

## A New Start

Thursday, March 12, 2015

### Loose Wrist

Guitar: Is loose right wrist an opening, a new direction, or a waste of time? Of course, since it's another new start, I'm hoping it's a new opening, a loose, open direction.

Friday, March 13, 2015

### Doubt

I have two why questions this morning:

1. Why study languages? Why study Bulgarian, Hebrew, and Spanish? And this even though my focus is better. (I am no longer so scattered by tour worries.)

2. Why does my lower "sciatic back" hurt and keep hurting? What to do and how to handle it? If it is sciatic, go on as usual. If other, go on as usual, too? (But what else could it be? It keeps lasting, like a Sarnoiic TMS injury. Thus it must be "sciatic back" which means a distraction. Thus my questions, even including the "Why study languages?" questions, are themselves forms of doubt. And the mind creates doubt as its most subtle form of distraction. Doubt to deter you from the course; doubt to deter you from facing your true fears, angers, worries, etc.

What am I trying to protect myself from?

Why did I get this "sciatica" in Cuba? From sitting so much on the bus but especially in the restaurants?

Truth is, I'm trying to convince myself that I like running tours. Certainly, I like the success part. But I hate the pressure, the responsibility, the tightness of the tour schedule, how I have to show up at each event, how I'm "imprisoned" in my tour and its schedule. Tight, tight, tight! That's the nature of my tour schedule. Follow routines,

sit, sit, sit in restaurants waiting for the food, and chat-talking to others while I and we wait, wait, wait, and sit, sit, sit. Truly, it is infuriating! But I won't admit or face it. Instead I get a "sciatica" from "sitting so long and too long."

Ha. That's it. I'm basically furious at the frustrating tightness, the imprisonment in my tour schedule, the fact that I have to show up for everything. I don't mind the "being on" part. That is actually fun for me. It's the imprisoned in my schedule, and the fact that I have to give up the loveliness of all my beautiful miracle schedule routines.

And I thought I liked running tours? Well, part of me does. But part of me actually hates it! Frustrated, infuriated and angry about the tightness of schedule. Tight in the sciatica, tight in the sitting, tight in the schedule. And especially sitting in restaurants. . . for hours. I hate and hated it! I can even remember the meal where it broke, sitting under Jesus and Karl Marx. That long sitting was the last straw.

What can I do about the "sitting sciatica?" Nothing but know about it, its origin, and recognizing and accepting how I hate the tight imprisonment aspect of my tour schedule which culminated in restaurant sitting.

But, since this is the only post-tour sciatica I ever got, maybe it was specifically and only the restaurant sitting on the Cuba that got me so frustrated, mad, angry. The imprisonment in my seat fed my rage which I, of course, immediately repressed (since I couldn't do anything about it.)

### Tour Negatives

The tour negatives are: My tour hating aspects. What makes running them so frustrating, infuriating, anger producing, and, if not recognized, sciatica creating.

1. Tight "tour imprisonment" schedule, in general.
2. Specifically, sitting long times in restaurants.

What to do?

1. Know I hate it.
2. Deal with the frustration quietly and within myself.

How? Good question.

### Tour Positives

The tour positives are: the folk dancing with local teachers and local folk dance groups is great! Of course, that is really why I run the tours in the first place! Maybe I should remember this. . . and have more dancing!

### Cuba Tour Criticism: Not Enough Dancing!

Bottom line: I agree with the criticism. There wasn't enough folk dancing on the Cuba tour. And especially, there was not enough salsa dancing! Too much sitting, and not enough dancing. (But maybe the too much sitting could have been softened, even counteracted, if we had had more dancing.

Thus, what I'm really mad at is we had so little dancing!

Anger at not enough dancing is (one of) the main reasons for my sciatica!

### Spring Time: Time to Spring New Goals!

The old exercise way doesn't seem to work anymore. I need renewal, a new direction, a new way of looking at things.

### New, specific, miracle schedule goals!

Running:

Gym:

Yoga:

Folk Dance:

Language:

Guitar:

Other:

### Back to Writing; Back to Soaring

My Brain and Body is Sore Because I am not Soaring!

One reason my legs may be sore is that I' am not soaring.

I'm tight, restrained, and I need release.

I'm sore because I'm not soaring!

Thus, to escape and be released from my sores, I need to soar!

I soar best through writing crazy, off-the-wall, falling off the table stories. My imagination soars, and with it, my legs rise as well.

Thus I need soaring fables, short stories that soar (lift) my spirit, lift my legs, and make my heart dance.

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

### Identity, Community, and Folk Dance Fear

Seems I'm shaking and trembling at every turn. Living in total fear and trembling. (Lots of awe but not much wonder, thought.) Every slight physical pain is throwing my mind into a downward spin.

List the pains and swirls: Lower back, right buttocks, ex-sciatica, left ankle just a bit, then dizzy this a.m. Each one is telling me I can't dance anymore. Strange, they don't tell me I can't lead tours anymore, or play guitar, or even run, write, do yoga, gym, or whatever. Only dance. And economic worries have left my dance world. I no longer worry about how to make money teaching dancing. And yet, somehow, my biggest fears are now in the form of "I can't, or rather, won't be able to dance anymore."

And these fears are entering my dance parts, namely, right leg, right hip and buttocks, right sciatica; they are telling me that things are not all "right."

It's not even a business or economic worry, not a worry about how I'll make a living. Yet, it crashes into my very identity, and this minus economic worry. Wow and why.

I feel I don't need my dancing in the old way, that is, how will I make a living from it. But nevertheless, I evidently need my dancing in a new way. This new way has something to do with (artistic) identity and community.

How did those words come up? Indeed, they are new, especially the community part. But also the artistic identity.

I don't remember having such folk dance fears before. But I do have them now. Well, maybe I do remember. My "folk dance ankle" immediately comes to mind.

So I do, and did, have mucho and many folk dance fears. It's just I've either forgotten or repressed them.

Well, they are back! Time to deal with them. Even as I'm writing about this now, a sickening terror is passing through me! Indeed, I'm definitely on to something

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

#### Revised Miracle Schedule: New Morning Order

1. Hour of Study

2. Hour of Yoga

Study of the body. Becoming a trainer (via my own personal training program)

3. Guitar practice

4. Maybe running (and/or folk dance practice. Wow, this is a new one!) Can I, should I, conflate the two?

Breakfast, etc.

Business and work day starts

Thursday, March 19, 2015

#### Accidents of Creation

I wonder if I should allow myself to play the classical guitar well, very well, even excellently, and even "perfectly."

After all, technique and inspiration are there. Am I not ready for "accidents" of spontaneity and creativity to take place? Or do I prefer to remain in the past, beating myself over the head with the constant threat of guitar failure?

Obviously and evidently, I'm ready to give up the latter.

I'll admit that, after so many years of practice, I've got the classical guitar technique down. The inspiration is also there, although I've let it be hidden. I'm ready for the accidents of creation.

I'm ready to jump in.

Friday, March 20, 2015

Could I really play guitar now? Why not?

A new life is starting.

Saturday, March 21, 2015

### Change Yourself

#### Running Wild versus Tour Castration(Responsibility)

A biting, debilitating rage has settled into my lower back. Some call it sciatica, others call it piriformis syndrome, still others call it something else. Whatever it is, rage is somehow involved. Rage which I, for some reason, do not yet see. Rage, which I haven't (let myself feel) felt for a long time.

1. I wonder why I haven't felt it, or allowed myself to feel it? It is, after all, such an energy blast.

2. I wonder what has enraged me?

Could castrated in the middle of a joyous event be one of them? Of course, that is a recent happening. What, if anything does it have to do with Cuba and tourism?

Am I constantly castrated, or on the edge of castration, during a tour? Indeed, part of me wants to run wild (the free, macho, uncastrated part) and part of me feels and follows the dictates of responsibility, (which, in itself, might be the actual symbolic "castration," destruction of my running wild instincts, and thus enrage me.)

I have become very "responsible" lately, Running wild has dribbled away and practically disappeared into oblivion. Where

Where did my running wild on the lawn go?

In the middle of my ecstasy, I am stopped, thwarted, turned off, destroyed, castrated. This makes me furious.

What to do about this, I don't know. But I can start by facing it, becoming aware of it's noxious influence, realizing its powerful destructive power.

Is there fear involved? Maybe. But I doubt it. Mostly, its is animalistic fury, a primal scream, an instinctual wildness, a primitive and primeval rage unleashed.

My past reactions have been to jump back into a corner and retreat. I'd end up inwardly fuming for days and with a headache. Now, to my happy amazement, I protest, get mad, speak up, (inner scream) and fight it. That is indeed better.

Perhaps awareness and fighting it is all I can do. But that's a lot. But, of course, I can't change others. And trying to do so is a total waste of time and useless. When involved with others, fighting and arguing will not change them.

But fighting and arguing may be good for me. I can always scream. And even though no one else is listening or paying attention, such actions help release my furies, reopen the energetic running wild channels. And that is good.

Fight, argue, scream if you like, but in doing so, accept the fact that you can't change others. You can only change yourself. But that, in itself, is pretty good!

Thus, forget about changing others.

Through awareness and self-knowledge, change yourself.

### Change Yourself, Change the World

Forget about changing others.

Don't waste your time trying to change others.

It is not within your power to change them.

As life goes on, go deeper and deeper into yourself. In so doing, go deeper and deeper into changing yourself.

And, in the process, changing the world.

Depth Guitar

Start with depth guitar.

What is depth guitar?

Basically, you can't change the audience's opinion of you.

But you can change your playing

You can change yourself

And, in the process, perhaps change the audience opinion of you,

But, no matter what happens, change yourself. And, parenthetically, as a by product, on the side, without even trying, you change the world.

It's been a clean-up year. Lots of neurosis and side-splitters are out of the barn. Or fixed up, and ready to leave old home; they're ready to roll.

What does "ready to roll" mean? It means they're ready to run wild on the lawn! And this in their own right, their own way. Thus:

#### Run Wild on the Lawn

1. Running, yoga, gym
3. Classic guitar!
4. Writing
5. Folk dancing, especially choreography.

Sunday, March 22, 2015

This morning I am sad because I feel my body is falling apart. But I hate a whiner. Give up the self pity.

Focus rather on what shall I do about it!

#### The Divided Gold

No question I am a totally divided person: half of me is in the world (business, meeting and talking to others, cocktail-hour kibbutzing. I even enjoy it), and half of me is annoyed by the world – just leave me alone and let me do my miracle schedule



things.

