

Beyond the New Normal

Sales Campaign (War)

Tuesday, December 10, 2019

What a weird place.

Since I don't have to write anymore, at least in the old way, with the old goals and modes, and I don't have to play guitar anymore, since I no longer make a living from performing, and I never plan to again, I am feeling more and more free from my ancient goals and compulsions.

I am actually almost free to play on the lawn, and even go wild.

Do I still have to folk dance and run tours?

Truth is, I have enough money and savvy to even stop them. Whether I want to or need to is another story.

But I am definitely more free than I was yesterday.

The writing barrier has fallen.

What will happen now with my new freedom?

Right now, today, I shall simply revel in it, and see where it leads, if anywhere.

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

Lifetime Sales Dilemma

Ultimately, it is the pain of rejection in sales that is so hurtful. Period.

Well, I'm starting my first Beyond the New Normal, and I'm starting at the bottom.

No desires for nothing. A bad, sad state. Depleted and empty. No desire to write, run, yogize, study, play music, dance, nothing. On the one hand, I've "done everything." On the other hand, there is no future purpose in doing anything.

Why am I so down? And lost, too?

Partly and probably has mucho to do with "giving up" publishing. Giving things up is basically bad for me. And giving up the pin cushion that used to prick me constantly to publicize mm books, ha pushed me down into the do-nothing, depressing, listless and energyless gutter. I need projects and things to push me ahead into the future. Without them, I'm down and lost in the mire and mirage of the present.

An that's exactly where I am today.

But even though I am in the gutter this morning, I do not see myself pushing, advertising, promoting, or putting any energy into selling my books. Truth still seems to be, that I do not want, and never will want to publicize them.

And yet, why and to what purpose will they remain in my basement? Why bother writing more if this process always takes place? The dream of future publication and recognition is "realistically" dead. But with this death and its "giving up" process, comes the death of my spirit.

I do not want to promote. But along with this comes the grand "Why bother?" No more reason to write. Very depressing. And yet, I see no way out.

So I am basically stuck.

Instead of “Beyond the New Normal” should I now call this the “Stuck Leaf?”

Are my choices two?

1. Do nothing and die.
2. Force myself to do something; and live “uncomfortably.”

Perhaps this is an old story repeated in a new and updated form.

Truth is, I’ve always hated sales. And yet, I am good at them!

I hated sales when I got married, but I was “forced” to do them. Or rather, I forced myself to do them because without them I would have had to work for a living (which means doing something I hated, like teaching in a school system, or corporate life.) The “compromise” was to sell.

So I always hoped that someday I would make enough money so I would no longer be forced to sell.

Well, strangely, I am now at that point. I have enough money so that I no longer have to sell. (Yes, I’d have to cut back a bit, but I have enough money to survive without sales.)

So, in one sense, I have succeeded, I have arrived. This new financial state I am in “solves” my financial problem. . .and my sales problem.

But it does not solve my book promoting problem. True, my total soul was not in my guitar program, or even my folk dance teaching or tours. Although a good part of me was in them, those programs or businesses were solely to make money, to earn a living with the

ultimate purpose of freeing me to be and become an artist.

But truth is, as I see it, my total soul is, was, and has been in my writings! In my view, most of my best self lies in my books. And I want people to know about it, to read it. I want them to know the real me! (Is this really true? What am I saying? Do I dare even say it?)

If this is really true, then I'll have to find another reason to sell. And one that has nothing to do with money.

I'd have to sell for my soul, for the "privilege" of exposing my essence to others, for the "honor, pleasure, and privilege" of receiving their arrows of criticism or indifference.

I no longer have to sell. I am no longer "forced" (to sell) to make or earn a living. I can now "get by" the way I am.

And yet, I am still not satisfied. Nausea and a headache are still following me, haunting me as I sit, financially happy, in my corner of success.

This certainly shows that money cannot buy happiness.

So what am I saying, searching for, asking?

Basically, I'm asking for another reason to sell.

Also, a positive that comes out of sales, is that I feel glorious when I finally do sell something! I feel that God has shined down on me!

But still, that has never been enough to justify doing sales. Maybe God is, has been, forcing me to sell because He knows that, despite my resistant personality, sales are good for

me.

Are sales good for me?

Deep down, I know they are, even though I hate them.

Why do I hate them?

1. Rejection

2. I feel I am wasting my time doing them. Instead, I should be spending my time either creating, improving my art, or improving something else. Somehow the act of sales is, in my mind, totally worthless. Do I think this because of my upbringing? Maybe and probably. But so what? That is, happily or unhappily, the way I think.

Can this basic negative view of sales ever be changed?

I don't know. Somehow I doubt it.

Somehow, if I ever decide I need to go back into sales, I'll have to do them with dragging the usual ball and chain of negativity around my leg. Until something better comes along, if it ever does, that's just the way it is and will be.

Does this mean that I can never escape from myself, that I'll have to force myself to do something I hate?

That total happiness will never be mine. That I always have to prick myself with the blood-drawing pin of sales. And this time it will be low-to-no paying book sales.

At least in the past, through the pain of sales, I at least had the "satisfaction" of making money. Now even that kind of satisfaction will be "unnecessary and gone."

Is it ultimately the rejection in sales that is so hurtful?

Yes

Nevertheless, in spite of this pain, here are my choices:

1. Do not sell: Get constant headache and nausea.
2. Sell: No headache or nausea. Energized (by facing and dealing with the pain of rejection.)

3. Is there a higher purpose to any of this? Is there a higher reason I have to suffer through sales, rejection, and “waste of time?” I hope and wish there is. Is God “forcing” me to sell because He knows the world needs my services, and that without “sharing” the talents He gave me, I am not complete. And neither os the universe.

(This is a “secret” thought. I am too distant from God to actually know or see this. Thus it remains a wish and a hope. I may someday experience its benefits in a “sales Wahoo!” but that is and will be a side benefit, the icing on the cake.)

Today and Yesterday

I needed the money desperately. Otherwise I wouldn't win my loving wife and sustain my marriage.

At that time, I called schools for bookings, and the pain of rejection was worth the money.

But now, I have enough money.

Is the pain of rejection still worth it?

Or is constant, headache, self-disgust, and nausea better?

Sales and Rejection

Love, inspiration, and courage run the world.

What are sales about?

They're about rejection and victory.

I hate to admit it, but I'm so sensitive.

Maybe my hatred and fear of sales is simply about rejection:

I just don't want to get hurt.

And yet life is full of about pain

There is no escape; only avoidance and denial.

What can you do?

Either dive in, ride it, seize the pain

And end up with a victory or two en route.

Or accept headache and nauseous.

Along with no victories en route

Either way you end up with (feeling) pain.

Love, inspiration, and courage run the world.

Isn't diving in a better choice?

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Finding My Own Pleasure

I woke up this morning furious. At myself.

Can one really be angry at oneself?

Perhaps and indeed.

Why?

I've been beating myself since Thanksgiving, for the past week or so. Why?

Something about publishing.

But bottom line, I've forgotten how to give myself pleasure.

How can I give myself pleasure publishing, promoting, advertising, pushing my books, playing guitar, running, yoga, gym, etc,

Up to a couple of days ago, I couldn't figure out a way.

But at least I'm onto the problem.

And in guitar: a pleasure in finger plucking.

In books: a pleasure in hearing my stuff read by Barrym and seeing other react happily and with interest to it. It warms my heart in a friendly, fulfilling chuckle, a bubble of fulfillment.

So there is pleasure to be found in my activities. I've just forgotten or have yet to figure out how to find it.

And pleasure ties me to the present, the only reality. Thus, not a bad bottom-line thing to search for.

Lost and Found Department

Thus I have completely lost track of my heart, my soul, mind, body, all the good parts, lost my way, been totally distracted.

Basically, I have forgotten (did I ever know?) How to have or give myself pleasure.

I was worried about giving to others, how to improve the world buy improving myself, giving of myself, etc. What bullshit? Fuck thee world! If I can't give myself pleasure, thje world will no doubt be a worse place. And the only way I can hel;p the world, or anyone else, is by learning how to give myself pleasure first. The, of course, the pleasure will spread to others. But it's got to start with me. Period. No other way.

How did I get so lost?

I don't know.

And truth is, I don't even care. The point is to get back on track.

Publishing my book is what threw me off. Once my Treasury if International Folk Dances came out, I was immediately thrown back into the old neighborhood of I must now sell my book. Result was a grand bout of nausea and headache, Total sickness and self-destruction. I didn't want to go back there, but I did anyway. Perhaps I needed to revisit, to "do it over," and finally get it right. In other words, destroy my old self-punishing, self-straight-jacketed self and replace it with a newe pleasure-seeking, pleasure-loving self.

And to find such a self among my books would be a major accomplishment.

Well, today I am on my way. I'm starting by asking the right questions: How can I get pleasure from my books, my guitar, my running, my everything? I'm the only one that

counts here. The others are nice, but really besides the point. If I can't do it for myself, no one else will matter, or benefit either. Such is the self-pleasure life.

Readings and Pleasure

(Not Yet But Maybe?)

A thought: If I get such pleasure out of hearing Barry read my work to others, and this through their pleasure in hearing it, their chuckles, acceptance, understanding of my philosophy, etc, then I wonder if I could get the same pleasure (or at least close) by reading it to them myself.

This would mean my doing a reading. Performing. That I should even mention such a terrifying thing, is perhaps in itself quite amazing. Am I on the cusp of future personal pleasure through my writings? Hmmmm.

Friday, December 13, 2019

“What’s the best way to approach death?” Dan asked. He was six years old.

“Through the back door,” Mama Madre answered. She was busy emptying her refrigerator, throwing frozen steaks out the window.

Sunday, December 15, 2019

Build Up and Plan my January Sales Campaign

What’s the best way to focus on the present?

A sales campaign.

What's a better word for sales campaign? War!

Who are my opponents in the war? All the other folk dance teachers and leaders.

I can use the energies inherent in my jealousy, envy, anger, rage, whatever, to propel me forward in this fight.

What weapons I shall use in this sales campaign war?

1. Write my own reviews
2. Design
3. Humor
4. Other

Monday, December 16, 2019

The Genesis of Amazement

Politics/History

Politics is the art and importance of the present.

History is the art and importance of the past.

