

Victory and Glory

Saturday, October 10, 2020

Hot Guitar Playing

The smoke alarm just went off by itself. Yet there is no smoke or fire. Weird.

Perhaps it was my guitar playing that set it off.

Today is my baptism as a hot player. The fire alarm announced it.

Live in the Moment

Trading stocks teaches you to live in the moment and appreciate it. No regrets about selling too early or late, losing a rising stock, or holding on to a falling one.

Looking back, Monday morning quarter backs are always right.

Since you can't know the future, the only left is the moment. Learning to live in the moment is a good thing because truth is in the moment.

Sunday, October 11, 2020

Playing Soleares

I jumped into divine sloppiness flamenco and came out clear and strong.

My Soleares errors became the path to growth and glory.

Divine sloppiness works by opening unknown neural pathways of relaxation.

Then the fingers fly, ecstasy comes, and all worries vanish.

Sunday, October 18, 2020

Success

It was fun. I finally got it right. The electrical supply from my car was in order, and the hood I created out of a carton covered the computer well, enabling me to see the screen in the sun. I could program the folk dance class as it went along, creating new moods. Finally, after many weeks of trying, all seemed in order. Victory at last!

I also wrote a successful article on outdoor folk dancing, and have a new MIT folk dance program from Murray to study, look at, and learn.

Plus, thanks to Dan, a possible new self-definition as a self-help guru which is the key to promoting my New Leaf Journal.

And since I started taking smaller positions, my stock trading has become more peaceful, controlled, and doable.

Finally, it feels like new directions are falling into place. I look at the corona mask and social distance world as "that's just the way it is." I've accepted it, at least somewhat.

Monday, October 19, 2020

Folk Dancing and Freedom

Social distancing has destroyed holding hands in the folk dance circle. But has it also freed the folk dancers from certain restrictions? Partly.

Freedom is good.

But too much freedom leads to anarchy and chaos. And that's not good.

On the other hand, too little freedom leads to slavery.

The golden means, a balanced middle way, is the way to go.

Freedom with discipline is best.

To paraphrase Jean-Paul Sartre: The free man is one who can choose his form of slavery.

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

Expanding Performance Mode

I get a shot of meaning when I do things with or for others.

For example, my parking lot folk dance class has energized me, awakened me from my Covid lock-down anger-panic-sadness-depression stupor. I'm up and ready to roll. Yes!

This “with-others” stuff scares me a bit. I’m nervous before each class. But the wake-up power of purpose, the adrenaline-rush that comes with the fear of criticism, and the idea that I stand before others with the possibility of total humiliation if I make a mistake or mess up, and the wonder and glory that come with success when my people love it, all this is my powerful jump-into-the-world stimulant.

In other words: Bravo!

Despite my fears, or perhaps because of them, dealing, working, performing, doing things for others, brings me great pleasure.

Audience Calling

Wake Up

If I face my audience, I may feel trepidation, but I never depressed.

This is an important truth.

This is a healthy, positive approach.

Better to wake up with bits of awe and wonder as side kicks than with depression. Besides, what is depression but a repression of fear, which itself is awe in disguise.

Fear of fears is a cowardly retreat. Better a manly face off, deal and dive into these miseries with the payoff of understanding, victory, and sometimes, even glory.

Besides, God and the audience are One.

And when I play guitar for the glory of God, I also play for His representatives seated before me, which also are my audience.

Sunday, October 25, 2020

Adding “Fiction Raw” to my Website!

Now I know why every morning, since the beginning of the corona shut-down, I’ve woken up with panic, depression, headache, or all three.

I’ve stopped writing fiction.

But I ask, what's the big deal? I'm still writing daily in my journal.

The answer is: I write in my journal to discover and explain myself to myself. It helps clarify the day. It is my vital form of self help, like eating basic foods in order to survive.

Survival is an important ingredient in success. However, once you succeed, is there more to life than mere survival?

The answer is, of course, yes. Writing fiction!

That's where great leaps of enthusiasm, sparks of happiness, bursts of celestial magnificence come from. I can't beat writing an off-the-wall story to make my day. When these crazy ideas pop in my mind, then sprawl themselves across the paper, they make me laugh and cry in unadulterated joy. Puzzling, uninvited. and unexplained, when these crazies enter my mind, I gasp and giggle in awe and wonder. Where did this come from? How did this happen? I really have no answer. Nor do I really care what it is, or if there is one. I am simply grateful that, through this mysterious writing process, I have been freed of ego and momentarily liberated to soar, wild and unencumbered.

These crazy stories are partly inherited from my father. He had crazy stories to tell us kids. So thank you Pop!