I suppose that is my nature; I will always be divided, except for those (short) moments of total focus and concentration.

Monday, March 23, 2015

Running Wild on the Lawn

Hidden strength. It started with lower back pain, turned into sciatic pain, turned into right upper leg pain (which made it difficult to even walk!). Finally, I tried running again, in spite of the pain, and slowly, although it still hurt, the knot loosened. My meditation went like this: This lower back knot is covering, hiding, repressing, holding back, waiting until it matures, like a seed planted in the ground must wait to mature before it breaks through the earth in its own kind of flower.

This flower is my rising new self filled with strength! What new strength is that? The ever-desired strength of running wild on the lawn in (almost) everything I do!

Thank you for the email Jim.

I would hope that your contribution for international folk dancing would be recognized soon. You not only teach, but the value of your organizing all the international folk dance tours should also be recognized.

Martin

Guitar: In terms of strength, power, and running wild on the lawn, Alhambra with focus on treble, tremolo, and fingers is more powerful – and more fun!

Running Wild on the Lawn: Coming to Pass!

I hesitate to say it. . . but I just did: Running wild on the lawn is coming to pass! Running wild with Alhambra, letting the tremolo fingers fly, is the first step.

Run Wild on the Lawn in Everything I do

As a universalist, it has always been my dream to run wild on the lawn in everything I do. I may be getting close.

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

By Helping Others, I am Helping Myself

Sciatica Breakthrough

My sciatica breakthrough has opened up a new world. A new-found running wild on the lawn strength.

I have to use my TMS self-knowledge on others in order to learn and relearn it myself.

Is this true of guitar as well? That I must “use it with and on others” in order to learn it myself. That means playing in front of, performing for, an audience. And this in order to learn it for myself. To prick, sting, wake up, and inspire my mind again.

I am so used to thinking and feeling TMS, that I have forgotten the words to explain it to others. And lost some of the enthusiasm as well.

How can I reawaken my enthusiasm? By using it on and for others. How to transfer that knowledge? That challenge would wake up my mind again, re-inspire me to relearn it on and for a different level.

In other words, by helping others, I am helping myself. Period.

Evidently, I’ve helped myself so much I’m getting bored with it. I’m getting bored, even falling asleep, with helping myself. Evidently, I’m at the point in life where I need to help others in order to wake up my mind and help myself.

I am ready to step into the help-others arena. After all, where else is there for me to go?

“Gone Public, Running Wild on the Lawn”

Next Chapter of my Life

What am I going to do with my new “running wild on the lawn” power and strength? Perhaps bringing it to others. What else is there to do? Where else is there to go? Plus, by “sharing” it with others, bringing, offering, presenting it to others, I will better waken and focus my mind, focus my new power and strength, and help myself as well.

Bringing “running wild on the lawn” to others, can’t hurt them. It might even help them. And it certainly will help myself. It’s a win-win situation.

How to do this, may be the only question.

1. Giving concerts, or performing for others, comes to mind.
2. Spreading the fun and joy of folk dancing is also a good cause. Folk singing, too.

3. And the meditative joy of classic guitar as well.

4. Becoming a TMS counselor, which means asking many questions. Maryann Zeliznak is my model beginning.

It feels like its hardly about me anymore; its about others. Where the me comes in is in the challenge: How to bring it to others. And by facing and dealing with this “beyond small self” challenge, this “step into and work with the Big Self” challenge, I shall grow and expand.

Although money is good, and partially included in this challenge, this is about more than finance.

This is about running wild on the lawn with and for others.

The sciatica breakthrough has taught me to “walk differently” in this, the “Gone public, running wild on the lawn,” next chapter of my life.

### Guitar: Flying Fingers

That’s the “Alhambra (Arpeggio) Gone Public/Running Wild on the Lawn” feeling.

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Languages: On Considering Myself an Amateur Linguist

Ready for Stage Two

It started with my return to Bulgarian study.

I'm moving from reading to speaking. And this, even though I may never use my knowledge on real persons in real life situations.

I wonder what this new view, idea, even direction means.

To think of myself as an amateur linguist. A lover of languages. Indeed it is a worthy pursuit combining love of languages with low-to-no pressure of being a non-professional.

Plus, it combines perfectly with tourism, fits perfectly into my tours. It infuses them, and myself, with a new inspiration: the desire to know the many languages I visit. It gives me a new goal and reason to travel.

Although travel pays well and I love the money it can bring in, I still need a new and higher reason to keep doing it. One aside from finance. Especially now that I am not so financially desperate.

This returns to my original idea of studying languages, history, geography, etc. of each country for a year before I visit them.

I'm in a new and different place now. Before and after. What's different? Let's look at the past and present.

When I started the tour business, I had to original reason:

1. I wanted to make money

2. I wanted to be free to dance the way I liked. Namely, I realize now, I wanted to choreograph dances. I got tired of people telling me I was doing the wrong steps. How did they know I was doing the wrong steps? And what were the right steps? If any. I could only know by visiting these countries and seeing the people dance. But dancers, and dance groups, and teachers would not dance for or with me alone. However, if I brought a group, they would all meet with us. Thus was I "forced" to

bring a group, “forced” to run a tour in order to learn how the locals danced.

The result of all this is that now I have seen them dance, and have total confidence in the way I teach, dance, and “make up” dances, that is choreograph them. I am no longer a closer choreographer; I am out of the closet.

So, in terms of my original goals, I am a success. I’ve succeeded in both making money and having knowledge and confidence in my dance teaching, choreography, and letting my imagination run wild within the folk dance traditions of the countries I’ve visited.

Well, what comes along with success? First, come elation and temporary happiness. After that, slowly boredom sets in. And the question, “What now?” arises.

Okay, finances are no longer desperate, money seems stable, and I finally know what I’m doing. And this both in folk dancing and the technique of running a tour. I forgot to mention all the nervousness, tension, energy, and worry I have, for almost a year before the tour, about organizing, running and leading the tour. A tremendous responsibility and worry. But, after a mere twenty-five years, I finally feel I know what I’m doing and how to run it. So, I’m a bit more “relaxed.” That means I’m ready to focus on the other reasons I ran tours: The love of (dance and music, of course,) languages, history, geography. and more.

#### Grand Goal

I could even have grand goal: to study the history, geography, etc of the countries in their original languages of Bulgarian, Hebrew, Spanish, Greek, or whatever.

Indeed, although traveling on the exalted path is possible, desirable, and I’ll love it, accomplishing it is an impossible dream. Luckily, I love pursuing an impossible dream.

#### Start my New Focus and See what Happens

With the above ideas in mind, I could even “aim” for smaller, more manageable tours. Maybe say limit them to 25 persons? And make the price slightly higher? Just a

thought.

But at least mentally, that would free me from constant sales worry, and thus free me for my new Talmudic scholar language-and-more study program.

Or, maybe I could simply follow my program anyway say, for a year, limit my tour number and financial worries, and not change anything. Just start my New Focus and see what happens.

With this in mind, I could start my New Focus even today!

After all, it is spring: Time for new beginnings.

This is, in a sense, the scholar's life I've always dream of. It puts studies at the forefront of everything else.

As I envision this, I see the monastery within, the high school student (me) studying in the attic, sitting at his simple wooden desk with a floor lamp shining light on the pages of grand books he reads to learn the secrets of the universe. What a beautiful vision.

Well, I'm not strong enough to bring that vision public.

I'm ready for stage two.

A life of study, a life of learning is what I've always believed in. It's the Jewish way. My parents believed in it and loved it. I believe in it and love it, too.

As Karl Marx said,

"Investors unite. You have nothing to lose but your strains." (claims, pains.)

"Das Minuscule" (Small Letter)

Friday, March 27, 2015

### Wild Horse Mind

The mind is a wild horse. You are its driver.

Your (rock-strewn, narrow) route is along the edge of a cliff. On one side are open

fields, blue sky, and (infinite) sun light; on the other, a steep (dangerous) (infinite) chasm, the abyss of darkness.

It's a bumpy ride, so hold on to the reins!

Monday, March 30, 2015

I Need Both: Business and Art  
Business Anchors me to Earth  
Art Enables me to Soar Above it

I can't believe what I'm saying. I've done what I need and have to do with my tour business. I've just about gone as far as I can go. Yes, I have some mop up operations, but nevertheless, it seems that, for awhile at least, growth has halted. Perhaps I'm at a consolidation stage. Whatever it is, believe it or not, I'm getting bored! Yes, I'm studying and filling the miracle schedule spaces.

I want, even need, something more. A new business!

And this, even though finances are good, Evidently, I need a business venture to ground me, to grind and fasten me concretely me to the earth. I still need something financial to anchor and motivate me.

This realization is something totally beyond what I ever thought in my life. I always thought I had to do business in order to survive. Once I could survive, then I could do what I "really" wanted to do, namely be an artist.

But now I see I need both. I need business to anchor me to the earth, and art to soar above it.

I always thought I need business only for the money. Only for survival. But, although money is the measure of business, I evidently need it for something even more visceral: as an anchor, for stability and earthy, material focus. Without it, I will, evidently, fly away and die, My mind, and even my body will disintegrate into space.

Why didn't my mother tell me this?

Well, maybe she did. But subtly, in a different way. Through her cleanliness compulsion, to keep everything in order in the house, to clean up my room. To organize and order things. To wash the dishes correctly.

What do washing dishes and business have in common? I don't know yet, but there seems to be a link. Or at least I want there to be. I want to find some connection, some link to business in my past. I want someone, somehow to make it important, make it part of the family tradition. And, if I can't find it, I'll make it up! Why? Because I evidently need it.

I need business like I need art. Only differently.

That is my spring realization.

Well, now what?

Well, if I can restart or upstart my old business, it may be time to start a new business.

I like that idea.

What new business would it be? Would it be a combination of old business and new business? In other words, a new direction with a connection (unknown at the moment) to my old business?

We'll see where this leads.

I need to expand my business and/or develop/grow a new one.

### Business as a Form of Play

Maybe to me, business is a form of play in the outside world. Like playing in Park Ewen was I was a child. This expanded to playing the violin, But I only played in my room.

Now evidently, I am ready to bring my playpen public. Or rather, I've been playing in public for years, only with resistance, with the brakes on. That's because I couldn't merge or tie it to my artistic or internal playing self.