Dealing in politics makes history, important, and dealing with history makes politics important. By stepping into the present, I embrace, crystallize, and enlarge the past.

This is all and beautiful and complicated way of saying the new and structural change has just taken place.

How to even begin explaining this?

Well. It “started” last night. I was feeling strangely down, and as I talked to Bernice, I was wondering why. That’s when I realized my down was a usual and typical down and came because I had finished some short term or long term project. I am always down when I finish. Why? Empty spaces now confront me along with the grand “Now What?” Question.

Okay, what had I finished? Basically, I had said that once my Romania tour was finished, I could then start finishing my books, namely my choreo book and short story book. Well, guess what? I’ve been working on my Treasury of International Folk Dances, and now it is published and finished. My Carlos the Cloud book is just about finished as well.

Then I faced the usual post-publication dilemma: How to promote, advertise and sell my new (and old) book? A grand bout of headaches, stomach aches, and nausea followed. And during this short period, helped by Rick, I realized I do not want. Will not want, and have never wanted to promote, advertise, and sell my books! Oh yes, I wish others would buy them. But I don’t want to put the effort and time into promoting them. In fact, once they are published, in my mind they are finished and done, and it is time to move on to the next project.

Yes, the books will mostly remain in my basement. But for some reason, that is their proper place. To be discovered by posterity, which is my secret hope. Or, perhaps more realistically, to be completely forgotten. Washed away by the flow of events, cover by the mist of years and centuries, lost in the dustbin of history, stolen by the thief of time.

Just as my body and memories of me will disappear into the dustbin of the universe, so will my books. It's sad to realize this, but that doesn't make it any less true.

In any case, for some reason, I've made my peace with this idea.

Okay, that was step one.

Now what?

Well, through the cleansing process of depression, with my mind now totally cleared, space was immediately created for something new to rush in.

And this morning, it did! What? Politics! And a short bit later followed by History.

This is totally amazing to me.

But it feels right. Also, with this new opening, realization, and direction, the study of languages has suddenly fallen off the cliff. We'll see where this leads.

I can't talk about this any more this morning. But I remember last night, before I went to bed, I thought, "I have absolutely nothing to do tomorrow. I am totally free. There is absolutely nothing I have to do! And this for the next two weeks, maybe even longer.

Okay, so in this new, free state, what, if anything, will I do?

And this morning I began not with Hebrew study, but by reading my book on Trump. And I wrote a list of all the good things he has done. And as I did, I also thought about how Ulrike is putting together a Hanukkah trivia quiz, and how, more important, I had totally forgotten about Hanukkah history, and history in general. When she mentioned elephants of the Maccabees, I couldn't even remember the name of Carthage, the Phoenicians, Hannibal, etc. My interest and memory of history had faded away through

mostly disuse.

But now, today, suddenly things were different. If I was now to speak about politics, the art of the present, I could now, suddenly bring in history, the art of the past, for support! I could verbally both explain and defend my views!

This kind of explanation, and defense is and would be totally new for me!

I have always shied away from politics, and been tongue-tied whenever it came to defending or even explaining my views. The idea of political confrontation has always shut me down. Political discussions drive me into a corner, and I immediately escape into the protective sanctuary of my teenage violin-practice chamber. I have always felt completely helpless and powerless, tongue-tied in these political situations, No doubt, it goes back to my childhood. But for whatever reason, it has been going on all my life.

But suddenly, this morning, I saw the possibility of something new, of explaining and even defending my point of view. In public.

Politics. and with it history, both came together.

Totally astonishing. We'll see where this leads.

My long, many year, constant study of languages if over. It feels like the leaf just fell off that tree.

I wonder if it will appear, re-appear in a new form. I vaguely hope so. Why? What a shame to have put in so much time and effort, so many years of study, and suddenly just drop it, give it up. This is exactly what my mother said when I gave up the violin. "So many

years of practice and study,” she said. “ You were so good. What a shame to drop it, and give it up.”

Strangely, I don’t remember feeling bad about giving up the violin. And truth is, I don’t feel bad about giving up language study. But it definitely feels a bit strange, different, even amazing. Suddenly, my need and even interest in it, has dissolved.

Will it come back in a different form, a different time of study, maybe late afternoon, or even evening? Even as I say this, I ask this question, I know I’m trying to hold onto the old way of life, the old language study schedule, the familiar. But truth is, deep in my new heart, I know something is over.

Maybe the quicker I accept the new, the better.

Take my amazement drink, mourn the past, for ten seconds, a few minutes, even a day or two, then move on.

From Useless to Useful?

Politics and History, (Travel and) Languages

Deep down, I’ve always felt the study of language, and the study of history, is useless.

But with the sudden new possible use of history, in politics will that “useless” view be changing. And if it changes for history, could it also change for languages? We’ll see.

No question, with its advent into politics, my view of history has changed from useless to possibly useful. I wonder if the same this could, would, will happen for languages.

We’ll see where this leads.

I can almost immediately apply history to the present, to politics.

But what about language? Where, if anywhere, does that fit in. (Perhaps language belongs in the arts section, along with guitar, writing, and singing.)

Tuesday, December 17, 2019

Success and Real Success!

Yesterday, during and after training with Rick, I realized I need a new big dream. All my old dreams have been accomplished, fulfilled, at least on some level. No wonder I feel down and empty.

So I need new dreams, new big dreams!

Then this morning I realized I don't need dreams. I still haven't fulfilled my old dreams. I've only given up on them!

Yes, my old goals have been crushed, destroyed, disappeared. Why did I give up on them?

Discouragement, fear of old age, other. Also I have "suffered" from victory and success. Tours have been good, and money has been good. I am temporarily satisfied. Thus success and victory. And then comes. . . Now what?

Victory and success also bring sadness and arrogance.

The arrogance protects from the sadness of success when success is seen as an ending.

Truth is, I've mistaken the brief "Wahoo!" at the top of the mountain as success, as

an ending, a permanent place, even an end-in-itself.

But this is evidently false.

This means real success is not an ending, not a permanent place, not an end-in-itself.

Well if it's not that, what is it?

This morning I have crossed the mountain barrier of success and skiing downhill on the other side in a glorious sunshine of happiness. Why am I happy? I'm on my way to the next mountain!

That is real success.

After crossing the mountain of previous success, real success is skiing downhill, in the sunshine, on the way to the next mountain.

New Start

Okay, the old leaf of success is finally over, dead. The leaf has finally fallen off the tree.

I'm at a new start, a new beginning. I'm skiing downhill on the other side of the mountain on my way to a new destination. And the sun is shining gloriously on my face!

What and where are my new goals?

I'll start with guitar.

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Still Lost After All These Years

I don't want money; I have enough.

I don't want fame; I have enough.

So what do I want?

To be left alone?

If that is what I want, then left alone to do what?

Follow my miracle schedule? (I like miracles. They're amazing and fun.)

What about working toward improvement and self-improvement? Well, working with self-improvement energy is part of my miracles schedule path. Nothing new there. And I like it. (But is that, could that be a secret calling? I hope so, since I want one so badly.)

What about sharing what I do with others?

Sharing can be fun, but it does not feel like a calling.

What about changing, affecting, effecting, and healing the world? That too is fun, but does not feel like a calling.

Thus, what do I want?

I still don't exactly know.

This means that, even at this late life stage, I'm still somewhat lost.

Having fun on my miracle schedule path is the only thing I can come up with. But is that a calling?

Maybe only by example. By following my fun path, I incidentally, inadvertently, as a side effect, heal the world.

Like a sun. When it does its thing, when it shines, it by its very nature heals the world around it.

Could my calling not have a meaningful and lofty purpose? Could it merely be to enjoy life and have fun?

But maybe this is the only way I can heal the world: by healing myself first. Making my sun shine. Then it's light will, by the very nature of light, fall upon others, heat their bodies and minds, and influence and even help their lives.

But whether this helps or hurts others, is not up to me. I have no control over others. I can only influence and change myself.

Perhaps my miracle schedule is my only offering, and following its path is my only gift.

Maybe that's enough.

Maybe.

This would mean that my constant question and challenge is: Can I enjoy myself and have fun? And this despite the thousand obstacles.

Even the president must ask himself this as he deals with the serious, weighty, daily, momentous challenging problems of the world. Am I enjoying the job? Am I have fun?

If not, why bother?

Same with me. As I following my miracle schedule, or teach folk dancing, lead a tour,

play guitar in public, do a reading, perform, trade stocks, see my family, lunch with friends, whatever, the same question and challenge emerges: Am I enjoying this? Am I having fun?

There is so much suffering to deal with in this world. Plus transience shades everything. We're not here that long.

Thus, through all the pain, ache, and difficulties of daily life, the hero asks, what is positive in this? Anything I can enjoy? Where is the fun?

Looked at this way, teaching the joy of folk dancing, the thrill and adventure of leading a tour to a foreign land, playing guitar, singing songs, are all incredible contributions to happiness. Just what folks need to remind them about the meaning of life!

Thus what I am doing is pretty important.

Just keep doing it.

Lifetime Challenge and Question

Then if this is my bottom line, my guide, then the great question and daily challenge to myself is: How do I make it so? How can I enjoy each thing I do? How can I make it fun?

This is a giant daily challenge.

One that will heal myself and the world.

So actually, whether I am doing something alone (following miracle schedule) or

doing it with others (business, social) is besides the point. The life time division I have put between business and art is a false one.

The challenge and question is always the same: How can I enjoy this?

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Performing for Nothing, Performing for Free

Could this be the first crack? And will it make a difference? But it certainly would catapult the New Normal into the stratosphere. And it happened in Barry's class, along with his help. But of course, I was and am ready.

What is my biggest fear? Performing.

But why?

Even in asking the question "Why?" the fear immediately diminished. Then the fear of performing dribbled into nothing. I can no longer think of a reason! Somehow the reason, and with it, the fear itself, just fell out of me.

And added to that, the idea of performing for nothing, for free!

First, the fear dropped away. Then the idea of doing it for nothing rushed in.

This also coupled with the "emptiness" of stock market trading. Why I bother or occupy my mind with the ups and downs of my trades. I don't even need the money. Thus I don't even do it for money, although money is the scorecard. I do it for ego.