And this morning, I'm ready to take the plunge again into the mysterious waters of the Wild River.

But before I leap, one more question: Anything else missing in my fiction life?

Yes. Publication and recognition.

A schizophrenic split between this obligation to promote and sell my books, and the desire to simply create them alone in monastic splendor, ever haunts me.

But this morning I have a possible answer!

I'll add a Fiction in the Raw section to my website.

This would solve the publication problem. It will also dispel most of my resentment toward sales and publishing. Just as the president uses Twitter to bypass

the media, I can bypass the publishing houses by uploading my stories on my website.

On my website, I can publish whatever and whenever I want.

I don't even have to concern myself with negative feedback or bad reviews.

Here's why: Since I put my New Leaf Journal on my website, no one has even read it! Turns out it's much harder to get readers than I thought. For now, that's fine with me. I'd rather experiment on virgin fields empty of critics rather than go into battle right away. This way I'll build up my confidence for future battles that may occur, if I ever get read.

Friday, October 30, 2020

Feelings and Reality

I feel much better this morning. I don't know why.

Perhaps the "Why?" doesn't matter.

But I love it just the same.

Like clouds, feelings float through the sky, passing in and out, changing day to day, moment to moment. They always feel totally real. Well, yes, on one level, feelings are real. But they always pass on, blown away by time itself, to be replaced by the next cloud, the next feeling, which again "feels" or seems totally real.

Feelings are real – until the next moment.

But if reality is measured by permanence, how "real" could feelings be?

Transient, ever changing, floating clouds, wisps of illusion passing themselves off as reality itself, how real is that?

What can I do about this situation?

Not much.

Well, there is one thing: Dive into them, get to know them, and, in the process, realize my feelings, although powerful, are but passing illusions.

Awareness of their illusory power is about all I can "do" about them.

And that is enough.

But it often takes strength, wisdom,, and courage to do it.

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

Is it really true that All-Is-One?

Yes.

Whether I like it or not, I am connected to others always and forever. Happy or sad, that the way it is. There is no escape.

Every activity is either directly or indirectly connected to others. And this is true whether these “others” exist in the past, present, or future.

Witness my new interest in biblical Greek. This language is a dead language. But is it? It was once spoken by humans. I am interested in humans. I belong to this group. Thus, my interest in the ancient language of past humans connects me to these ancients folks. Even though they no longer exist!

My work, social functions, family, and daily activities in the present are also all connected to others.

My concerns about the future, how I will connect with others in life, or leave them through death, also connects me to them. (Is life permanent or temporary? Is death real or an illusion? We'll deal with these questions, and rebirth, resurrection, and reincarnation, another time.)

Summarizing: I am gloriously or miserably connected to others forever. Is this good? Is this bad? These questions are really besides the point. From cradle to nursing home, womb to graveyard, connection to others is simply an eternal and infinite reality.

Always and forever. That's the way it is.

And that's the way to go.

Eternal Communication

By studying biblical Greek and Hebrew I am communicating with people in the past.

By teaching folk dancing, running tours, doing business, I'm communicating with people in the present.

By wondering about my direction and purpose, what will happen to me in life, I'm communicating with people of the future.

People are forever. That's just the way it is.

Get used to it.

The Reality of Imaginary Audiences

The guitar concert I am practicing for will always have an imaginary audience.

And this whether I give it public or not.

Imagination creates reality.

Is my imaginary audience real?

Yes.

As real as the Greek-speaking audience that inspires me to learn biblical Greek.

As real as tomorrow's folk dance class that inspires me to prepare a new program, introduce new dances, and ring back some oldies.

Imaginary audiences are my great motivators.

Practice and prepare for them wherever and whenever they are.

Wednesday, November 4, 2020

We Are One

Everything I do is connected to others.

Even the things I do alone, which is most things.

For example: I study alone, practice guitar alone, go over my dances alone, exercise alone. For business, I answer emails alone, preparing tour itineraries alone, write letters alone.

But all the time and efforts spent alone, ever hovering in the back of my mind are the invisible others. And ultimately it is for them that I work. And play, too.

Quite amazing. The world is all connected. We are One.

New Coordination and Direction

I just wrote a fiction piece in my New Leaf Journal.

I used to make separate sections for my fiction. But now I wrote it in my serious, real life New Leaf Journal. This means my so-called real and serious self and my flights of imagination fictional self have moved from the imperfect coming-together tense) to the perfect have-come-together tense.

No more separation between real and fictional world. All is in one place. I like it. All is One.

Editing my Journal

Are reality and fiction really separate?