I believe in play, fun, and simcha joy as connection to the Sublime and the meltdown experience of union with the Sublime and Magnificence.

No question, art has always been the supreme form of play. Now I realize that, for me, business is too. It always has been but somehow I was too afraid, too financially insecure to realize it. Now that finances are better, more in order and under control, my mind is more relaxed. I am free to delve deeper into my personality and inner sources of motivation. I am free to realize that business is play. As an adult, I play in my personal business sandbox; as an adult, I lead my second grade Barnard School for Girls team into Tryon Park to play Boys Against the Girls.

So business is my playpen gone public. Play is the constant on the field of artistic and business freedom.

I've developed a wider sandbox.

That means that for my new businesses there must be some money attached to it. It must cost something; some profit must be made. Not much, but some.

These could be "old" or former businesses, but, since I am new, they are now new businesses.

What new businesses?

New businesses: Languages, books, exercise, history, videos.

Old businesses reborn: (Renewed through the concept of business as fun, playpen gone public):

1. Performing. This is the "easy" route. This business playpen is all together and ready to roll. It only needs a new attitude of "business as playpen gone public and ready to roll."

Tuesday, March 31, 2015

Learn a word, or a few words a day. This in a foreign language. English counts,

but I know most of the words in English.) Thus Bulgaria, Hebrew, Spanish, whatever. A few words a day. Maybe three is the magic number.

### Adventures in Mud Land

Even though things are going well in my life, I still want to complain. I don't know why, but I do.

The past few days have been just terrible. When did it start? (We'll deal with why later.) I don't know. Another thing that bothers me is I keep saying "I don't know." I know myself and my patters. So why do I keep saying "I don't know?"

Perhaps I do know, but don't want to examine or admit it.

Okay, let's start with the "fact" that I do know.

What do I know?

1. That "success" has led to an emptiness and "Now what?" state. This emptiness, a directionless, purposeless, and meaningless place, has created a sinking, falling off the cliff feeling. Panic. I'm falling into a dark, infinite and fathomless abyss.

I've been through this feeling many times before. Usually, maybe always, at endings. I go through it, survive it, a new idea or direction comes along, and then I move on. All very calm and easy. A "been there, done that before," safe explanation.

But let me not diminish the new and freshness of this situation. It's a new day; I'm in a new place; and I'm falling to a new abyss. It's still just as scary, terrifying, really.

Okay, let's start over. This panic state is first of all destroying my body. I'm beset by aches and pains. This is all very vague and general. Anything specific?

Well, let's start with folk dancing. I'm still totally pissed that I lost the free time before both my classes. First at St Pauls in Englewood, then at the Rodda Center in Teaneck. Lost this time has totally destroyed my love of teaching. The free time before classes was where I did all my creative work. I even said that by the time class starts, I'm finished. The class itself is almost an after thought. The creative part before class is

the most productive and important part of the class.

And I lost it in both classes! Since I can't do anything about it, can't find other rooms to teach in, and I can't, don't want to, cancel my classes, I'm stuck with this miserable, totally frustrating, and enraging situation. I'm underestimating the importance of this loss. It has killed my love of folk dance teaching. A big deal!

The time before folk dance class is where I choreograph, get in the mood, create, and put the dance and order of the upcoming class together. Now it is all gone. A gigantic loss. I am totally enraged by it. This rage is (probably) sinking into my bones and muscles.

Must I adopt and change? What else can I do?

Why is God blocking me in the way, throwing up such an obstacle in my path? Why now? And for what purpose?

But this isn't all.

Strange, but I am mad at my success. It has taken away my motivation. It's an old story. I hate the frustration of failure. But at least failure motivates me, pushes me to get past my failure and succeed. I never feel empty with failure, only depressed, down, low, and miserable and I lie in the mud and breath in the dirt. But as I lie at the bottom, a strange force slowly fills my being. It is a strange form of survival instinct and rage. A voice starts speaking to me. It says, "Jim, you have a choice. You can either die right here, or fight back, start screaming and struggling to turn things around. And then another voice comes along, surges up in me, and says, "Never! I shall never give up! I'll die first. I'll die fighting. But I'll never give up!" And then things slowly start to turn around; I start coming up, rising from the nourishing mud of the cellar. I am reborn to fight again. And I start down the strange happiness road of struggle and survival.

Sure, I'm happy with my success, the fact I have mucho people registered for tours, and my finances are in good shape. But evidently, I still need something more. Man does not live by bread alone. I need something beyond bread.

For now, all I can think of to do is simply dive into my depressed state. (Trouble is, it's not even an old-fashioned depression. At least that state always led to creation.) In fact, I don't know (there's the phrase again!) what state this is.

Perhaps I am truly in a new place. There's no new name for this bland, empty, meaningless state. I've never been here before. New territory in an older, more experienced, successful, lost again body.

New territory. Time to sink in and explore.

Adventures in Mud Land.

Let's start with my body. Seems I am destroying my body with some strange rage. It started after my Cuba trip with sciatica. Actually, this sciatica is still with me. It hasn't left. Perhaps it is the psychological beginning of this muscle-tightening, body destroying rage.

What happened in Cuba? (Or after Cuba?)

Immediately, I think, too long dinners, too much sitting, not enough movement or dancing. Beyond that, imprisonment in my tour structure. Tight, restrictions, loss of freedom.

But could it "only" be that? I also love my tours, even as I hate them. And I've been through this so often before. What makes this different now? And why a sciatica? I had it only once before when I had the tension of upcoming folk dance teaching workshops. Pain and heaviness in my thighs, my quadriceps, and worry about my upcoming folk dance teaching performance.

But I have no worries now. And no upcoming performances. And again I have sciatica. Why? What is new? But I do know (at last I know something!) it, something, started in Cuba.

Or was it after Cuba? Did it have something to do with the success of my tour business? That I am now becoming a tour machine and giving up my writing and beautiful fantasy life?

And this, after losing my choreographic space, the pre-folk dance time? No, choreo is something different.

I think it may have to do with the feeling of being forced (through success) into becoming a "tour machine," and, in the process, giving up my writing and beautiful fantasy life.

What happened? Finally, through success, I've arrived at the place I've always wanted to be: A place where I am finally "free to create." And that means, free to write.

But somehow, I've given up writing, given up the challenge and beauty of this expansive fantasy life. Trading it in for "mere tours and tourism." Basically, I'm selling out for success, selling out my creative values for the money and numbers (of clients) in tourism. A Faustian bargain. Tour clients in exchange for my writing, fantasy life, and beautiful, wild, off-the-wall creativity. Which comes out primarily through the printed word, through writing.

Is that the post Cuba message? Is that why I have sciatica?

In order to cure myself, do I have to give up my tour career, and return to writing? Or at least turn my priorities around. Make writing my top priority.

But this time it would be to not only write it, but also to deal with the non-recognition frustration by adding sell and promote it.

Is this the change I do not want to face? Is this my transitional form of sciatic writing?

The cause of sciatica.

I've finally arrived in the place I want to be in, but I'm afraid to start. I've become so involved with the means to the end, that I have forgotten the end. The end was always to write. The means was my other work, the work to make money. The prize hangs right in front of my nose. But I've been afraid to grab it.

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Responsibility, Sciatica, Aching Legs (some back)

Responsibility and sciatica, aching legs (even back).

Part of me is glad I'm having success and am successful. And this re the tour business, But part of me, which I hesitate to recognize, is the weight of responsibility also involved in success. I have to take care of all these people! It's a big and weighty burden. Annoying, too.

And big success came in after my Cuba tour. Full Bulgaria registration, (fears of 75 or more people, none of which has materialized, to my disappointment), adding more tours for 2016, and even 2017. Weighed down and burdened by tours, and responsibility of it, and, of course, my time and my art dribbling away with it.

That may well be the anger reason for my sciatica. Anger, grand annoyance at the weight and responsibility of success!

It's not all happiness; it's not all misery about how success saps my of motivation. It's also the weight and burden of responsibility that success brings me. It occupies, fills my mind with constant annoyance.

Thus is success a double-edged sword. Gratitude and happiness for it; annoyance, anger (even rage?) at the burden of responsibility that I must carry.

Responsibility and sciatica, aching legs (even back).

New Person Blues

Minor Identity Crisis

Truth is, I don't feel any anger or rage over this responsibility. I do feel a grand annoyance sometimes. This is countered by a grand excitement that I am wanted, loved, desired, which makes me extremely happy.

Rage and anger are gone. Grand annoyance coupled with some overwhelmed is what I feel. Perhaps I can find sciatica in overwhelmed. But somehow I even doubt that. Even the overwhelmed is now manageable.

Perhaps I'm at a new stage where I can handle overwhelmed, handle grand

annoyance, handle a successful tour business. Perhaps I have sciatica because I'm no longer angry or enraged. Perhaps I'm angry (enraged?) because I'm not the person I used to be. I'm competent, calm, and in control. Perhaps I can't face this fact of the new me.

Perhaps sciatica, "restless, tired legs" and back are parts of the old neighborhood returning. Perhaps they are dying, I am losing them, they are dying, and the shards and shreds of their old bodies, as I drag their remains and remnants around, are creating a fading sciatica and leg heaviness.

Perhaps I'm a new person. . . and realizing and adjusting to it is confusing, annoying, and bothering me.

It is, after all, springtime, time of the resurrection, time for rebirth. Perhaps sciatica and heavy legs or the pains of rebirth.

Old neighborhood sciatica, back pain, heavy (fibromyalgiatic) legs. Can I accept that these are transitional pains, short visits to the old neighborhood to touch base, say hello, before I move on? But what else could it be?

All these pains are old pains. I've had them before. I know them. I know their origin. "Been there, done that."

The only thing I can figure out is that it bothers me that it doesn't bother me. This old neighborhood visit will be simply shrugged off. Really? But what else is there? What else can it be? What else can I do? I can no longer even believe such things, such sciaticas, leg heavinesses, etc. Yes, they are there. But I don't believe them. They no longer "fit" or fit me. Short visits from the old neighborhood before I say goodbye.

That's why they are such a puzzle. They just don't belong here anymore. None of the old neighborhood attitudes fit or work anymore. It's a shock and a change, but I'm in a new neighborhood now.

Maybe that's the "threat" I feel. A threat to my old identity and a fear of the birth of a new identity (anger at the fear?). I'm creating distractions, distracting myself

with sciatica and heavy legs, from the fear of recognizing my new identity, from facing, dealing with, and realizing my new calm, focused, and confident new self.