In any case, yesterday's trading day was the worst. I didn't lose that much money, but my dreams of being and becoming a good trader were once again smashed. And I was left

with an emptiness of vision and purpose. That's when, once again, I questioned, what kind of empty life do I have, do I lead, when I let it be disturbed by mere stock market fluctuations?

And that evening, last night, is when the idea of no more performing fears rushed into my mental vacuum.

I always covered my performing fear by saying I must be paid to do it. Otherwise, facing and dealing with the fear is not worth it. And this was partly true, since performing was the way I earning my living. But that way of life ended long ago. Only the fear, and habitual way of thinking remained.

Now that habit has fallen off the table. Dare I admit that my mind is now free to perform again? With a bit of a tremble, on this new day, I way yes.

And add the idea of performing free, and I am at a total new juncture. I open the door to the possibility, hope, and even desire, of enjoying it!

What more does this mean?

I can drop the pre-performance anxiety that appears before (almost) everything I do in public. Like folk dance teaching. Tours?

But more important, can I now begin to perform again on guitar, singing, and even readings. How about putting them all together in a show? An one-man show? Wow, do I now dare? Would I ever do such a thing?

Or should I start small? 5-10 minutes somewhere? A combo of songs and reading.

Performing for free. And use a head phone?

Friday, December 20, 2019

Performance

A Seismic Shift, A Big Deal Change

The idea that I am no longer afraid to perform has released strange venoms and odors. I now face the world as a possible totally free human being.

This opens up the idea and possibility that I don't have to do anything. And this in turn enables me to ask the bottom-line philosophical question: What do I really want?

This morning I woke up at zero, at the bottom, totally empty. I am at the place of no purpose, meaning, or desire whatsoever.

I have a total weekend off. I have had almost the whole Xmas vacation off. And this is a period of free time and emptiness that I have been wanting to experience since the Romania tour ended, and my choreo book was finished.

Why do I want this period? Why do I want to experience an epoch of total free time, with absolutely nothing to do, not a pressure or desire in the world, a totally free Weekend, a long totally free Xmas vacation, and more?

The reason is: I want to find out if, in the depths of emptiness, there is actually anything I really want to do. Or, beyond needing the basics of food, clothing shelter, anything I need to do.

In other words, I want to get to know myself. My real self. When I am un-pushed, not needed for anything, have no demands from the outside, am totally free, is there anything deep in my core that I actually want?

Can the core me live empty?

How long can the core me go on without purpose or meaning?

Would it or I want to live that way? Is it even possible?

Do I need to merely fill up my empty time on earth? Or is there a real purpose to my existence, a real meaning to my life?

That is the quest and question in my “totally free” experiment.

Having no fear of performance, being free to perform, also expands to being unafraid of meeting people, dealing with people, leaving the house, being in society, and no longer needed, or even desiring the hermit life.

And the hermit life really means living inside the teenage violin chamber of my mind, the practice home of my soaring imagination and creativity. Because alone in my room, playing the violin and soaring high on spacious spiritually journeys, I experience the Magnificence. A vision and power I never want to lose!

But leaving that chamber, such a vision would be squashed by outside negative forces. So even though, through marriage and more, I was forced out of my chamber, in my mind, I never wanted to leave it.

Fear of crushing, fear of criticism, fear of crushing criticism created a split mind. I functioned quite well on the outside, but while doing so, my brakes were always on. Holding back, holding back, always defending, waiting silently for the grand blows of crushing criticism to fall on me.

But now somehow, this grand fear has fallen away. Perhaps, well no doubt, it is because I am older, more experienced, and stronger. Somehow the fear of crushing criticism has just dribbled away. Amazing. But it feels right.

So where does this new state leave me?

I don't know yet. But I am about to find out.

It begins with the "invitation" to perform at this year's folk dance New Years' party.

And I am swirling around the idea in my head of singing, reading, and classical guitar, a threesome, all in one showing.

Am I really thinking of this? Do I dare? An old question.

But I am now in a new place. So I definitely dare.

Daring is no longer the question.

So what is? Perhaps I simply need more time to process and contemplate what this new performance opening means and how it will affect and effect my life.

But even as I am saying this, deep down, I know it has already changed my life. And deep down, I even know that now that I'm free, I'd somehow like to reach the mental place where I want to perform.

And in this grander sense, perform means not only stage performance, but a total change of direction and attitude. A seismic shift, a big deal change. Spreading so-called "performance" into all aspects of life! Opening myself up to the world. In other words, a "total" going public.

Do I want to perform?

Not yet, but I may be getting closer.

Preparing (Training) for the Event

Blurring and blending the lines.

To prepare for an event, a social, concert, public, all is one, together event. All is social now.

Is preparing (or training) for an event motivating, inspiring, energizing, pleasurable, enjoyable, etc?

Indeed, preparation would be part of the new gone-public, free. social and socializing process.

Is preparation be energizing, inspiring, fun, pleasurable, enjoyable, more?

Do I actually want to, need to, prepare for a social event?

Maybe.

Preparation, even for a mere social event might be good for me, fun, and energizing.

Is it?

Well, I know it is.

But such preparation used to be tinged with fear. I'd resist it as I acted on it simultaneously. Brakes on and brakes off at the same time.

But "tinged with fear" is over. A thing of the past.

Thus I ask again: Is preparation for even a mere social event good for me, fun, and energizing?

With fear dropped, what else can I answer but YES.

If YES, then I can add love of preparation to my life.

Specifically, how will that work?

1. One man social show, “concert,” New year’s party performance. First deal with the word “concert.” Still lots of fear embedded in that word. The past looms up whenever I say it. Should I distill the fear from it, drain it out of the word, and reuse it in its new, beached and cleansed form? Or find a new word? I’m leaning toward bleaching it, but we’ll see.

2. Tours: How will preparation now work?

3. Folk dance classes: How will preparation now work?

4. Social event. Dinner, family meetings, friends meetings, phone calls, etc.

5. Athletic event. Race, gym, tread mill, yogic goal, etc.

There was never any fear here, no pre-performance anxiety, nothing. Still its nice to have goals. We’ll see where this leads.

New and Naive Guitar Playing

New and Naive Audience

Social acceptance and social playing:

Have a complete new and naive vision of guitar playing. Start with Gavotte en Rondeau.

This means a new vision of the audience. Imagine them into existence! A new and

naive audience; they have never heard the guitar before! They are hearing guitar for the absolute first time!

Start playing Gavotte en Rondeau for this new audience.

Imagining a New Audience

That is my future creative work: Imagining a totally new audience into existence, a new audience for everything I do!

A new naive audience. What does naive mean? Totally open to anything I play, dance, or do.

I create audiences out of my imagination. They exist because of my imagination. I imagine them into existence.

In order to imagine my new audience, I must kick out the old audience first.

Saturday, December 21, 2019

Preparation

Using the Future for Self-Motivation

1. Three Languages: Hebrew, Bulgarian, and Greek. Upcoming tours to Bulgaria, Greece, and Israel.

2. Guitar: New use of my (new imagination) audience.

Use of my new naive and supportive audience. Let them see into my mind, and let

their energies flow into my mind. Use their accepting, naive, and supporting energies to sustain, support, encourage and inspire me. Use their willing, happy, and naive energies to strengthen me, support me, give me new powers.

I'm asking them for their help and to contribute their strength.

Let them creep into my mind, help me, support me, give me strength, bring them into the show, and in so doing, become part of the show.

Index Finger Walks on Stage

He's a big guy standing at the door of the concert hall guarding my index finger.

He's also blocking it.

But which one? Blocking, guarding, protecting?

Do guarding and blocking go together?

Or do both of them working together create "stuck?"

Is my index finger stuck in the door?

Somehow blocked and protected, guarded have to be transformed, metamorphose, fused into one, so that my index can walk freely through the door.

Maybe rather than blocked or protected it is blocked and protected. In other words, that big guy's method is to guard my finger by blocking it. Blocking my finger as his way of protecting it. He wants, nay needs, the finger to be safe.

But as index walks through the door, entering the new concert hall with its new, accepting and naive audience, maybe it is now totally protected.

Protected against what? Against the arrows of criticism, darts of negativity, deadly poisons of jealousy, envy and hatred, and all the other boulder landslides that can fall on and roll over a concert soloist.

But the new naive audience is now an index fan club, supporter, protector, defender, and energizer. Index no longer has to worry, no longer needs to be guarded and protected. It can freely enter the concert hall, mount the stage, And when it does, it will now be embraced as a soloist by the naive, happy, open, accepting, supporting, generous, energy-giving, energizing audience.

Index, there's no need to be afraid any longer. We're your new naive audience, We're sitting here in front of you, fascinated by what you do, We love you and can't wait to dive into your mind, and give you the beautiful energy of our curiosity and rapt attention.

We are your happily naive, forever children's audience, ever open, awe struck, and fascinated by what you do.

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Now

It means I can bypass my index.

I don't need that block anymore.

I have to accept this new reality, this new normal.

It's just a fact of life—of new life.

I can't go backward.

I can't go back (even if I wanted too.)

Monday, December 23, 2019

The strange Devil's bargain: I can play guitar but I can't walk. In other words, my fingers finally work, but in exchange, my legs don't.

Do I want that?

Maybe for a week. This week is totally off. NO dancing, no gym, no "need" to exercise, no nothing. I am totally free to fall apart as I play guitar gloriously.

But once work starts again next week, we'll have to see where all this leads. But for now, for this week, until the glorious guitar playing habit is established, maybe I don't mind trading it in for walking and hurting legs. Lots of sitting may well be necessary to play guitar so well.

And it is so wonderful to play guitar! To flow and weave through these great pieces! Maybe this mental game with the devil is okay to play for a few days. Give up walking in exchange for guitar playing. Certainly, I did that for two days, the weekend, Saturday and Sunday.

But today is Monday. We'll see if I should go on like this for a week, or exchange these Devil's ideas for new ones.

After all, I do want to keep my legs functioning along with my arms and hands. I want all my parts to work to celebrate this glorious new guitar endeavor.

(Maybe my legs are hurting because I am resisting a celebration. Hmmm. Maybe I'm

still afraid to believe I've broken through, that I no longer need my index block, so I'm holding back, restraining a flood of joy. And that's why my legs hurt. Actually, my leg pain starts in the lower back, so really my lower back hurts. And remember Sarno and the anger displacement TMS effect.