Is my fiction and reality really separate?

Since “perhaps” is my energy connection, perhaps reality and fiction are really one.

If this is so – and I think it is – this could be the first step towards a desire to edit my journal.

I have no trouble editing my fiction. But until now, editing my real New Leaf Journal was unimaginable.

But if my fiction is real, and my real is fiction, then I can easily edit my journal.

Thursday, November 5, 2020

Guitar: I’m into divine sloppiness, and I love it.

I wish I could stay here, but nothing lasts forever. So dive in. Enjoy while it lasts.

Friday, November 6, 2020

The Tyranny of “Right” Pronunciation

I suffer from the tyranny of “right” pronunciation.

I’m studying Hebrew and biblical Greek.

What is the “right” pronunciation and how important is it?

I know there are different pronunciations of languages throughout the world, and in different regions, people pronounce the same language differently.

I know the most important thing about pronunciation is understanding each other. I also know, since people speak the same language with different pronunciations throughout the world, that there are many “right” ways to speak.

Given this truth, why do I suffer from the tyranny of “right” pronunciation? Probably because I like to get things “right.”

But what is “right”?

But in my heart and soul, I still want to speak the correct way. And the correct way is, I think, believe, guess that the correct way to speak, the “right” pronunciation is the way people pronounce words in their native country. Thus, the right way to pronounce Hebrew is the way Israeli’s do it in Israel, the right way to pronounce Greek is the way the Greek’s do it in Greece, etc.

But what about a so-called “dead” language like biblical Hebrew and Greek, classical Latin, Hittite, and Egyptian hieroglyphics? How do you pronounce the cuneiform writing of ancient Babylonian Code of Hammurabi? Really, what’s the difference how I pronounce a dead language? Not many ancients to communicate with these days. Unless, of course, I use the present “accepted” pronunciation, so I can speak the dead languages to my contemporaries.

Lots of questions.

But for me personally, it is simply a decision I have to make alone. After all, I am the one suffering from the tyranny of right pronunciation. Therefore, only I can free myself from these intellectual chains.

I can start removing the chains by stepping out of my self-created prison, walking out and “pronouncing” myself a free man.

Guitar Sensuality

I love sensuality of my slow guitar playing.

Saturday, November 7, 2020

Going Slower

Jumping into the Fire

What are the advantages of going slower?

You go deeper.

When I told this to David, he liked it. His appreciation of the idea confirmed its importance.

Slow and fast have different purposes.

Fast covers lots of distance and surface.

Slow covers less but goes deeper.

Both have their place in the pantheon of burning opposites.

Opposites unite the cosmos.

When slow and fast meet in the fire

They melt into One.

Money as a Grand Motivator

Money is a grand motivator.

This is true whether I have lots or little

Consider at my outdoor folk dance classes. I only ask for a \$5 donation. After each class, I add up the small amount I receive. I wondering whether it's financially worth the effort of running the class. Then I feel the money, smell its green content, sense the power in its bills, and, as it sits happily in my hands, I say, “Yes, it's worth it!”

Indeed, money is a grand motivator.

Since this is true, can I use this kind of green motivation to encourage me to promote my books?

One way is to upload my stories and New Leaf Journal writings to my blog post.

This would serve the purpose of:

1. Advertising my books.
2. Motivating me to edit my new writing.
3. Give myself an audience. I need one to motivate me.

Jumping into the Fire Self-Expression in the Forest

The slow experiment:

Slow Greek declension endings, slow Leyenda bar, slow knee focus.

This moving slow experiment feels so mystical and deep. Others may not understand. This gives me a reason to quietly follow my own road.

But is quietly a good reason?

Maybe publically verbalizing it is better. At least, it has its place

Yes, other may not understand it. But, on the other hand, they may. Perhaps a more courageous road of saying it despite possible resistance and criticism may be better. Truth is, one never knows when and if seeds will take root.

Also, it's good to learn how to verbalize these deeper thoughts. No one really knows how others will react. Besides, does it really matter?

The purpose of all this is to learn how to express myself tastefully, clearly, even forcefully. Such learning is within my control. The results, how it effects (affects?) others, is beyond my control.

Gates of Speed

Soft and light guitar playing open the gates of speed.

Do soft and slow go together?

Does fast go with deep?

I sense it does on a different level.

Since opposites attract and work together, soft and loud and slow and fast could work together as well.

But I still don't know how.

Sunday, November 8, 2020

Defeat and Fighting Back

Yesterday I lost.

But am I defeated?

What's the difference between losing and being defeated?

Losing can happen anytime. You have little control over it.