The old self has to die before the new self is born and can take its place. I'm feeling more confusion than anything else. A confusion cloud has hovered over my head. Its starting to break up and dissipate now, sprinkling and dissolving into the atmosphere.

It's a minor identity crisis.

Let me list the new things that have happened during the past year to enhance my new calm, focused, and confident self.

New neighborhood breakthrough events:

1. Tour leadership breakthrough: Balkan Splendor tour.
2. Classic guitar breakthrough: Playing Alhambra.
3. Performing breakthrough: Giving up performing anxiety.
4. Stock market breakthrough: Giving up trading, and stock market need and hopes.
5. Financial confidence.

All this leads to a new identity, a new self image,

This has been preceded by a short sciatica confusion syndrome (SCS).

I'm crying because I miss my family, and the old neighborhood. They are part of the old neighborhood. The warmth, protection, and put downs. In fact, the put downs represent, among other things, protection and warmth and acceptance of my old self. But now I have a new self. And I cry for my losses.

But what really have I lost? Among other things, the protection and security of put downs.

After I cry, I need to forge a new self, with its own warmth, security, protections, but this time, with put ups.



Thursday, April 2, 2015

Fear of Success

Old Age Distraction Phenomenon

With a new self being born, I can no longer use the old excuse of incompetence, future improvement of finances and more to distract my mind. Yet now, because of this, (or in spite of it), I have a new cloud of thought invading: I'm getting older. I am old. There is no future up ahead, Soon I will die. Etc. How can I run, exercise, learn new skills, etc. if I am old and soon I will die. Why bother? Aha, the "Why bother?" phenomenon again, but in a new form, and with a "new" reason.

How has old age suddenly invaded my mind? I'm only a few months older. When did it start?

Immediately, the Balkan Splendor tour springs to mind. That's when I realized I was in a new place of calm, focus and confidence. With the realization and birth of this new self, all my old distractions started to fall away. First when my performance anxiety: "Suddenly," I was no longer afraid to give concerts! Then went my financial fears. Suddenly, I saw myself as having money, even enough money. And soon I dropped day trading and the stock market as financial and self-savior hopes. Another distraction down. And, of course, my tours and tour leadership doubts disappeared with the emergence of my new calm, focused and confident self.

That's three grand TMS distractions down! Lost. Gone. What can or could I do? What a loss. What can I do with my brain now? How can I distract myself? Evidently, I need or needed a "worry" to keep me going, a fear to keep me in place, even a terror to keep me down, an anxiety to put a lid on my wild and energetic self.

They're all gone now. What can or could I do?

Well, I could invent another one: Old age!

I'm not mad, angry by old age. It is inevitable. I would be foolish to be enraged by it. I don't want to be foolish. So instead of being enraged by upcoming old age, I feel helpless before its inevitability. And along with helplessness comes despair. Yes,

despair over old age is my new subtle, mumbling, whispering mantra. Despair is my new TMS creation.

I am old and will get even older! That's why my legs suddenly hurt when I run, dance, and even walk! That's why sciatica has lodged itself in my lower back. That's even why my lower back hurt a bit when I awoke a couple of weeks ago. My lower back almost never hurts anymore. Why suddenly now? And note, I wasn't fooled by it. I said to myself "Here is TMS again" and my morning lower back pain went away. But instead, it was almost immediately replace by sciatica!

By losing my unconfident self, I lost, nay gave up, all my rafts, my lifeboats. Now the ocean of unconscious fears could totally wash over and drown my new and unprotected self. Evidently, I still have (had?) the need to worry about and fear something. But I couldn't figure out anything to fear. What to do? Create a new fear out of thin air. Create the old age fear.

Note this "new" fear make me feel helpless. It puts the lid on. It makes we weak and bring the "Why bother?" and life is meaningless philosophy along with it. All remnants of old neighborhood thinking. Old neighborhood thinking but with a new, modern, "self-confidence put down" twist.

Basically, by creating a new form of worry, I've succeeded in pushing myself back in the old neighborhood. Note, I also just used the word "succeeded."

I used to fear success because it would sap my motivation. This fear went on for years. But now it is gone.

Or is it? Maybe my helplessness and despair before my new fear of old age is a new form of success fear. No question, with its "Why bother?" phenomenon and new attitude of despair have destroyed my motivation.

Thus, sciatica, legs heaviness, quad pains, etc. along with my newly created old age fear, destroy my motivation and distract me from fear of success.

(Note: I got up from this writing almost crippled temporarily with back pain and sciatica.)

Old age itself is just another different state of being. But fear of old age is a (mere) mental distraction. It can quickly turn a TMS condition through, in my case, the creation of distracting sciatica and leg heaviness.

### Celebration!

Celebrating my victory: Wow, what a brilliant psychological analysis of my state!

Celebrating is something I almost never do. But I see it differently now. Celebrating has a 'higher' purpose: It is a way of reprogramming my mind! It helps cement my victory state (in this case psychological victory) in place.

Friday, April 3, 2015

### Path of Duty and Obligation

During the last few sciatic weeks, I've really been marching in place, treading water, before continuing on my path. I've felt "stuck" in my ancient miracle schedule, "stuck" in it for life.

Not a bad thing. Really, a wonderful thing. But nevertheless, I tried to move "beyond" it.

Maybe there is no beyond it.

Maybe my straight-jacketed miracle schedule path is, for me, all-inclusive.

Although presently, I feel lost, directionless, with brain clouded by meaninglessness, even within this context I cannot escape from my path. And since miracle schedule feels all-inclusive, maybe that's why I can find nothing beyond it.

Yet, filled with ungrateful hubris, and believing I've done everything, been everywhere, and that there is nothing new or dynamic to inspire my brain, I've felt so down recently. And this even though I can find absolutely no reason to be.

It's hard to blame success. After all, I love success. Even though, for some strange reason, it saps my motivation.

Perhaps I just feel like complaining.

Or perhaps I needed to step back a bit, take a vacation from my former life to view it from a different perspective.

In any case, today I can see nothing else but to return, with a vengeance, to my miracle schedule. And truly, I want nothing else.

On one level, all my desires have been fulfilled. I dwell in completeness within the “limitless boundaries” of my miracle schedule.

But the old question returns: If my needs and desires have been fulfilled, what will motivate me?

Perhaps it is time to move beyond my needs and wants.

(After all, since their direction issues have been fulfilled in miracle schedule, I don't really “need” or “want” them anymore. Why? Because I have them already!)

Perhaps I'm ready for command path of must, obligation and duty.

Whether I feel like it or not, whether motivated or not, the miracle schedule “straight-jacketed” path is the one chosen and given to me by Higher Forces,

Truly, there is nothing else for me to do but follow it.

After brief periods of fatigue and questioning (like the sciatica period I just had), I simply fall back to my chosen path. After a brief jaunt, lost and experimenting in the woods, I get back in the saddle again.

Thus, as I see it today, my path is one of duty and obligation. I have a duty and obligation to follow the miracle schedule path.

Miracle Schedule contains my personal Commandments, a gift of life direction handed down (in tablet form) by the Hidden Hand Higher Forces at Mt. Sinai. (Strange, I should realize this during Passover!)

So shut up and follow your (miracle schedule) directions.

Everything else will happen by itself.

Saturday, April 4, 2015

Obligation, Must, and Duty Added to Psychological Repertoire

A bit of total disgust this morning. Luckily!

It means, with a difference, I'm back in the game.

What difference? Obligation and duty have been willingly added to my psychological repertoire.

Now, added to miracle schedule love and passion is the "must" word: I must, I am obliged, it is my duty to practice guitar, do business, sing, write, run exercise, do yoga, study, organize and run my tour and folk dance business, etc.

It's an overwhelming amount of things to do. But somehow, I must fit and organize them into my schedule, and do them.

That is my chosen path. Now it is also sprinkled, nay peppered, with obligation and duty.

Even if done half-assed, poorly, not up to my standards, nevertheless, I must do them!

#### Four Great Questions for Entrepreneurs and Others

1. What are your talents?
2. What are your passions? (What do you love?)
  - a. Passion is based on love. Passion give you the motivation (to develop your talent.)
2. How can you be the best you can be?
3. What is your purpose in the world?

#### Duty and Obligations

Does that mean (because God gave me these talents) that I must, have to, is my duty to, am obliged to (among other things):

1. Give a concert
  2. Keep writing and promoting my books
- Yes it is.

### Obligation to Give a Concert

Is it my obligation to give a concert?

(Someday, sometime, somewhere?)

Yes.

The word “concert” is (was) so frightening. But somehow, if it is an obligation, it seems less frightening. Strangely, if I have to, am obliged to do it, I’m not as responsible for results.

My job is simply to do it, give the concert as best I can.

Judgements of how good, bad, or indifferent I play, are up to the audience, not up to me. Concert results are not up to me.

God is “forcing” me to do my duty, duty and fulfill my obligations.

I will do it.

God through His audience will take care of the results.

### Solving the Motivation Problem

Obligation and duty answers the motivation question.

I used to fear success. Why? I feared it would sap my motivation.

Originally, my motivation for doing business, giving concerts, performances, teaching folk dance classes, running tours, etc. was based primarily on financial fears: Inability and failure to support my family, fear of poverty, etc. Thus, with this motivation philosophy, success, meaning financial stability, would sap my motivation.

Now, with the new obligation and duty idea, finances are no longer the prime motivating factor. Obligation and duty have replaced finances as a prime motivator. In fact, finances are hardly a factor at all. Why? Because whether I get mucho money, little money (or even no money?), duty and obligations remain.

I cannot be freed from duty just because I make or made a lot of money.

Money has nothing to do with duty or obligation.

Now, motivation-wise, it’s a totally new ball game.

Sunday, April 5, 2015

Am I physically strong enough to perform again?

Dare I take the plunge into training for a performance?

What would my performance be?

Two hours of music

45 minutes to 1 hour of classical guitar.

45 minutes to 1 hour of folk singing, both solo and group.

Three hours of music

7-8 p.m.: 45 minutes (1 hour) classical guitar.

8-9 p.m. 45 minutes (1 hour) classical guitar.

9-10 p.m. 45 minutes (1 hour) folk singing, solo and group.

Would I include readings in my performance? (But reading is a different skill; it is involved with selling books. Would I, should I, develop a different Reading program?)