Afraid to believe it, and angry that such a fear still exists. Lack of faith perhaps.

Why should I have faith?

But why not?

Why not choose faith over lack of faith, non-faith.

Faith is better for me.

Maybe I should choose faith that my new guitar playing will now last forever. The old days are over, the log drawn-out past, with its fifty-year feel of index finger blocking, is gone. Things do not last forever, although they may sometimes feel that way.

Success, Perfection. . .and Happiness

I hit Success of Perfection Mountain last night and this morning. And I glow in amazement.

The glow lasts a few seconds, minutes, or hours, even a day or two.

But after the glow comes darkness, the emptiness of "What now?"

And I know I won't be happy until I slide down the dark back side of Perfection Mountain and am on my way to climb the next mountain.

Tuesday, December 24, 2019

I hate losing.

I hate losing money.

I hate losing money—in the stock market, trading in the stock market.

On the other hand, I love winning. I love making money.

Hating my losses should cause me to look deeply into my behavior, and change something. I should learn something, benefit in some way, from the pain of loss.

Okay, what did I learn from my losses yesterday? What can I change?

1. Sloppy. I tried putting my stop-loss in several times, but it didn't work. So instead of selling the stock, I gave up, and "let it ride." In other words, naked and without a stop-loss. The stock went in half the following day. I wasn't stopped out so I lost half my money.

2. It was a unique situation, and perhaps even the stop-loss wouldn't have worked.

3. Beyond the stop-loss: I took too big a risk.

Why? I had a few victories during the past few days. Consequently, I became a bit over-confident. And instead of selling out, I said, "well, I'll let it go. (I'm "sure" it will be all right. Of course, it wasn't, and I lost money.

4. Anything positive to be seen in this negative event?

Yes. The pain of my loss caused me to pull back, to remember that trading, and even the stock market, is a risky business, that I can lose, and much money at that. More than that, the loss, protected me from losing even more money by acting as a warning, a reminder

of the risks, a reminder to not become too confident, and thus too careless.

A reminder that in this game, I can lose mucho money. This loss was a pinch, but it could be a slap, a whack, and even a catastrophic blow! (This I definitely want to avoid.)

So I should approach the market with caution. I should be scared, but not too scared, not to the point of paralysis.

Feelings and the Stock Market

My stock going in half and losing the money is a slap, a reminder to be careful.

Annoying. A total blow to my ego. Pay attention.

How can I get myself to pay attention?

Feel the disgust with the situation, especially self-disgust for putting myself into this careless, unmindful situation. Ugh.

Disgust is good.

Self-disgust is best. It is my energy rising, and a very important motivator.

Face it, feel it, let it run.

Let self-disgust be my guide.

See where it leads.

Wednesday, December 25, 2019

Christmas da,

In Spain October 2018, I recognized my mortality bottom. Old age, fear of disability,

constant shadows and realization of upcoming eventual death haunted my mind. And of course, I tried to deny it. But my body rebelled against the denial and came up with constant knee and leg pain.

Step two was when Rick said I was totally stiff and needed to make my new religion one of stretching. I agreed, and in April of the following year I began an intense stretching program. Even up top one to two hours a day. And it worked! Slowly my body improved. But optimism entered since I now knew I could handle my knee and leg pain through stretching. It came down to a simple truth: When I stretched, I felt better; when I didn't stretch, I quickly got stiff, and I felt worse.

But somehow the fears of disability and mortality did not go away. They were "handled" through the positive distraction of stretching, but were not dispelled.

Now, today, almost six months later, I am looking into them again. I started by reading Sarno again,

Here's what I came up with:

Giving Up—and Anger

With mortality and old age comes lots of "giving up."

(Along with subtle, unconscious anger at this unhappy human situation!)

What dreams and goals have I slowly given up?

1. Languages
2. Running: Marathon, long runs, etc
3. Yoga: Head stand, scorpion, lotus, etc.

4. Gym: Chins, etc
5. Writing: Fame, book promotions, readings, etc
6. Concerts (of course). Performance

What can I do about the specter of mortality and disability?

Only attitude.

Fight it, with anger and rage. Embrace the hopeless, endless struggle. What satisfactions can ensue?

Relish the transient victories.

Here's one:

Running" Today I ran and gave it my all. I could hardly walk the rest of the day, but after stretching before bed at night, the next morning it worked! My legs felt stronger, more competent, better!

What does this mean?

Extremes work! But they must be followed by rest and recuperation.

Mym Fighting Forms

1, Guitar:

Warm-up 15-30 min. Add Alh Ley, etc. slow fast.

2, Singing: 15- min Back to warm-ups, and songs

3. Exercise

15 min warm, Standing exercises, ad dance exercises: Balance and jumps.

Machol Halahat, Floricica. Small Exer choreo.

Thursday, December 26, 2019

New Sales Day

On Enjoying Sales, Classical Guitar, and even Performing

It is a crime for me to enjoy sales.

It may also be a my crime for me to enjoy playing classical guitar.

Is it a crime for me to enjoy performing?

(Exhibiting, displaying myself and my ego. This however, now seems like an old fear which has dribbled away.)

These are my two grand attitude problems. Lifetime, I'd say. I certainly see my upbringing as partially responsible.

In any case, that's where I am.

Or where I was.

Today is a new day.

What's new?

The money command and impediment to sales has fallen away.

I no longer "must" sell to survive. Thus I could either give it up, or (learn to) enjoy it.

But perhaps I already know how to enjoy it. After all, whenever I make a sales, I hit the roof with happiness. Now, by removing the sales impediment, perhaps I can enter phase

two: Diving in, relishing, enjoying it!

Note also that performance and performing is part of sales!

Could I then actually (learn to) enjoy performing? (What a revolution that would be!)

On the other hand, maybe I already know how to enjoy performing. Look how happy I am after the show, and perhaps even during the show.

So why have I resisted, feared, hated both sales and performing so much?

Aside from the usual fears of rejection (and they are biggies), I've had the extra baggage of always worrriede about how to make a living. And this out of performing. Thus performing, money, safety, and security have always been closely involved with each other. Enjoyment hs nothing to do with thi equation. The only enjoyment comes really from a sense of relief. Relief that the show or sales is over. I now have some money, and with money come the hope that someday I will no longer have to sell or give shows, that I will be finally free of this incessant pressure.

But truth is, that pressure is now over. I am financially stable, or at least have enough to get by, and not to worry. That is a giant leap forward. But I have mad the leap.

So I am truly in another place, one where money alone is still good, but nevertheless, fear of poverty is no longer enough to motivate me. I need a new source of motivation.

The only one I can find is: Do I enjoy doing it? Is it fun?

Thus the new question is: Can sales, and classical guitar playing ever be fun? Can I ever enjoy them?

And indeed, the seeds for enjoyment are there. Even the manure to help it grow. But

I need to remove the blanket that has been cast over the garden; I need to let in the full sunlight and fresh air.

And I am now in a position to do that. In fact, I'd almost say, there really is no longer a choice. Grab fun or leave. Enjoyment is the only way to go.

This will take a lot of getting use to.

“What Can I Sell Today?”

Can I use “What can I sell today?” to energize me and wake me up.

Friday, December 27, 2019

The Fun Factor

The Enjoyment Enterprise, Joy Jumping

Is the purpose and meaning of life to enjoy oneself? And the world around us?

What else could it be?

So I'd have to answer: Yes.

That means the hero is one who can enjoy himself, or herself, despite all the suffering, hardships, aches, pains, hurts, and heartaches the world imposes upon us.

This means one must actually practice enjoyment.

“Fun” is the child's word for enjoyment.

Practice enjoying.

1. Guitar

a. the physical touch of the finger on the string. The feel of it on the finger tip.

b. Fun is also letting my thumb run wild on the Alhambra lawn! Bass powerful, second and third beat accented.

Fun also may let me by-pass technical problems by [putting me in a new place where I work around those problems.

Witness Gavotte en Rondeau and even Alhambra.

Enjoyment, jumping joy, is so much fun, I (may) want to do more of it!

Saturday, December 28, 2019

Pleasure

How to hold on to the fleeting nature of pleasure.

Maybe you can't. Maybe feel it and watch it fleet is the only way to go. Maybe the nature of pleasure is that you can't hold on to it, and when you try, you lose it.

My New Job

My new job—and even my New Year's resolution—is to enjoy my classical guitar playing. And this from the very first moment I touch the guitar!

1. Legato warm-up: Hear, listen to the hammer on/pull off.
2. Scale: Feel the electric pleasure in my index finger when I touch and pluck the string. Love the index feel.

The divine sloppiness meets the perfect relaxation.

How many times have I been through such a grand hope before?

On the other hand, I am in a new mental place. Maybe the time is finally right.

Maybe the time is now.

This index focus playing (IFP) could be a grand jump into deep relaxation playing. Why not grab it and believe it? Why not dare to experiment, try it, and believe it?

Look how many times Edison tried.

Ma nishmah? What's different now?

I am in a new mental place.

Okay, I'll grab it, try it, experiment, and believe it.

New Place Playing.

Hope

Dare I hope?

This means: Dare I want something?

Evidently, I do.

I want to play guitar great!

Anything else I want?

Maybe I have been fooling myself? Maybe I want something but mortality—I shall someday die—and disability—my knees hurt—have squashed my desires, discouraged and pushed me down, forced me to deny them.

So, now that I know I want something, what do I now want? What are my desires?

1. Live forever. Handle this with rage.
2. No disabilities: Handle with rage, exercise and attitude.
3. Play guitar great.
4. Run fast, do my yoga scorpion, head stand, lotus, etc
5. Master the stock market, and trading.
6. Hebrew.

As for business:

1. Books (sales, etc)
2. Folk dancing
3. Tours

All three are part of my business. I'll do them anyway so it will "take care of itself."

Note: Writing is not part of this. It has graduated into "books" and part of my business. What this means yet, I don't know. But it is interesting.

Sunday, December 29, 2019

Why is hope important?

Because hope creates motivation.

Idea: Take a year off. Learn to meditate "my way."

Which means "year of study":

1. Guitar playing
2. Exercise
3. Hebrew (and/or other languages)

A swelling of goodness this morning. I wonder why. Results are coming in from my two weeks of hibernation and cave dwelling. I'm making progress on my issues. Yes, lots of issues have been resolved including how to handle mortality and disability.

