fool" myself this way? Yes.

So maybe I should drop the word "fool" and simply say this is good for me. Certainly, if it is good for me it is not fool-ish.

Truly, by imagining this way, I am introducing a new practice. The practice of imagining beyond my ego. The practice of imagining that my work, my actions, my creations help others, are good for others, cure others.

Indeed, this is a haughty (again a put down word) but important practice.

Is it haughty arrogant, hubris-laden, and thus insane? Seems I can't help but put myself down. I don't feel comfortable unless I put myself down. Especially with such an arrogant approach to my creations, my work, my actions.

But perhaps my arrogance, haughtiness, and hubris is simply a form of self-protection against. . . what? My goodness, my expansion beyond myself, my recognition of God-given talents and skills. And God-given ability to run wild on the lawn.

Is it a protection against my better-self?

Are my put downs, my seeing myself as arrogant by claiming that my creations can help and cure others really a form of self-protection.

Maybe I am protecting myself from a slip over the cliff into hubris. Maybe I'm right to protect myself by putting myself down, to limit the scope of possible expansive insanity. This is also a danger.

Yet, to a certain degree, what I create is good for others, and does help cure them.

Maybe it's a question of judgement and degree.

Beyond the wild ups and downs of my crazy imagination, I do know that, in reality, some of what I do actually does help, cure, and heal others.

This is actually true and realistic. It is a base from which to start “imagining beyond ego.”

Start this morning with guitar.

Give them the truth of my playing, whatever it may be.

### My Books

Like my children: They are born. They go out into the world on their own, make their own way. They are not my books anymore, as they forge their own identity.

I can only display them, be proud of them, whatever. But they must speak for themselves.

Tuesday, December 10, 2019

### Writing, With Its Old Goals And Modes, Come To A Close

It is totally sad, but my New Normal leaf is over.

There is now no more reason to write other than I enjoy it. And in the future, I will enjoy it. Otherwise, don't bother.

The old “reasons” are gone. No reason to publish my works beyond my personal satisfaction. They will never sell. More important, I will never sell them, or rather, ;put in any effort to sell them. This is a grand true that has only taken fifty years to realize.

But realize it I finally have. The leaf has fallen off the tree. I will never put in any effort to sell a book again. I may give it away. I may hide it, or stack it up in the basement (same thing). That's now okay.

So, on one level, I feel totally free! Free of the sales burden, free of the fame and

immortality burden, free of even the writing burden, if there is or ever was one.

Not much more to say about this.

Time to move on, to a life without these old compulsions.

Yes, I will die and be totally forgotten. This is so obvious, why even question it or waste time regretting it. Who remembers Loquas Quorum who lived in ancient Rome? No one. And he was only one of millions. So after a few years, even decades, few will remember me. After many years, centuries, millennium, no one will remember me. And I'm sure this will also be true during the earth's geological periods up ahead, to say nothing of the universe. It is simply a law of nature that I will be forgotten. So what, after all, if the big deal?

Although this is all part of the Old Normal, since I'm beginning to see and understand it for the first time, I'd have to say its now all part of the New Normal.

So ends another New Leaf.