Monday, April 6, 2015

Learning about technology, its complications, joys, and failures, has to be, and is part of my obligations and duty.

It goes with giving a concert.

What is it? Why am I breaking down crying? Is it because I can't take the victory: The recognition of the Beauty and Magnificence of life?

I calm myself, bring myself down to concreteness, stability, and even controllability of earthly reality by looking at my email.

Ego and Alhambra

Is Alhambra really about ego and wanting to do it my way? No matter what?

My way is emphasizing the treble, unlike Segovia who brought out and emphasized the bass. My ego and rebellion insisted on treble, doing it my way. And this in all arpeggios.

But today, I see the music says (do it Segovia's way), the bass is the "melody" and the treble is mere quite distant, unobtrusive but present, accompaniment. And this is also true in all arpeggios.

Tuesday, April 7, 2015

Everything aches this morning. So what?

I still have my obligations and duties to perform.

Giving up 50 years of Alhambra tremolo luggage; giving up 50 years of extra, useless, and ego-based arpeggio luggage.

### The Eighty Year Artistic Arc of my Life

The eighty-year artistic arc of my life: From music and the Technique or Technician Period, drifting then into folk dancing, and tour leading, as a "break," a long (40-50 year) gestation period, a "distraction" from music, then back to music, issuing in the Interpretation Period.

### Creating Cosmic Vibrations

There's just God and I playing the guitar, performing together.

Thus, there is always a performance going on.

God and I playing together. Whether the audience looks on, pays attention and listens is besides the point.

On a deeper level, whether they listen or not, they are nevertheless subtly affected by the vibrations created in this living room cosmic performance.

In other words, a vibration is a cosmic vibration. Whether played in my living



room or performed elsewhere, it affects the outside world. And this whether an external audience pays attention or not.

Thus concerts are nice, but they are besides the point.

#### General Goal and Desire

To bring joy to people. Bring joy to others.

Do it through my skills and talents in music, dance, tours, leadership, organization, etc.

How? F

1. Bring joy to myself.
3. Then, do it publically, in an organized manner, and I bring it to others. (Thus public dances, tours, concerts, readings, and more.)

Wednesday, April 8, 2015

### Personal Victories Make the Heart Shine

I can finally play the Alhambra. (And it only took forty years!)

A great personal victory.

But do personal victories affect the outside world?

Yes!

They create inner glow; you shine from within.

Personal victories make the heart shine.

And like the sun, when the heart shines, it shines upon all.

### Secret Strengths

That's why secrets are so powerful.

Secret victories create secret powers.

Powers in the closet, like bombs held in check but ever ready to explode, give you secret strengths.

Often hiding your strengths gives you secret powers.

(Which can be used for good or evil.)

### Self Help Helps Others

#### The Cosmic Purpose is to Shine

Bringing joy to others will happen by itself and long as I pursue and achieve my true purpose.

And that purpose is to shine!

When one shines, the glow (often called joy) naturally and easily shines on others.

Thus does self help, help others.

Thus the pressure to play Alhambra and even guitar for others is off. Gone, disappeared, diminished to zero.

Instead, glory in the accomplishment, and shine on!

There's nothing like a smile to light up the world.

(A yahoo, with glory of achievement behind it, ignites all.)

I feel like I've awoke from a long nightmare. Cleaning it up started during the Balkan Splendor tour, then moved to performing, finance, and finally the playing of Alhambra.

I'm back (or forward) to where I started. . . but different.

Thursday, April 9, 2015

Guitar: I've got the audience out of my system. And I feel free and freed. The guitar is only for me.

I feel somewhat selfish saying that. But my "selfish" feeling is diminished when I realize that playing guitar "or me alone" will increase my inner happiness, inner radiance, even joy. Thus others will benefit from my the sunlight I radiate.

Thus playing guitar "only for me" is good for myself and good for others.

Alhambra and Villa Lobos Prelude Number 4: Another missing (right hand) index finger piece just fell into place.

### Quiet Period

Not one tour registration or even inquiry has come in during the past few weeks,

even a month. Such a long quiet period. I'm beginning to feel a bit abandoned. And this, even though this year is almost full! Well, Bulgaria is almost full. Albania could use another ten people.

What to do, if anything.

1. For 2015: Promote Albania. Maybe telephone calls?
2. This year is over. Start on next year.
3. Use my "free time to develop other areas."
  - a. Languages, guitar, video, other.
4. Develop another business? And/or expand this one?
  
5. Put up hundreds of Youtube (folk dance teaching) videos.

Friday, April 10, 2015

What have I learned?

How have I improved?

Good questions to ask myself daily.

### Yoga

I wonder if my back hurts this morning because I'm mad that I'm not doing anything with my yoga. I've managed to keep up morning language studies daily, but no yoga.

Discipline is down and I'm mad about it.

### Extending my Habits

#### Morning Trilogy Habit

Evidently, I can't base doing yoga on my feelings. Better to base it on first discipline, and the discipline comes through habit. A new habit.

Just as doing an hour or so of language study first thing in the morning has by

now become a habit, I need to extend my habit. I'll call the extension my morning trilogy habit.

1. Language
2. Guitar
3. Yoga

#### Playing Alhambra: Treble and Bass

What have I learned? How have I improved?

It's a self-aggrandizing luxury, an egotistic indulgence to focus on the Alhambra treble. Focusing on the tremolo is where the midgets go.

The power of giants, the beauty of flow, is all in the bass.

#### Yoga and Alhambra

How can I do yoga with these same Alhambra thoughts?

What is the treble of yoga, and how can I find its base?

Alhambra is strong light radiating from the bottom, the core of earth, with small shadows on top, fuzzy clouds. Light in the bass, shadows in the treble.

Villa-Lobos Prelude No. 4: strong bass with treble tingly and metallic background.

Bach Prelude in Dm. Bass works.

Leyenda: Bass and treble seems strangely equal. Treble mirrors the gong of time, whereas the first bass mirrors the ring of eternity. Perhaps the play between temporal/transitory and eternity.

Alard: The story of light and the sun rising.

What have I learned? Tell a (non-verbal) story when I play guitar, through allegory, symbolism, hinting.

Saturday, April 11, 2015

Entering New Fear Land, and New Challenge!

Energized Again

I'm almost relieved. I've found a "new fear:" I'm afraid that body is falling apart. I won't be able to hold up teaching folk dancing, running tours, working, whatever. My athletic and dancing days are not exactly done, but slowly closing down.

I say "almost relieved."

I used to worry mostly (only?) About finances. No more. I haven't had a good worry for months. Now suddenly (and luckily?) a new fear has emerged to occupy my mind.

And I am strangely happy about it. Now finally, I have something to worry about. And with that worry, comes (happily) a new challenge! To deal with my body, improve, help, and grow it. To move it beyond my new fear.

This "new" fear may really be an old fear reemerging. I am now not only competent, but Rich my trainer said I'm in great shape. Strangely, that scared me ever more. Not only do I have "great shape" to live up to, but I hear my mother saying, "Rest, take it easy, don't strain yourself. You'll get sick. You'll get hurt." An old fear re-emerging, but perhaps in new form.

But whether new or old form, a "fear" is back. And I say, "Thank God!" I'm in gear again. I've got a new challenge!

One of my fears of success was that I'd lose my motivation. Well, in my mind, I've been successful the past few years. And I've gone through the "depression of success," namely, the loss of my financial motivation. I've been in a kind of success/failure No Man's Land for several months, even years.

But now I've moved beyond No Man's Land. I'm finally in a new country, a real country, the country of Fear.

And I strangely like it! (Could I even say I love it?)

Yes. now, luckily, I have a new fear! I fear my body is falling apart; I'm afraid I won't be able to handle the athletic, folk dance, and even tour challenges up ahead.

Indeed, I now have “something to work on.” And I’m (vaguely) energized again!

### The Maintenance Challenge

Am I entering maintenance mode? Is my challenge to keep from sliding backward? Of course, you can never completely return to the past; but you can be influenced by remembering it, inspired by its positive practices.

Not going backward, but reaching backward to go forward.

Folks reach into history for inspiration: I’m reaching back, searching my own personal history for inspiration.

I once knew somebody (me) who used to run 2 hours on Sunday

I once knew somebody (me) who used to practice yoga: he stood on his head, put his legs on his head, did scorpion, did lotus position, yogic breathing, and dead pose.

Sunday, April 12, 2015

### Alhambra Tremolo

#### Go for the Exhilaration!

Physical exhilaration (versus) and/or musical satisfaction.

The first is sloppy and glorious; the second is smooth, more controlled and perfected, and, in that sense, satisfying.

But physical has the exhilaration. In exhilaration is the wild, screaming joy, is the passion, burning, brilliance, Dionysian, magnificent meltdown glory of God.

The musical has the satisfaction. In satisfaction is the Apollonian calm, happiness, confidence and satisfaction.

Both are good in their own right. But very different!

But bottom line, I’d say go for the exhilaration.

Satisfaction is nice, but exhilaration is glorious!

Go for the exhilaration!

### The Divine Sloppy

Exhilaration has joy and sloppy in it. In sloppy joints of missed notes, lost dance steps, dropped words, and more lies freedom and creativity.

Monday, April 13, 2015

### Wishing to Want

#### I Believe in the Divine Sloppy

#### Playing Classical Guitar/Singing Folk Songs for Others

Playing classical guitar and sing folk songs for others.

For free!

Giving (guitar and folk song) concerts for free.

The Avram Barzilay idea.

What, if anything, does playing classical guitar (and singing folk songs) for free have to do with bringing out the bass (and down playing, de-emphasizing the treble) in Alhambra and Villa-Lobos Prelude Number 4?

What, if anything, does it have to do with excitement of the divine sloppy and musical "satisfaction?"

However, even if and when you play for free, you must charge the audience something. Otherwise they will feel guilty. But what to do with their money? Give it to some kind of cause? But what "cause" do I believe in? I can't think of any. In fact, I resent giving to causes. But I don't mind giving to individuals. Like artists, starving artists, like Tony Krauss.

But can I play guitar for another, for an outsider, something outside myself? Somehow I doubt it. Playing that way is not my way. I can play for the glory of God, and, in this manner, for Glory itself. Playing must be a good-in-itself with no charities or monies attached. Yes, that I believe in.

So perhaps charities and causes are out.



Yet, I am still somewhat intrigued by the idea of playing for nothing, for no money. What do I want out of it?