(4 good Alhambras to overcome one bad one. 400 to 100, or 40 to 1. We'll see.)

Practicing guitar the good and happy way. Playing the Good Alhambra, loose and relaxed with index happiness.

But suddenly doubts arise:

Doubt

Am I discovering a new guitar world?

Or am I fooling myself (once again)?

Do I dare believe it?

Or will my rush and lack of patience kill it?

I have to choice: I have to believe it!

I have to believe in progress. I have to believe that starting, and perhaps finishing, with myself. I can create a new world.

Thus I have to believe in my hopes.

Why?

Because hope creates motivation. And motivation is good.

Thus, even if it is an illusion, it still creates motivation. My belief that even at this late stage I can change my guitar world, motivates me to work at changing it. And by working at it, I will hopefully improve something.

So, whether my hopes are true or not is besides to point. (Hope is simply a good-in-itself.)

My hope to improve my guitar playing will push me to practice more! And that is good.

Monday, December 30, 2019

The Joy of Power

The power of focused relaxation.

The joy of power.

Love it. Dive into it. Embrace it. Feel it. Use it. It feels so good!

Practice the joy of power.

Start with guitar. Let index point the way.

Tuesday, December 31, 2019

The feeling that I have to eventually perform (Alhambra, as a symbol) has absolutely been blocking me for years. The block has been in my right hand, my index, to be exact. Now, after years, perhaps really the past fgew weeks, I have psychologically realized that first I do not want to perform, secondly. I don not have to perform, and finally, that I've give up, lost the need to perform (this happened when I decided not to perform at the New Year's Party, too much tension and preparation, as a professional, etc.) In any case, somehow miraculously, after so many years, the chains fell off. The gate at the index finger relaxed, then opened, and a love of power, joy, and happiness index finger came though.

And this morning, somehow, it seems like Hebrew is coking together as well!

Another miracle.

This miracle feeling, the grand "Wow!" really means I did good today. Nothing more. It is my feeling of satisfaction, happiness, and excitement in the present. Nothing more.

When I make it more, as I have done for so many years, it simply acts as another form of put down, of diminishment, a shut down of my satisfaction, turning off of my excitement. The unreality I created by expanding the “Wow!” feeling to unrealistic proportions is simply another inventive form, a creative way of expelling my happiness.

Somehow all that is over.

Victory during the past few days, and victory today.

Faith and Practice

How can I assure myself I'll hold on to my victories?

How do I know I can repeat them tomorrow?

Only through faith and practice.

My practice comes from my long-time habit of practice. But deeper than that, I comes from hope (the deepest form of motivation). I hope that through practice I will improve.

Why do I want to improve?

Improvement feels good. And feeling good, en-JOY-ment, is enough.

And indeed. If I practice, I will improve.

How about faith. Where does the faith come from?

Good question.

Flirting with Disaster

I don't consciously want disaster. But somehow it is stimulating to flirt with it.

Curiosity? Uncertainty? Testing limits? Lack of faith? How far can I go without destroying myself, or what I want?

At the moment, I'd attribute it to lack of faith. After all, why would I want to test limits, if I absolutely knew that what I want will happen no matter what? Destined, fated.

Can I be sure about faith?

The very nature of faith is based on "I don't know." And there are so many things I don't know. So faith must be all around me. even though I can't grab or hold onto it.

Without faith, I'm forced to try various methods, test and experiment, be daring and wild. Who really knows what will work?

If this is the case—and it is, where does faith come in?

What is it? Where and how can I use it?

Wednesday, January 1, 2020

If it is true, for today, that "I never want to perform again," where does that leave me?

What do I really like?

1. I do love the guitar.

The sound, the feel, the touch, all. But this love has nothing to do with performing. So far, performing is for others, not for myself. So far, performing is thinking of others, thinking about what they want or might want, but not about what I want, or I like, or, in the case of guitar, what I love about it. So, no wonder I never want to perform again. The way I

think about it, at least for now, is that it totally removes all my joy.

Notice I add “at least for now.” This means I still maintain a hope that someday I may see performing differently. But until that day comes, if it every does, “I never want to perform again.”

Return to Total Selfishness

(for the Greater Good)

So how can I return to being totally selfish (total selfishness for the greater good) remember and focus only on what I love, and, in the process, forget about others?

That is my present challenge.

First comes a return to total selfishness,

The greater good is not a concern since it follows automatically.

It is about remembering and focusing on what I love, and not being distracted by the audience, if there is one.

IF

IF, IF, IF, IF.

IF I EVER PERFORMED AGAIN, IT WOULD BE TOTALLY ON MY OWN TERMS. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY.

Slow and meaty as I want. If there ever is an audience and they fall asleep or walk away, let them. It doesn't matter. Is of no consequence. Performing is no longer about

them. It is about my love and loves and my expression of those loves.

It can be no other way.

Could I pull this off? Certainly not yet.

In the future? I don't know.

But there is no other way.

My next venture: Remember and stay focused on my love, how I love to play it and them, and nothing else. Period.

Performing and/or an audience is besides the point.

Thursday, January 2, 2020

Never Overwhelmed? Maybe

Another Wow morning of self-discovery.

Went to sleep last night, and woke up this morning with a bad knee, bad back, and bad start. I know it has to do with going back to work today. And this after my great two-week "vacation."

Rage and anger at my return. The usual. And this is subtly causing my morning aches and pains.

But do I still need it?

Everything ahead of me looks good. So basically, I'm being overwhelmed by the good.

The stock market is up this morning. I can't wait for it to open in a few hours! I'm

so excited! (Note bad knee, back, etc.)

So I can see my left knee as my “excited knee.”

My back as my “excited back.”

I’ve repressed the excitement, depressed it by being overwhelmed.

I’ve invented overwhelmed to suppress my excitement, a self-containment wall against the joy and fun of running wild on the lawn.

Am I really overwhelmed?

No. I always manage to handle my situations.

This means I am not overwhelmed. Rather I am excited—but hiding it by my mental overwhelmed invention.

Now looking back, I wonder if I have ever really been overwhelmed. Maybe I have just excited, even over-excited, but controlling it, hiding it, through my guard-rail “overwhelmed” mechanism.

Never overwhelmed? Maybe.

Friday, January 3, 2020

Doing Something by Doing Nothing

Active Watching, Waiting . . . and Deciding

Today is a down day in the market.

My market “plan” was to wait a week or two before I do anything. My plan was to actively watch and wait.

But at the same time remain “flexible.”

Thus today is the day to learn that I am doing something by doing nothing.

What does actively watch and wait mean? It means watching and waiting like a tiger ready to spring, about to pounce. It mean watching and waiting while in deciding mode. The decision part if the active part. It means you’re ready to change your mind at any moment depending upon what happens, depending on circumstances.

Business Adds Motivation

My time is so precious. I have so little of it.

Since this is so, what will “push,” motivate me to call folks on my email list, or for that matter, even friends?

One motivating reason would be increase my tour and folk dance business. Increase and grow my business in general.

This sounds very self-serving—and it is.

But obviously, it is a good thing, a good action, when I make the effort to call others. And the goodness remains whether the reason is “selfish” or not.

Thus business is a positive motivator. It pushes me out of the house and into the world!

Father Business

If this is true, and it is, I wonder why I always resist it so. My inward reticence? Fear?

Desire to remain in the safe and womb-like confines of my house, my room, the violin-practicing, teenage chamber of my imagination? Other?

In any case, the “reticence will probably always be a part of me, will never leave me. Thus desire to enter to world will always face resistance and be a constant problem.

Forcing myself to do it may be the only way I will ever do it. And what better way of forcing myself that through the self-serving attitude of my business.

I can even see my business as my father encouraging (“forcing”) me to stop practicing y violin, strongly telling me me to get out of the house, get some sunshine, and go outside to play. (While my mother stands for art, and remaining in my protective practicing womb-room.)

Thus is business like a father to me. An interesting, sweet way of putting it. Plus it helps me remember him every day.

Headaches revisited

This is beautiful idea. Yet note the rise of a blinding headache as my father gets introduced into the picture.

I remember my blinding headache when I road down to Hamden with Miki in the back of our truck. I didn’t know why I rose up it, but I did.

Anger and rage is now again rising. I wonder why.

I know I want to relate my father to my life-supporting work, tie him to my business and give it more strength. And to daily remember him.

Resolved

My father, Abe, is the gateway to a positive view of business, a positive attitude toward business. Art I Ma, business is Pa.

In a blind (headache) flash, after 50 years or more, the conflict between inner Ma and Pa, art and business, has been resolved. Ma and Pa are united. No more fighting.

Now it's a question of getting used to it.

A great psychological step and attitude forward.

Wow! Exciting.

But let not this "Wow!" block the flow of excitement bursting through the dam.

Saturday, January 4, 2020

It is my job to make them happy.

But the way to do it isto reach deep into myself, pull out my treasure, and share it with them!

In other words, reach deep inside myself, pull out my talents and skills, and share them with my audience. In other words, I start from the inside, rather than lookinbg outside, looking around me at the audience and trying to find out and decide what they want. Fist, it is impossible to know what they want, second, I can't give it to them anyway since those are

not the talents and skills that I possess.

So, trying to please the audience by going outside myself to the centers of their desires, is basically impossible.

I have been on a fools quest most, and simultaneously resisting this quest, of my life.

Thus the energy and creation of performing, teaching folk dancing, even running a tour is born and first comes from deep inside me, then fans out to reach the guitar audience, my folk dance students, my tour travels, even my readers.

Performing from the inside. Teaching folk dancing, leading tours from the inside.
(From the outside, it is impossible.)

Thus, in summary, it is impossible to give them what “they” want since I don’t know and can never know what they want, and secondly, even if I knew, I couldn’t do it, since that is not my talent and skill.

I can only give them what I want, my talents and skills, since I know and possess them. That’s it.

Thus, fearing audience criticism, folk dance student criticism tourist criticism, although it feels real, is really quite ridiculous and besides the point. My performance is not up to the audience. It is simply up to me. I can only give, share, what I know. Everything else is besides the point.