Defeated means you've decided to give up.

Losing is an "outside" event/

Defeat is an "inside event", a thought, an attitude, a personal decision.

As a teenager, I was a passionate baseball fan, routing for first the winning Yankees, and then the losing St Louis Browns. My emotions went up and down depending on their wins and loses. I also played baseball.

In politics, I am a fan as well. But beyond that, unlike baseball, I don't play politics. I am merely a fan.

Note the word "merely." Like baseball, are politics for me merely entertainment?

By us "merely," am I diminishing the importance of this entertainment? Yes.

Like baseball, I am hurt by the lose of my favorite team. Losing hurts. Period.

Might as well admit it, deal with it, let the sadness and anger roll, and see where it leads. And finally, when the waves subside, move on.

After defeat, the choice is to give up or fight back.

It's healthiest for my psyche to fight back.

But how?

Although I am a supporter, I really "do" nothing beyond being a fan. I join no parties. I spend no time promoting my political team. I simply watch from the sidelines and cheer. And I vote. Evidently, that's all I want to do.

Is just giving positive energy enough?

Maybe.

On the other hand, maybe I am already in politics, doing it my own way, but just don't know or recognize it.

How so? Maybe my political way is the way of art. It my personal apolitical political method

After all, I do want to make the world a better place. I believe in *tikun olam*, healing the world. But my methods are different from the direct, in-your-face, hit-em-over-the-head, bash-them-into-submission political methods of some others. Although I may believe their philosophy, and support leaders who do it this way, my way of indirect, subtle, telepathic communication may be different, but shines and works nevertheless.

I believe that all people, although on the surface, may not be united, are nevertheless one.

I believe that All is One.

And I evidently I have my own method of bringing them together. Technically, I use folk dancing, concerts, tours, my artistic method. In my mind, when I work, I constantly think unity and All is One. That's how I think about my audience, my students when I teach folk dancing, my tourists when I lead a tour. I work is by mentally creating unity and thinking it into existence, projecting unity energy through telepathy in order to unite my customers, my audience, my travelers.

All is One.

Paradoxically, although on the surface, my method is apolitical, in reality, it has big political meaning.

So what I offer is larger than I thought.

So, I just created the first Folk Dance Party and made myself president. (Of course, this is a joke. But maybe its not as funny as I thought.) Our party philosophy is we go in all directions, accept all people, and unify everyone through folk dance.

Monday, November 9, 2020

The Truth of Slow

Does slow really open up a new world?

I hope so.

In this case, deep down “hope so” means know so. I know its true. But I don’t have the confidence to admit it yet. Also there is the fear, that by knowing so, I’ll kill not only the hope, but the fact, the truth and reality of slow itself.

If I jump immediately in my believing my instincts, is it over confidence? Am I rushing the process, and, in so doing, diminishing or even destroying it?

Interesting question.

In any case, the idea and practice of slow opens up a new world. This means slow guitar playing, slow running, slow study of biblical Greek and Hebrew roots, slow yoga, and even slow weight lifting, slow, slow, slowing everything down.

Is there a great truth in the slow process? Can it uncover great truths about myself and the world?

Deep down, I know it can. It already has.

Example: Once I got past my shame of running slowly, I began to feel a new power in my legs. I’d have to call it the “power of slow.” I’m amazed that I’m even saying this – but I am.

Indeed, shame of slow was blocking the power and wisdom of aging.

Shame is merely fear of judgement by others. A big “merely,” but merely,

nevertheless. Thus, shame boils down to fear. And fear, although it can block entrances and exits, is also an excellent motivator. And basically, its best to use to inspire you to start doing what you're afraid of.

The physical fact is: I am entering a new stage. I am moving more slowly. (But another positive is that slow movement is better than no movement.)

New doors are opening. Slow is an important technique to use on the road to wisdom. And it ripens, gets better with age.

Do I want to walk the slow road?

Where will this lead?

Do I even have a choice?

Love Your Opposition

As You Fight Like Hell To Destroy Them

What can you do about the opposition?

Basically, nothing.

They will always be there,.

Opposition is a fact of life.

The only control you have over them is your attitude.

What's the best attitude?

Loving your opposition is best.

Why love the opposition?

They stretch your mind, help you grow, teach you about weakness and strength.

In the cosmic design, opposites attract and need each other. Without them, the world falls apart. But whenever it does, it falls into opposites, which immediately attract each other and put the world together again.

In the short run, fear of your opposition gives you strength and power. But in the long run, love gives you more.

In conclusion: Love your opposition. Then fight like hell to destroy them.

So ends a New Leaf.