I want to have, to find, the desire to play for others. I want to find want, need, desire; I want to find purpose and meaning in my playing. My purpose and meaning used to be to make money, earn a living, etc. But that purpose has long ago been achieved and dissolved. I no longer need (or even want?) Money for my playing. I simply want to want to play for others. (Just as I wish I would want to run a tour to China, Japan, and India. But I don't.)

Basically, I am wishing to want.

Maybe I need to first learn to dive immediately and directly into the excitement, into the divine sloppy. From this divine center, I may find a new direction, a new inner-outer purpose. outward.

I believe in the Divine Sloppy.

### The Challenge of Divine Sloppy

Of course, believing, doing, and acting in the Divine Sloppy has nothing to do with others. Others, in the matter, are "besides the point." Well, maybe not exactly. Look at folk dancing. Teaching, leading, and dancing with others increases the magnitude and intensity of the Divine Sloppy. Others contribute their energy and thus there is more energy, more energy to connect to the Divine Sloppy.

More energy from others means more energy for me. And vice versa. So maybe there is a place and role for the audience after all. One needs an audience to increase the energy. And increasing the energy expands the connection to the Divine sloppy. In other words, more fun, more joy, more excitement and ecstasy. Not bad for a start.

So the audience may be about more, the big More.

I can definitely say I need an audience to increase my More.

But, do I want one? Do I want to take a chance on increasing my more through an audience? Because, although they can increase it, they can also squash it. Through

criticism, non-participation, indifference, lack of approval, resistance to going along with my Divine Sloppy program. etc

Nothing new about this fear.

So I'd be taking a change with the audience. On the one hand, I could get a huge excitement and ecstasy payback. On the other hand, I could be completely shut down.

Is it worth the risk? Good question.

I know I can have the ecstasy group connection through folk dancing. I've done it before, and it happens almost every time I teach.

I've also had it leading group singing.

But could I have it playing classical guitar? An old question. Am I ready for a new answer?

That answer would come only from playing classical guitar for an audience.

Would I play? Do I dare to even try? Good question.

As a start, it might (would) have to be for free.

Evidently, or at least perhaps, I am still not ready to play for an audience.

My present challenge is how to get ecstasy, the Divine Sloppy, into my classical guitar playing.

Still, maybe I can deal with, think about, two problems at once: Divine Sloppiness for myself and Divine Sloppiness with an audience.

### Myself as Choreographer, Folk Dance Choreographer

Rather than a folk dance teacher and leader, I may have to also see myself as a "folk dance choreographer."

Or even choreographer first, and folk dance choreographer as expression of choreographer.

If I am a choreographer, then I can easily choreograph folk dance style dances

(since that is my skill and knowledge) to classical music, or other music. Thus Nun is Das Heil, Turkish March, even Beethoven Andante are possible to offer as new creations to my folk dancers (“audience”).

### I am a Choreographer

Wow, not only does this change my self-definition, but it gives me a definition that I have always (secretly) been!

1. “I am a closet choreographer” was my first, but secret self definition. I started the whole tour business so I could learn how other nations danced their traditional dances, and then freely improvise, choreograph, and eventually come out of the closet! (And of course, to make money.)

2. Then I came of the closet. (2005 to present)

3. Now I’m ready for a new and complete self-defining: Presently myself as totally out of the closet. I am a choreographer. (I happen to know folk dancing, so I choreo in folk dance style. But I am stepping beyond folk dancing. So I am parenthetically a folk dance choreographer, a choreographer of folk dances), But beyond and more than that, I am a choreographer.

Tuesday, April 14, 2015

### Feeling Good

Two good sessions in a row with Rick. Feeling good.

Am I at a break through point?

I feel I am. It feels like all the loose ends of the year are coming together. Felt good after Monday folk dance class: I stretched out the wounds immediately after class. Felt good.

Even though Pretty Polly choreo (and even Man of Constant Sorrow) didn’t seem to go over very well last night, I still feel good about choreo in general and my own choreographies, in particular. Feeling good.

New self-definitions are falling into place. Feeling good there, too.

Yes, I'm feeling good. It is a new day.

### Dwelling within the Words

To dwell within the delicious taste of Hebrew (and Bulgarian) words, their history, philosophy and meaning, would be a lovely new state of patient luxury.

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

### Classic Guitar

The doctrine of Divine Sloppiness and Finger Fun works. Why? Because finger fun is divine.

### Folk Dancing

The doctrine of Divine Sloppiness works in folk dancing as well. Only in folk dancing is it Feet Fun.

Thursday, April 16, 2015

### Feelings on Studying Hebrew

#### Love Wins

I learn so slowly. I'm feeling very impatient.

Negative attitude: Slow is stupid, thick, dumb. What is wrong with me? Am I a lousy student?

Positive attitude: Slow is good, deep, philosophical, and wise. I am moving slowly, carefully, easily, and in depth. One word at a time. Diving into its essence, looking up its roots and origins, and subtle multifarious meanings in three dictionaries.

Truth is, some may consider my progress in Hebrew slow, others may consider it fast. But, whether slow or fast, it is who decides whether to take a positive or negative attitude.

How can I decide?

I want an attitude that will push me forward, help me progress, aid in my learning Hebrew. Thus, my value system, found in my study goal, is to progress, growth, improve, move upward on the Jacob's ladder path of learning.

Value system: Study and progress is good. Progress through study is good.

Positive or negative? Which one will help me grow and make more progress?

Does negative stimulate me more than positive? Or vice versa. Both can be paths of expansion.

The negative attitude is the path of anger, fear and competition. Very energizing. The positive attitude is the path of love. Also very energizing. . . but differently.

Which attitude is best?

Maybe the embrace of both attitudes is best.

Life is lived in the Land of Both.

How to enter and embrace Both is a fascinating question.

Moments later, as I study Hebrew again, the positive Land of Love approach is definitely more motivating.

The negative, with its anger and fear, somewhat makes me tense and shuts me down. It actually narrows my vision!

The positive love approach, relaxes, expands, and motivates me; I even want to study more! "Let me repeat this wonderful venture over and over again!" That's the positive love approach.

So what is today's answer?

Love wins.

Certainly, slow and stupid is comfortable and familiar. I've known it all my life. I can hear my mother saying "You're slow and stupid!" Very insulting. But motivating, too in its own sick and miserable way. I even saw it as a form of love. "You're slow, stupid, pathetic, can't really function on your own, etc. Therefore, you

need me, And (therefore) I love you.”

So, I’ve known this negative. “You’re too slow, You can’t wash the dishes. I’ll do them instead, negative “love” approach all my life. It drove me back into my room. But it did allow me to practice the violin mucho and improve in quiet, back room splendor. Thus, living in the closet helped me grow.

But I’m out of the closet now. How to function out of the closet? No question I’ve outgrown and have moved beyond the negative, put-down approach. (Nevertheless, a small vestige remains, a negative hint, memory, impulse.)

But out in the open now, I no longer need or can even use the old neighborhood negative approach. This plant has grown, graduated, and fled the back yard garden. Its now out on the street running wild!

Yes, love is running wild. Not a bad place to be.

Friday, April 17, 2015

### Attitudes

#### Excitement/Fun/Adventure versus Perpetual Frustration

A much better Hebrew, Bulgarian, or any language attitude is: “A new word! How exciting! And there are an almost endless, infinite supply of new words. That means I shall be endlessly excited, stimulated by new intellectual adventures; my mind shall be endlessly entertained by fascinating new verbal directions. And this forever! A limitless supply of entertainment, adventure, and happiness!”

This attitude of adventure and excitement, rather than The attitude of perpetual frustration: “What’s the matter with me? How frustrating! I’ve been studying so long and hard. And I still don’t know it!” Truth is, even if I “conquer” the language, or whatever it is, and reach the (unhappy) point where I “know everything there is to know,” I soon ask, “Well, what’s next? What else can learn about and conquer?”

Excitement, fun, and adventure versus perpetual frustration.

Attitude is the only thing I can control. And I have a choice of attitudes. Which

one shall I choose?

Savor Each Task versus the Endless Treadmill

"Hurry, hurry, finish it fast! Why? So I can move quickly on to the next task. And what will I do with the next task? 'Hurry, hurry, finish it fast!'"

This is the endless treadmill attitude.

Savor each task: That is the true art of life.

The highest art is the art of appreciating each moment

Practicing The Highest Art

Art of Appreciating Each Moment

Achievement is important. And it is often good.

But the highest art is the art of appreciating each moment.

How, when, and where to practice this art?

The frustrating task of renewing my New Jersey driver's license is a good place to start.

One technique is: Go slow.

"Slow, slow, slow can equal savor, savor, savor."

This can change into "slow is fast" and vice versa.

Saturday, April 18, 2015

Pricing my Tours

Anger (Rage) and Self-Confident

Let's face it: People, potential tourists, even travelers who question my tour price, especially when they say it is too high, totally enrage me. My tours and tour prices are so personal, I feel they are attacking me personally, and in a subtle (not so

subtle) way, saying my tours are not worth the price. From that, I move on to “I’m not worth the price” and from that to “I’m not worthy” and from that, by extension to “I’m worthless.”

Wow, quite a progression. But true, nevertheless. I take it all very personally.

That’s why when Lee said I’m getting the reputation on the folk dance “street” of being the high priced, pricy tours, and that some folks won’t go (or can’t go) because they are too high, and that instead, they are traveling with Yves Moreau, I felt first enraged, then partially threatened (with my “new” high-priced reputation, I’ll lose all my customers, and all my business).

But, notice this psychological shift and twist: As I spoke to Lee, I defended my price. Then while defending and explaining it again, I noticed I was getting madder and madder. And when our conversation ended, I suddenly felt very threatened, low, unsure of myself, and felt my old confidence slipping. What a puzzle. I used to have these kind of lack of confidence feelings quite often; but I haven’t had them now for many months (since the Balkan Splendor tour). Why suddenly now?

And losing confidence in myself and my tours? This hasn’t happened for a long time (or at least since the Balkan Splendor tour.) Why now? There was absolutely no change in reality. And when I went over the numbers and the truth of the situation, I again realized, that in the specialty tour business, my prices are not the highest, even too high; they are average, and often even a bit below average. Plus, I reviewed my prices, why I make them, and again realized they were all legitimate and okay. Certainly, the “facts” did not fit my feelings.

So what happened? Why did I suddenly lose confidence?