Yes, I can be compassionate and sympathetic to their complaints, desires, unhappiness, and dissatisfaction, and even try to help them, if I can. I may even be able to

modify the way I teach, the way I perform or even run a tour by changing its itinerary, etc. All that is possible. But again, these decisions and changes would come from deep inside me, and would be based only on my skills and talents, and one of my talents is flexibility. Period. Again, because that's all I can give them.

Sunday, January 5, 2020

Maybe my attitude toward work (retreat), money (freedom from fear), and performance (retreat) is part of my unpaid karma.

No question there is a terror in the land, and it concerns work, namely returning to work after my long two-week fruitful "vacation." The terror is reflected in the heaviness, aching, and fatigue in my legs and lower back. Going back (note "back," "lower back") to work is both my terror and my cure.

Okay, I now know and recognize the terror. What about my cure? What about curing myself?

Well, work starts tomorrow.

1. My first folk dance class starts tomorrow night.
2. Along with it comes tour preparation, sales, etc.
3. And book sales. Note this "addition." How this snuck in, I don't know.

4? Is guitar performance in this? No. Or at least not yet. It means that, no matter how many times I try to kill it, somehow the "dream" of some kind of future guitar performance is still not dead. Certainly, this "dream" will die with my death. (But maybe

not?) Until then, if it will ever die, I do not know.

5. I also have choreography

6. Writing

7. Study

8. Exercise

9. Stock market.

But can I call the last six “work?” They don’t terrify me the way actual “getting out-there” work does—or perhaps, did. And yet, they are a most vital part of my life. They are the unseen part of my iceberg, the invisible bottom supporting the visible top.

So I should and will include these six wonders in my work. Because without them, my work iceberg would melt, and, like my soul, collapse into the infinite ocean of Universe.

I’m not ready for that yet.

I still live in this physical life.

So onward. Today I return to everything I used to do. But a bit differently, with a more expanded, happy attitude, revealed, opened, and developed during this vacation.

Amazing what I just said: I am happy, excited, and anxious— in the happy, excited sense of the word—to go back to work!

Also my division between art and business has vanished.

This attitude is the happy result of my vacation!

Work:

1. Folk dance class

2. Tours

3. Book sales

4? Guitar performance? Maybe.

5. Choreography

6. Writing

7. Study

8. Exercise

9. Stock market.

Amazing what I just said: I am happy, excited, and anxious— in the happy, excited sense of the word—to go back to work!

I am happy and grateful that I have work and am going back to work! Happy and grateful are words I have never used in the past. I'm returning with a totally new and different attitude.

Also my division between art and business has vanished.

This change in attitude is the happy result of my vacation!

Monday, January 6, 2020

It's a new day. I like new days. They are a fresh start.

And this morning I'm off to a fresh start. It's the first day of work. I'm prepared.

Last night's beautiful thought was about Hebrew.

My Study and Connection of Hebrew

The study of Hebrew connects me to God and Eternity, and to eternal life. Just what I want and need.

Death is something I do not want. Thus studying Hebrew is a good way for me to fight against death. It might not help my body much, which will disintegrate by itself. But it will help calm my mind, and certainly will motivate and inspire my spirit.

Thus studying Hebrew is my way of connecting to Eternity.

By studying it every morning I am connecting to eternity every day. Not a bad way to begin each sunrise.

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Improvement Is My Goal

Without trying to improve myself, I have an emptiness within me; without trying to climb Jacob's ladder.

It is the down of success? Maybe. But perhaps instead of using the word "success" I should say "finishing." I'm finished with my project, Path, goal, etc.

Yes. But whatever word I use, the truth is, I must find something to improve on.

Why? Because it's good for me. Period. Self-improvement, improvement in general, is a good-in-itself. Without it, there is only emptiness.

Thus, what can I improve on?

Truth is, anything I choose. I simply have to make self-improvement and improvement my lifetime goal.

What's the difference between improvement and self-improvement?

Probably nothing. One feeds the other, is a mirror opposite of the other, and both work together to improve self and the world.

Okay, let's start today: What shall I improve?

So many choices.

Wednesday, January 8, 2020

Strange, But NiceAngry With My Guitar

I'm happy with my business, happy that folks are registering for my tours, happy with my choreos and folk dance teaching, happy with the stock market and the way my choice of small (penny) stocks are moving.

So basically, everything is going well.

But strangely, this morning I woke up I realized I was:

angry with my guitar. What does that mean? My guitar has let me down; I'm disappointed with it. What does that mean?

I once upon a time expected so much from the conquest of its technique: Fame, fortune, recognition, competence, confidence, and probably lots more. Now, after the Sharon Isbin revisit to my guitar past, and living through the old down, lack of confidence, constant worry and inferiority feelings I used to have as a professional guitarist, I somehow have lost them. That would mean that basically, I am finally, after perhaps forty, fifty, or even more years, free.

This is a good thing, a fine attitudinal development. The leaf of inferiority complex and with it, the need to perform and prove myself, has finally fallen from the tree.

So my first feeling is anger: Anger at the guitar! You've let me down, disappointed me, I can no longer find sustenance and hope for redemptive confidence within the narrow confines of your belly. I am finally free to play you (if I ever want to play you again, you miserable fucker!) In total freedom. No restrictions, desires, hopes, nothing. Just the pure fun of touching you, and plucking your strings, and listening to whatever sound that comes

out. This is definitely a good thing. But I suppose I must go through the disappointment and anger stage first.

That's where I am today. And with the realization that I am no at that stage, the stage feels like its just above over. I'm ready to move on. Strange. . . but nice.

On Leading Others in a Folk Dance

The crazier the leader, the crazier you get.

Thursday, January 9, 2020

Things are going great this morning.

No problem dealing with the downside. Years of that.

Now how to enjoy the upside.

Friday, January 10, 2020

Late rising equals no goals.

I'm not self-disgusted yet, but I'm getting close.

Guitar: Back to my original pristine teenage violin/guitar in chamber of my imagination room in Riverdale. I play for my violin/guitar for myself, with God listening, watching, and shouting encouragement. Fast and slow, impressing others, or even thinking about them is all besides the point. I ride only on the wings of violin/guitar playing Love of

music and the Lord.

Same with writing, but that area of my brain has not yet been cleansed.

Sunday, January 12, 2020

Index finger guitar collapse. Let him in. Make friends with him. Let him enter the establishment. Accept and adjust to his style of playing, slow with gand focus on the index finger plucking exactly and strongly.

Monday, January 13, 2020

Down thoughts block off the love and passion for things I do. They are part of the resistance.passion.

What good is patience?

It gives you the time, and space, to focus on love and passion.

The stock market has run its course. I've made some money. Now preservation is now the order of the day.

Okay, that's run its course. What's next?

SALES: Start Selling

1. Sales as fun.

a. That's my challenge.

2. Calls. Other. Pictures, ads, internet, website, whatever.

3. It's the sales season. I'm ready to plunge in, and have an adventurous and wonderful bath.

4. What will I sell?

a. Tours

b. Folk dance classes, through my choreo book.

Why? It's fun.

Side life of sales: Hebrew, guitar, exercise.

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

Emotions and the Stock Market

I'm amazed how emotionally attached I am to the stock market and the up and down fluctuations of my stocks.

I have enough money to survive well. So the market is no longer only about money. It's more than that: It's about winning and losing.

Is it good to have my emotions subject to such fluctuations? I doubt it.

What to do, if anything?

Cut back? Invest more? Do Stay the course and nothing? Other? I'm not quit sure.

Eternity and God

I need eternity to give my life long-term meaning.

Thus, I need God. Period.

(Whether He needs me is another question.)

But the fact that I need Him for permanence, long-term, endless rock, is a good reason for His existence. O to invent Him. Either way works.

With everything around me, including myself, transient, I need the solid existence of a rock an infinite source. (Doesn't everybody? How do you find meaning without it?)

Thus bottom-line, since I need the long-term, endless life; I need to cling to a Highest Power.

Otherwise, why bother?

Saturday, January 18, 2020

Enjoy the Moment

This morning I feel totally and fully successful.

I can't say I enjoy the feeling. But I don't dislike it either. I'm more in shock than anything else.

I don't know what to do with this "new self-image.

What should I do?

Simply be thankful and leave it at that?

See it as a passing moment, a pleasant phenomena, a good day, and leave it at that?

Probably, the latter is best. In fact, part of this questioning is to avoid the happy feeling of pleasantness.

So best is to jump into it, let it settle in my bones, swish around my body, bring a pleasing massage to my brain, let it do its thing. . .and then, let it pass.

That's the wise and smart way to handle a day of success.

Guitar and Singing

There is absolutely no reason for me to play guitar. . .and certainly no reason for me to sing.

This is, feels like a totally new phenomenon.

Again, I don't know what to do with it.

Should I simply watch it, and let it pass?

Does it have something to do with success? Partly. I absolutely don't need the guitar for anything anymore. So why play? Habit? Other?

Maybe I'll find another reason. But maybe I won't.

On the other hand, it's a shame to drop it, give it up, after so many years of playing, and finally having so much skill. Same as violin. It may slowly die by itself.

Or it may be resurrected for an entirely different reason. A good part of me hopes that is true. But hopes do not make a reality. We'll see where all this leads.

Do I Need Musical Security?

I need my body. So I have to keep my body in shape.

I need my voice, too.

But do I need my guitar? And singing voice?

No, not in the old sense.

Is there a new sense? Not yet.

Will there be one?

We'll see where this leads.

I have money, success, and financial security.

I still need physical security, my body. I need exercise. Running, yoga, gym etc are all still true and needed.

But do I still need guitar? And singing?

Do I need musical security?

Security is based on fear. Thus "Do I need musical security?" is a fear-based question.

What about love and beauty?

Do I need them? Yes.

Once fear and fears are conquered you say, okay I conquered my fears. What now?"

And beyond that, the deeper question: "Why bother to live?"

The answer is: You live for love and beauty.

What else is there?

What else could be better?

The answer is "Nothing could be better."

So you have fear and security on one side, and love and beauty on the other. Truth is you need both not only to survive but to thrive.

Okay, do I need guitar, and singing?

Do I need art?

Do I need beauty? Love is another form of beauty, and vice versa.)

Note: Politics is not about love and beauty, It's only about power, mostly over others, with argument and fight as its base. And aggression. Whereas art, based on finding and creating beauty and love, is about finding power through revelation of your higher self.