This morning I woke up knowing why. The old psychological trick had returned, the mental movement that kept me in the old neighborhood for most of my life. What was it? Rage turned on myself; anger turned inward. This is the mental movement that caused (curable) depression, low self image, and all the other negative goodies. What had I done? My old anger had risen within me against those who question my prices,



and thus my value. I got angry in front of Lee. And I felt strangely embarrassed by how uncool I was. Therefore, instead of embracing my anger, being aware of it and dealing with it, I tried to deny and run away from it. I retreated back into my old neighborhood self by choosing a lid to shut myself down. What kind of lid? Lack of confidence.

Instead of admitting I'm furious at those price-questioning fucks, I turned my anger on myself by pushing myself down, back, and into a corner. And that corner was low self-confidence.

Well, now I know. And believe me it is over and won't happen again. (Or if it does, I'll be quickly aware of it.) Better to be self-aware and enraged than blinded, put-down, lidded, squashed and pushing into a corner.

Back to proud of myself, proud of my tours, proud of my accomplishments and abilities, and thus proud of my prices! They are not unfair and high, but totally expressive of the value I give. Period. End of discussion.

I'm proud of myself and happy this morning. Yes! I conquered the demon of ignorance, self-doubt, and lack of confidence. I embraced my righteous rage. I'm back to happy normal.

Yes, my tours are expressions of myself. And, they are very personal. And I get hurt and insulted when folks question their value. And one of the expressions of their value is their price. If folks want to go, but really can't pay the price, I feel a bit sorry for them. But most of the time, with most of these potential clients (well, they really are not potential at all) they actually have the money and can afford it, but, for some reason, don't really want to come anyway. So, rather than say that, they blame the price. Truth is, (or at least, if it were me) if they really want to go, and are passionate about going, and it is very very important to them, they somehow figure out how to pay. I've had a few travelers who even borrowed money on their credit cards to go. Yes, it was so important to them that they went into debt! That's the kind of passionate committed traveler I want. The others can go to hell. Or, if not to hell, at least to Bergenfield, NJ.

Yes, in another sense, my price helps me “choose” my clients. It is their form of audition for my tour. I even want the price to be a bit of a challenge to them. It should be a bit hard to play, a bit hard to reach, a bit of a struggle to get there. The struggle is part of the tour glory; it ignites the importance of their passion, commitment, meaning and purpose. Do they really want to go to Bulgaria! Or other. How important is it in their lives? As important as going to a restaurant? Going to college? Therapy? Other? It’s got to be important to them to make the sacrifice; one has to struggle a bit to grow, improve expand, and climb Jacob’s ladder.

That’s what I’m about. And that’s what my tours are about!

They are definitely not for everyone. They are for the select travelers, the special folk dance few, those with the passionate desire for folk dance, cultures, learning, growth and expansion.

Index finger hazak mode: It’s strong, powerful, in place, somewhat slow – but it could be fast, confident and visionary.

Sunday, April 19, 2015

### Ninth Decade (Travel) Vision Thing

India, and the Lee trip to India, is knocking on my head. Giving me a headache, an expansion headache. Should I do it? Can I do it? I feel like I’m exploding, expanding too much, I’ll burst. Plus do nothing in depth, only skim the country surface, never do anything deeply and well.

Well, I can’t do everything at once.

The vision thing, Suddenly, I see something in and for my future. The vision thing. What do I see for my future?

Maybe India, Japan, China, Far East are for my ninth decade.

Isn’t this unrealistic? I’ll be too old to do anything? But it is a vision, nevertheless. I did “see” the Far East as fitting into my future. And this give me a

couple of years, a few years even, to prepare my mind and body, to prepare my focus and concentration. Maybe God means me to go on even longer. I'll still be of service. Is it presumptuous of me to say or even think this? Maybe I've been thinking too small.

The headache is back. But, if I live and am healthy (this "if" sentence comes from a Catskill mountain hotel old lady talking somehow in my mind; a negative worry idea, something I somehow "should" say), travel to India, China, Japan, and maybe more is, at least possible to "fit into my life, to organize," if I push it into my ninth decade.

A thought, a question mark, an idea.

My New Vision: Service to Others  
(How) Can I be of Service to Others?

Fascinating and utterly amazing. There is a qualitative difference in this, my new vision.

I see it in terms of service to others.

My original tour vision was basically for myself. I wanted:

1. To learn how folk dance traditional forms so I could, with confidence, improvise in folk dancing (and ultimately, choreograph my own dances.
2. I wanted to make (mucho) money.
3. To learn about Europe and the Middle East. My vision concerned western civilization, both ancient and moder,

This time around however, it feels totally difference. Truth is, I've accomplished my original goals: I improvise and choreograph dances without a problem. And I've made money. And I've been to and explored almost every country in Europe and much of the Middle East.

So now I'm in the second round.

Second time around, my vision is totally different. It no longer "concerns me" in the old way. My former ego has been satisfied' It's needs are mostly gone; it no longer feel "involved." Or perhaps it still exists, but is now involved differently.

In any case, in my present situation, I'm no longer desperate for money, I'm confident in my knowledge of traditional forms, improvising, and creating choreos, and I've visited most of the countries I originally want to see. I've completed my original task, fulfilled my original vision.

Now, my new vision comes out in service to others. What is best for others? Can my God-given talents and acquired skills be used to help others. In other words, am I needed? Still needed? Can I be of service?

Amazing that I, such an egotistic and self-directed person, should now start to think this way, But I do.

Dawn of the next stage.

It feels like my life is over, at least my old life.

Does God still need me on this earth? Maybe He does, but in new terms, in service to others.

This is a totally radical new way of thought. I can't believe I'm saying this. But I am.

### Service to Others

How can my guitar playing be of service to others?

How can my folk dance teaching be of service to others?

How can my tours be of service to others?

How can my choreos be of service to others?

How can my Alhambra be of service to others?

Monday, April 20, 2015

### Sharing Self-Growth and Improvement Thoughts with Others

Very scattered and lost this morning. My disciplined and focused bass has somehow dribbled away and vanished. None of my usual morning tasks have any

meaning.

I wonder why. Somehow many family and social activities have dribbled away my focus. Turned them from soft into meaningless dribble.

Could this be a disguised expansion? In other words, how to include family and social activities with friends, etc, into part of a broader picture of my existence? Bring family and friends into my focus and discipline fold?

Truth is, I'm enjoying my time with family and even friends. Yet (in the past) this relaxation and enjoyment with friends and family has also distracted me from my so-called "important" tasks of growth, self-development, skill development, business development, etc.

Now perhaps, in a calmer and more confident mode, I can start to include them, include friends and family in and on myk fervent and fevered path so self-improvement.

Including others, friends and family, on my self-improvement path. Is my concrete base breaking up in order to soon open a new world beneath and above me? Am I feeling lost and meaningless as a precursor to soon be found and meaningful?

In the past, I've taken and alone (but not lonely) path to self-growth and improvement. Am I now on the cusp of being able to sharing these deepest thoughts of meaning and self-improvement with others?

Hmmm.

### Others, Others, Others

Others, others, others. Sharing my self-growth and improvement thoughts with others. Service to others. It seems I am breaking out of my solitary self-development cell, stepping through the bars, and shaking hands with others in the outside world. The next step in going public.

Am I strong enough to share my goodies with others? Maybe.

Am I confident, focused, and calm enough to go public, share with friends, family, and others these deepest desires of my passion-for-self-improvement mind? Maybe.

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

### The Hebrew/Jewish Identification Connection

This morning I feel I lack an identity. Reading Hebrew gives me an identity, a deeper, richer, longer lasting, nay historic identification with the Jewish people. I feel I belong somewhere, and it brings a sense of inner peace.

Sure, I love reading and learning Bulgarian, Spanish, Greek, and other languages. But Hebrew is special in the identification way.

I wonder if this identification feeling is only for this morning. Is it only because I'm feeling more comfortable reading Hebrew? Could it happen with another language, another culture? Will this identification idea and vision last over time?

I want it to. I like it. But will it endure?

We'll see.

### Who am I? Where am I Going? What is my Next Step?

Yes, I'm somehow in a new place, ready for something new, ready to move on. I'm asking myself identification questions. Somehow the idea of "passing my tour company on to David" (whether this can or will ever happen, we obviously don't know) has put me in a new state, a new place. It's forced me to ask again "Who am I?"

"Where am I going?"

"What is my next step, next direction?"

I've accomplished many goals. I'm at the end of a road.

Scary. But vaguely exciting as well.

My future tours, Bulgaria, Albania, and even 2016, seem like mop-up operations.

Yes, of course I'll work hard and do a good job. But nevertheless, I've been there before, done that.

Isn't there a new way I can do them?

Better, is there a new way I can look at them?

Something within has clicked and switched.

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

### Scattered Mind

I have a small terror and discouragement in my brain this morning. Why?

Symptoms: Woke up with a back ache. That means I'm mad at something. But what?

From my anger, I'm pushing down and back, denying and refusing to face something. But what?

1. I'm discouraged about the stock market. Considering giving up even long-term trading, or at least, paying little attention to my stocks. They only seem to go up and down, and basically nowhere. So I'm first discouraged and am drifting away from them.

2. My body: it aches mostly from folk dance teaching. Is it falling apart, getting old, whatever? Of course, this is true. But it hasn't discouraged me in the past. What's different today?

3. I've pretty much stopped my self-healing yoga practices. Why I can't seem to get back into them, I don't know. They were so healing and wonderful when I would spent an hour with myself doing them. Why can't I "go back" and do them now?

4. I don't like my looks or dancing form in my folk dance videos. This can be improved although it will take time and work.

5. Does my down has something to do with my children, with David "taking over" my tour business? An unrealistic dream. Partly. But somehow I doubt it.

My down is really more of the usual question: What are my directions, goals, and

purposes. I feel very scattered. My energies are dribbling away in many all directions. I'm clouded with several, even many half-important, undynamic, unfocused, non-dynamite goals.

Yes, that's the problem this morning. My mind and directions are scattered. Why, I don't know.

### Leadership and Sales: I Need to Lead and Sell

A thought: Maybe it's because my sales days feel over. My tours are pretty good this year. There's no grand reason to push for more clients. Also, it is late, and by now most people have already registered (except perhaps for Albania.) So there is really, presently, little for me to sell.