That's perhaps why I'm tongue-tied in political "discussions." They are really arguments in disguise, no-win situations which I instinctively shy away from.

But I am still fascinated by the fight, aggression, power, struggle, war of politics.

I'm talking about a "both" situation here. Evidently, I need all these sources of love, beauty, art, politics, power, war, fighting, etc, all in various proportions. It's a question of judgement, judging, choosing, and balancing them out.

Sunday, January 19, 2020

Slower, Deeper, Wiser: A New and Natural Directin

That's how an older person goes: Slower, deeper, wiser.

Slower, deeper, wiser is a new and natural direction.

Seems that is also how I'm going.

Slower, deeper (wiser, too perhaps): in Hebrew, guitar, singing, even dancing.

Soon singing, business, and relationships,

It feels like I'm doing less, but I'm really doing more.

The Mystery of Growth

Is there in slow, deep, and wise place which is a secret entry into fast?

Is there a hidden place where fast feels slow, and slow feels fast?

I'll bet there is.

I just haven't found it yet.

After all, the mystery of growth never ends.

(Even after eighty) my search continues.

The Hidden Power of Imagination

Send healing vibrations (prayer) to Janet.

Do they work? Maybe.

A good practice. Gives me some power and control over illness and even death. Yes, it may be imaginary power, but it helps me. And if it helps me, it might even help others.

After all, the hidden power of imagination is vast and unknown.

Who knows where this could lead?

Monday, January 20, 2020

New Danger

And A New Practice

My life style is changing. Seems there's more success an sitting up ahead.

With more success comes more sitting. That's my new danger.

Note that my legs are in descent. Due muchly to too much sitting.

What to do?

New Practice

Add these to my routine of daily yoga stretching. A must:

1. Daily walk and/or run. Even if it's only 15 minutes.
2. Squats: Build it up. Aim for 100 a day.
3. Practicing stairs. Up and down.

These must become daily habits. It will take a month or two of daily repetition to establish the habit.

Start today. Plan it, and give it consistent a time of day.

Seems the best way I can expand now, is by staying in place. By delegating, and organizing my events at my computer.

That means mucho sitting.

Guitar idea: Simply accept that I have an index finger problem, and deal with it,

How?

Play and while playing, let it run its course, and move on from there. Do not fight it!

Note: It does go away once I dive into it.

Maybe it's even part of warming-up.

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

On remembering Hebrew words

All I retain is my love of study.

A Visit from the Devil

Focusing on death, old age, short time, lose of my wife, etc are all another form of the “Why bother?” excuse. A depressive, “impending doom” post-eighty cloud that has haunted me with its darkness most of my life.

It is a useless visit of discouragement from the devil.

When it visits, best is to dispel/dispatch it immediately.

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Go places my muscles have never gone to before.

Thursday, January 23, 2020

Hebrew

All I retina is my love of study.

But that’s a lot.

Focusing on death, old age, losing everything, transience, etc. is another form of “Why bother?” In other words, it is the same depressing, impending doom form of excuse that has hauled me down all my life. Only now it comes in post-eighty form.

When this impending doom, useless visit of discouragement comes, from the Devil himself, my earthy job is to dispel, displace, and replace it immediately.

What it means, among other things, is that I should fight harder. In fact, love means

fight harder.

For the good things, the good attitudes.

Fight harder dispels the darkness of the Discouragement Devil, and replaces him with the shining light of high energy encouragement, and positive growth and expansion!

Journal Writing

Do I write in my journal to remember, or to forget?

Yes, often I want to forget.

Bad, bad.

Change it to reread, learn, and remember.

Lots of wisdom hidden in my gems.

No more throwing it away.

Keep it for my sake and for posterity.

Guitar and New Tour Destinations

What's my new tour destination?

I want to travel to new regions, places where my muscles have never been before—areas of high velocity.

Friday, January 24, 2020

Three January Victories

1. Play guitar
2. Exercises
 - a. Walk/stride
 - b. Knee stretch
 - c. Even dance
3. Hebrew depth

Ion a strange and mysterious way, playing it fast mkes it better! It opens up new levels.

This is so exciting!

I can't stand it. . .but now I can!

Plus thumb (it means bass), which is now a fading truth.

I am a gambler. I like risk.

Of course, not too much. But I like some risk, enough to stimulate my brain.

However, the risk I took with LK is just too big. Too much money to gain, or to lose.

And I am in the process of losing much to most of it.

I have to sell down to the comfort/stimulation level. I did put my stop loss in. But I didn't expect it to be used.

Yes, gambling is my vice-hobby. I like to gamble; I have the gambler mentality. But

only in the stock market. A speculator.

Maybe I should read up about gamblers, and speculators; get to know more people like myself.

Challenges

Can I find a stimulant, a practice, a challenge to replace gambling? Or am I “hopelessly” attracted/addicted?

If I am, is it a skill I can learn? Should I “study” gambling, or rather stock market speculation? Namely, small stock speculation? Is it worth trying to improve?

Or is it more worth trying to give it up?

Or should I just forget about both, see it as a passing storm cloud, pay no more attention to it, and move on?

Basically, I have too much time on my hands, am unchallenged. Perhaps I’m even a bit bored. Even a active as I am, is this possible? Yes.

What challenge could really absorb my whole mind?

If there is, it would somehow not have to involve money. Be beyond money.

Improving on guitar? Body? Hebrew and languages? Other?

Writing?

I once wanted it to be writing, but somehow that has slipped away. Is the slippage permanent? Or maybe writing, publishing, and promoting my stuff, is the challenge I lost and need.

Dare I say this, but the challenge I could be avoiding is both writing, and getting my books out there. This would be a major effort because ia also means readings, public appearances, Susan’s approach, maybe even radio and TV appearances. All in order to push and promote my books.

It’s a two-pronged approach

1. Writing. . . daily more books

2. Selling, promoting my books. Getting known a an author. Etc. (No question) the stock market, speculation, etc, are all distractions, ways of avoiding this challenge.

Sunday, January 26, 2020

In a blink, it can disappear.

But without an excitement substitute, I’ll do nothing.

Learning about myself.

It also hides a fear.. . of the public.

Coming out of the fog of fear.

Passing the gambling wall.

Goal: To Be Better in Public

(This is the excitement substitute)

Do it, not for money and success (in the sense of public approval), although that may come on its own, but rather for learning and improvement. Especially improvement!

How?

Speak better, better voice

Speak Hebrew, better voice. This means speaking to others!

Read my stories, better voice, enunciating

Guitar:

Dance video

Rebirth and a whole new set of challenges.

Too good to be true. . . but it is!

All I need is my thumb to enter the public arena.

Monday, January 27, 2020

Stock market, speculating, trading, etc is just another way of trying to impress her with my money making skills.

I never thought much about money before marriage. After marriage I almost only thought about money. And since then, my obsession with money has never stopped.

In fact, most of my need, want, and desire for money is to impress my wife. Sure, I need some for myself, but most, the excess, the security part, is mostly for her, to impress her, to make her happy.

What would I do or need without the desire to impress her and make her happy?

I don't want to lay it all at her feet, or blame her for my money obsession. Yes, she wants security through money, and so do I. But most of this obsession comes from me.

Still I ask the question: Would I worry or even think much about money, if I didn't want to please her, impress her, and make her happy?

I definitely want to impress her. But this need comes from me, not her.

Okay, I've gone far enough with this. How can I apply it to my life?

I really need a new self-definition. Actually, it would really be a reminder of my old self-definition. The one I discovered as teenager, and perhaps my first year in college.

A self-definition based on love, learning, and improvement, love of the self-improvement path.

What did I love?

Violin, basketball, and in college, I learned that I loved to study. (Not get good marks, my marks were terrible. But I loved the study process, the magnificent of learning, of opening a book, reading, and let the universe open up and expand before me. What a marvel that was!

So I have learning, self-improvement, and love. The big three.

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

What's Normal?

Given the choice between mortality and immortality, I choose the latter.

However, I'm not given the choice.

Thus, for the thinking, sensitive person like me, it may be normal to wake up low, down, and depressed every morning and then convince and fight my way out of it.

After all, the sad truth of existence is that all is transient, temporary, passing, and

sooner or later will die.

Thus even though everything for me in the daily world is going pretty well, I still wake up depressed.

Then, through mental gyrations and convincing, I slowly fight my way out of it.

I wonder if this is the way all smart, thinking, aware and sensitive people live.

Yes, involvement in the world distracts me from my mortality. And that's a good thing.

Wednesday, January 29, 2020

Could I improve my stock trading?

Goal: Improve my stock trading.

How?

1. Keep exact money records.

A. Did I win? Did I lose? Amounts. How much.

2. Study, read books on trading. Focus and learn.

Trading is a skill. Like a language.

Practice, study, learn, improve.

New "career" and commitment. Become a serious trader.

And I am. As of today.

Mistakes

I lost much dinero in LK. I got over-excited, over-enthusiastic. Success made me

careless and I made a mistake. And I believe my mistake is shameful.

But making mistakes is part of the game. I will always make mistakes. What benefit can I get from them?

Learning and self-knowledge: Learn from my mistakes.

What have I learned?

1. I love trading. I will never give it up, and this, even if I lose mucho. (And this has certainly happened over the years!)

So the idea is to learn from my losses.

What have I learned? That is I want to be proud I'm a stock trader, I must take it seriously.

This means study, learn, etc.

Yes, I was careless as I walked through the stock trading quick sand. And I am ashamed of my carelessness and especially the resulting loss.

Does shame relate to fear?

Yes. Secretly, I blame myself for my mistake. Thus, when others blame me, I believe them. I am wrong for making a mistake, and should be flamed/ punished.

Thus, it is my view of mistakes that is the problem. When other people criticism me for my mistakes they are simply confirming what I believe.

Mistakes are part of life, and certainly part of stock trading. They are indeed painful, but are learning opportunities. Mistakes are painful learning opportunities.

Perhaps the pain itself makes it a very good learning opportunity. Who wants pain? We'll do almost anything to avoid it. Thus, better learn or else!

Mistakes and Punishment

Should I be punished for my mistake?

I am punished already by the pain of my shame.

Also, until I learn my lesson, the lesson of changed behavior or the way I think, I will continue to be ashamed.

(Have I learned my lesson yet? Have I changed either my behavior or the way I think? I believe so.)

Will society or outside forces punish me more? Maybe.

Is that something to be afraid of? Maybe.

But outside punishment is beyond my control. I am only in charge of my attitude, and that is the only change within my power to make. What happens from the outside world is annoying, even devastating, but beyond my control.

Thursday, January 30, 2020

Slipping Off the Cliff

I slipped on the cliff.

I've become (I had become) so arrogant and confident.

Or did my growing confidence turn to arrogance? Well, whatever, I became over-confident, carried away by grand emotions that I'm finally on my way, finally know something, finally got the stock market right, finally have my tour business right, finally even have my guitar right, and my physical body in also on its way to getting better through all my stretches, exercises. etc. In other words, things are finally going absolutely great.

And it was true.

But I got carried away with my excellence, lost my frightened focus through success and over-confidence, and starting the LK overreach, and partly unfocused tour billing, ended up slipping on the cliff.

And yes, I've been down and stunned for the past few days.

This morning I'm at the bottom, but starting to turn my ship around. I haven't lost my "realistic" confidence, But I have been slapped aside the head, kicked in the ass, made a fool of myself to myself. I'm embarrassed, stunned, somewhat disgusted with myself and a bit visited by the "How could I be so stupid?" feeling.

But as I lie here on the ground, I'm getting ready to turn things around, and get back to the old values.

Return to the Path

Actually, in review, what really, mostly, and totally threw me off was my stock market loss from LK. That's where I got too excited, went overboard, lost my caution, bought too many shares, though it could never go down, and suddenly the virus appears, and everything goes down, especially China! Of all the wrong times to overexpose myself to a Chinese stock! Everything went totally wrong. And this almost immediately after I bought it!

In any case, that was my big mistake. This plus a slight error in tour billing. (But that was really small potatoes.)

My big mistake was in the stock market. And this just as I thought I was finally "getting it right."

So in truth, my feelings of progress, hope, and confidence in my guitar playing and exercise program may well have been, and still are, justified.

I've now "rearranged" my market attitude and approach.

Let me know "return" to the guitar and exercise path, with its new way of thinking.

Actually, what the fuck happened? I just had one bump, a big bump, but only one.

Everything else is and was in order, and going well. Yes, I had to get used to success and feeling good, confident, optimistic, etc. And perhaps I had to "soften" it a bit, with a little failure, a stock market bump, a loss smacked to the head.

Okay, I've been softened. Excitement level is down and I'm getting back on track.

Friday, January 31, 2020

Learning and Improving

Money and impressing others are no longer the motivation. That's a big deal, a big ending.

Learning and improving are my motivation. That's a big deal, a big beginning.

Practice voice with Hebrew, and video. Simply to improve. A good-in-itself.

I do it not for money, or to impress others—although taht may happen—but because it is a good-in-itself.

A new motivation. A big deal.

Learning and improving is fun, fascinating, energizing. . .and that's it. But that's enough!

This is the fresh beginning I want, the essence of my values, what's most important in my life, what give it meaning, the bottom-line values that to me are immortal and eternal.

Learning and improving. They bring fun and fascination, bright and cheerful, energizing, hopeful, glorious and magnificent. That's my motivation.

That's it.

But that's enough!

Death is the space between lives.

It takes many forms.

Saturday, February 1, 2020

A New Habit

The up side is the worry side. . .worry that I will be dragged back, sucked back into the waste—of time, and ultimately money

It created fog, and lack of focus.

Clear the fog in my mind, and help me focus.

Dispel the fog, and help me focus.

Model: Cash (or some RSP and FTEC).

But cash may be better. A la East Village bank life. Satisfaction of watching what I actually earn, grow.

A grand distraction.

From what?

Once it has an actual use: I wanted to make money. It was one of the ways. Now the dream has been realized. I no longer need to make money. Thus it is no longer useful.

It has become a bad habit. It once had a potential use. No more. Let the leaf fall from the tree.

Time to drop the old habit.

Put on a new one, a new leaf.

Let a new habit grow on the tree.

Monday, February 3, 2020

The so-called masculinity of stock trading, especially the up-down excitement of day trading, fills an emptiness, a lack of purpose, a deep void. And covers up the “impending doom” feeling.

What could, and will, replace the meaninglessness?

True, once there was a “need,” a psychological need for stock market trading. I needed money, and stock market trading gave me the hope of sudden wealth. And wealth, I thought, would dispel all financial fears. And over many years, since marriage actually, most of my fears were financial.

Well, I’ve reached the happy point where I finally have “enough” money. I’m not rich, but I have enough. Thus, the so-called need to play the market, to gamble by trading small stocks has dribbled away. The only reason to play the market now is because I want to

win. Win at the game. It seems like a stupid, meaningless purpose. And it is. But I've done it anyway for about a year. Mostly, at the point, out of habit. I've found nothing more useful, exciting, thrilling, and, when I make money, fulfilling, to do with my mind.

Note also that fame, my desire to become a famous writer, to shine in the light of others, has also dribbled away.

But there's nothing like a loss to wake you up. And this time, it feels like things are different. Two things have changed: First, I have enough money. Second, evidently I'm ready to face the emptiness.

So where am I this morning?

I'm considering some "impossible tasks."

1. Learn three languages: Hebrew, Greek, Bulgarian
2. Guitar: Alhambra, and some Leyenda: 5x/ day for 3 months.
3. Body: Continue one hour/day yoga/stretching, add running, and gym.

Note: There's nothing new or creative in the above three. Only more intensity. More intensity is good. It's a start.

But is it enough to do the trick, enough to fill the void?

I doubt it. But we'll see where all this leads.

Love, Passion, and Commitment Conquers All (Or Most)

"Shut up and do it!"

Quite depressing as I face the emptiness.

What can fill it?

What can be my strong purpose?

Passing on my legacy? Racing against death?

Indeed, these are not enough.

Love—of something? Maybe.

Love, passion, commitment? Better.

Do I love my guitar?

Do I love my yoga and running?

Do I love my languages?

Do I love my business, folk dancing, writing?

Do I love my miracle schedule?

The word “miracle” implies love. Love creates passion, and makes commitment.

Love would fill the void.

If God is love—the book title is God Loves You— then, if that is true, love would fill the void.

In this sense, I could say that God shows His love for me by revealing His miracle schedule. To me. He has given me my life plan. Within these activities, within this revelation, is my purpose and meaning. And as I perform these loving activities, I throw out sparks of radiance, affecting those around me, and, in the process, heal the world. I like this approach. It reminds and puts me in touch with the Higher Forces.

Love would work.

(Passion and commitment would follow in its footsteps.)

So maybe it is true.

Okay, to make my daily life better, let's say it is.

How will things change?

Let me start off by saying, admitting, realizing that I do love my miracle schedule.

And I do have love, passion, and commitment to its activities.

So, if all this is true, what's the problem?

I "simply" have to remember I love them. Passion and commitment is part of that love.

Then dive into each one!

As Rick says, "Shut off the mind and do it!"

Or, as I say, "Shut up and do it!"

My Miracle Schedule is My Personal Torah

My Miracle Schedule is my personal Torah.

It is God's book of directions, a personal guide book given to me to help guide my life, with purpose, direction, meaning, and goals.

What is Depression?

What is depression?

Depression means I've lost my way, forgotten my path; it means I'm off-track, off-path, forgotten my Miracle Schedule and its Higher Forces connecting purpose.

It also means: Get back on track! Right now!

Stop wasting your precious time by fucking around with your mind.

Discipline

Discipline is a form of love.

I could start by disciplining my mind to stay on track!

I could start my new life by practicing the discipline of staying on track!

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

Life as a Foolor Retreat Yes, Defeat No

Maybe her counsel is not right, at least for me.

I feel lost, tattered, and battered.

The stock market threw me, knocked me on my head.

But now, I'm thinking of crawling back.

Is this a double defeat? First, in fear and disappointment, I decide to give it all up—defeat number 1. Then, I reverse my so-called definite decision, and decide to return—defeat number 2. (Reminds me of tour leadership.)

Does such a reversal make me humble, stupid, or both?

If I return, how would I return? Would it be different? Have learned anything? If yes, how would it be different?

I've been chastened by over-excitement, and burned by my deep jump into LK. Timing couldn't have been worse as the corona virus came the next day! Of course, who could have know that? Nevertheless, one must learn to protect oneself from the unexpected.

That is a big market lesson.

Yes, I lost mucho money. I felt totally deflated. But was I defeated? Actually, yes. I gave in and then I gave up. I decided the market game is not for me. And I sold all my model account.

But now, in better times, I'm considering a return. A total mental whipsaw.

What have I learned?

Maybe what I saw as a defeat is really a retreat. (Is this a rationalization, or true? Probably both.)

How would I get back? Gently and slowly, just a few, less trading, and small amounts.

I like the little ones. But do less. Maybe only 5G.

Maybe I just can't give up. It's not in my personality. (Maybe its part of the anal personality.)

Giving up to me is death.

Thus, I cannot give up trading. Yes, I can do it "differently," especially after being chastened by this historic retreat.

Retreat is a mental state, an attitude.

So it defeat.

Evidently, my personality, and even character is:

Retreat yes, defeat no.

Yes, I feel a bit like a fool.

But note, after accepting fool status, I feel a bit better already!

Maybe life as a fool is the way to go.

Maybe life as a fool is the smart, realistic, humble and wise way to go.

Yes, I can take retreat. But I can't stand, and cannot take defeat. It is quite illuminating and amazing to learn this about myself.

What else do I want to do differently?

Make investments (note this new word) that are longer term. This so I am not compelled to watch my stocks every day, or worse, every few hours!

I don't want to be haunted by the market anymore.

This a significant goal and difference.

(So I should thank LK for its teaching losses.)

Basically, I was way over-invested, way over my head, on the verge of drowning.

I had to pull myself out of the water; I had to save myself from drowning.

I don't want to drown. I withdrew from the danger of drowning.

But that doesn't mean I have to stop swimming.

What Have I Learned?

What have I learned from my stock market debacle?

Two positives:

1. Over-excitement is my danger.

2. Fear makes me cautious.

Time for a New Leaf