Perhaps that's the reason I'm down and scattered. Business and sale-wise, I don't know what to do with my time. More than that, perhaps I need sales and a sales project in order to spice up, organize, focus, and direct my life.

Is that really true? Do I need sales to dynamite my life? Am I a born salesman, and without it, my aggressive fighting instincts are weakened, squashed, pushed down, and with this diminishment, I die a bit?

How did this happen? Was it always there, but I never wanted to recognize it? Do I need sales? Maybe.

What about leadership? Where does it fit in?

Leadership is romantic and good; sales is evil and bad. I've grown up with this thinking this way. A moral dichotomy.

Do leadership and sales go together? Yes.

That means I need to lead, and I need to sell. They are two sides of the same coin.

Since that is the case, what can and should I sell?

(Strange, just the act of thinking about sales, that I need to sell, has given me a sudden touch of purpose and thus has lifted me (slightly) out of the doldrums.



Therefore, the confluence of sales and leadership, the connection between leadership and sales, must be true.

So, what can I sell? Where (and what) can I lead?

### Needs, Leadership, Sales

It's not even about my ego anymore. It's about my personality. My mind need sales and leadership. Just as my body needs food, my mind needs to sell and lead.

Must I always lead?

Since leadership is sales, must I always be selling?

Maybe. It's good for me.

Well, just as leadership is sales, sales is leadership.

When you lead you sell your ideas, you need to convince others to follow, to buy your "wares," which are really yours ideas in material form.

Well, what do I lead and sell?

My tours, folk dancing, books, guitar, other? Nothing new here. Only the deeper realization that I need to lead and sell!

Will the realization of this deeper commitment heal my morning down and back ache? Yes.

### Trading Stocks

Trading stocks is my "protection," my way of hiding from my aggressive, dynamic, dynamite, running wild-on-the-lawn sales and leadership self.

As a fence against my dynamic self, my focus on trading stocks is basically meaningless. useless, a waste of time, and even destructive.

### Leadership, Sales, and Artistic Self

This leadership and sales self has nothing to do with art or my artistic self. Art helps, the artistic self is somehow there and involved, but it is a different aspect.

### Business and Artistic Approach

In fact, I'd say that leadership and sales is the same thing!

A businessman needs to find a market, then fills the gap.

An artist needs to create a market.

Thursday, April 23, 2015

### No Purpose Creates Discouragement

I'm feeling so discouraged this morning and I don't quite know why.

Yes, primarily my body and legs ache from folk dancing, yes, secondarily, I have no good place to do my folk dance videos, but these are really not good reasons to feel discouraged. Actually, everything is going well in my life. Yet, I feel very discouraged.

Does it have to do with a sense of purpose? I've somewhat lost the desire to "improve" my body through running, yoga, and even gym. Where did that desire and passion go? Could that be why *I'm* discouraged? Without a strong sense of purpose, I always get low, get down, get depressed. (And once I get on the road to strong purpose, aches and pains either disappear or become meaningless!)

I think that's it. Somehow again, my "success" state, the fact that my tours are pretty full, at least for awhile, and I have ostensibly nothing really vital or important to do, is getting me down. Causing my body to ache, or at least causing me to focus on my body aching and the concomitant downs that go with it.

Yes, it's purpose. I'm floating vaguely, uncomfortably, "gently" in the air now, without a strong sense of purpose.

I'm in vague mop-up mode. It must be done but there is no dramatic purpose, nothing dynamic in it.

Is this a reason to be discouraged? Maybe.

What to do about it?

Limp and drip along. Wait until the cloud passes.

Friday, April 24, 2015

Money and Mental Freedom: Shifting Priorities

“Who am I?” / “What do I Want?”

What’s the money for?

To allow myself the mental freedom to study!

Study what?

1. Languages: Bulgarian, Hebrew, other.

A. Longer range goal: To read (study) history of these countries in their own languages!

Does this mean my priorities are shifting? Maybe.

I’m successful; I’m making a living; I’m even a bit comfortable with my funds. I’m no longer living in the financial terror, panic, and desperation state that I’ve been in most (all?) Of my married life.

If I have financial freedom, I can now do whatever I want to. So, the new question emerges, what do I want to do? A “Who am I?” and “What do I want?” moment.

What now? What do I really enjoy? What are my dreams? What do I really want to do?

Time to revisit my miracle schedule. Now, with financial freedom, I am freer; I can dedicate my life to the search for miracles which are found within, and maybe even beyond, my miracle schedule.

I’m starting off with languages and yoga/run. We’ll see where, if anywhere, we go from there.

Saturday, April 25, 2015

### Scaring is Good for Me

Prepare a concert. (At Classic Quiche.)

Why? It's good for me.

Like learning Bulgarian, or going to India, it scares me. And strangely, scaring is good for me.

Note: I'm not scared now (translated as "challenged") and I'm quite bored. This bored and lost feeling could be ricocheting, creating the Sarnoian aches and pains in my body.

What else scares me? Running? Yoga? Technology? Not writing? Overwhelmed feeling? I'm underwhelmed now.

What am I saying? Fill my mind with miracles. Going back to the full Miracle Schedule in full force. Do it all, and get overwhelmed again.

### Choose Overwhelmed

Strangely, I have been trying to avoid that "overwhelmed" feeling. But I live between overwhelmed, with its concomitant fears that I'll never finish all the things I start, and underwhelmed, with its vague boredom, and focus on newly created aches and pains.

All is attitude. I have the power to choose. In the past few weeks, since Cuba really, I've somehow chosen underwhelmed instead of overwhelmed.

I realize my error. Better to choose overwhelmed. With Miracle Schedule going in full blast!

How to return to the life of Overwhelmed!

Strange, but success to me – and I do feel successful – has meant being able, allowing myself to relax and live in the land of underwhelmed. In the past weeks, I've experimented with my success by living in the land of underwhelmed. Result: disaster! I am not happy here. I feel lost, directionless, and depressed.

Evidently, remaining underwhelmed is bad for my mind and body, a noxious choice based on self-ignorance.

Once again I was fooled. I thought I knew myself (just as I thought I “knew everything about my body” before I started training with Rick.)

I was wrong. Now I know. The land of overwhelmed is evil, bad, noxious, foul, boring, depressing. Totally bad for me!

Living in the Land of Overwhelmed in best! Diving full blast into all events and motions of Miracle Schedule.

This means going forward by returning to the past: A renaissance of my Miracle Schedule. Even though I am sometimes overwhelmed by its dictates, when I am faithful to Miracle Schedule, I am happy and fulfilled.

Overwhelmed is the only price I pay to enter this rich and fruitful land. Pretty cheap, if you ask me.

#### Lack of Perfection (Imperfection) Brings Happiness

Also, if I overwhelm myself with things to do, I’ll never succeed in doing or finishing them all. Thus I will never “succeed” again.

Of course, I’ll have temporary successes. They are okay. But temporary success is totally different from permanently “successful,” which means a state where I have no motivation, nothing more to do.

In this new place, my “unsuccessful,” unfinished, imperfect state, I will be happy!

(Bulgarian saying: “Always leave a room unfinished.”)

Sunday, April 26, 2015

#### Overwhelmed Feeling: Sign of Energy Rising

Pressure on the finish Bulgarian. Why? What’s the rush?

The push/rush to finish are old friends. They help create the “overwhelmed” feeling. I once wanted to avoid overwhelmed because it made life “unpleasant,” made me think I wasn’t able to handle life in a calm, collected, mature, and smart manner.

Thus something was wrong with me. I must complete my action before I be free to move on.

Where this stupid attitude comes from, I don't know. I could blame Ma, but I'm not sure it came from her. Truth is, at this point it doesn't matter where it comes from. It's a ridiculous attitude and I'm ready to give it up.

True, I might continue rushing to finish the job, and feel overwhelmed. But now I like (and even want) the overwhelmed feeling! Overwhelmed is a sign my energy is rising, and that is good for me!

### Two-Hour Run: Making The Big Effort

Making the big effort. Did a two-hour run yesterday.

I feel accomplished and heroic. A two-hour run focuses the mind. I give it my all.

Such an effort breaks me down, opens me up. I feel like a hero and weakling. Both. Today, I'm vulnerable and crying.

Monday, April 27, 2015

### Soaring through Writing

### Taking the Soars Vaccine

That's why I bought my freedom. So I could write.

Somehow, in the process of purchasing my freedom, I forgot why I wanted it.

Yes, somehow I managed to write all my books while under the financial cloud of slavery. But my goal was always to write them as a free man.

Now I have the financial freedom to write them as a free man.

Question: Do I still need to be a slave in order to write them? To free myself from slavery?

Well, although I have much more financial freedom now, I am still vaguely

depressed. Although I can say that “things are going well” and “I have nothing to complain about” and that all “my financial dreams are coming true” and that I am now “free to do whatever I want,” I have somehow, in the process, forgotten what I want to do. I’ve forgotten my original dreams. The dream of soaring, the dream of wild and crazy, the dream of running wild on the lawn, the dream of the off-the-wall, zany, mad shoe, crazy free man. And all this was, can be, and will be accomplished how?

Through writing!

But no journal writing. Journal writing is my garbage can. It clears and cleans out my mind, makes it fresh and pure for the day. All my miseries, problems, transitions, searching, and etc. are drained through my daily journal writing. Yes, it cleans out my basement, first floor, and even my attic. It is earth-bound, heavy writing, dealing primary with the business and material world. All very important and good.

But it is not soaring, not the wild, crazy, fantasy fiction writing. Journal writing does not lift me out of this world, put me into the sky of wonder and miracles.

So-called fiction writing does. And I need it. I need to soar, to lift myself out of the material mud of the transitory present. I need to go beyond myself, rise into the stratosphere through the humors of my imagination.

Writing so-called fiction does it. Well, somehow I don’t like the name “fiction.” That is already a done category. I need and want a new name for what I write. It’s not fiction. Why? Because it is closer to reality than many of the so-called “real” things I do in the business and material world.

Yes, my fiction is reality, and my reality is fiction.

So be it. Back to writing I go. I could call it Zany writing, Mad Shoe writing, off-the-wall writing. But somehow, I’ve used those names before. I’m in a new freedom place now. I need a new name for my writing. How is soaring writing, or the Writing of Soars. I’m suffering from a soars deficit. So I’m taking the soars vaccine. Soaring through writing.

Soars writing? Not quite the name I like, but getting closer.

Evidently, I have nothing new to say in writing. But the old things I said were pretty important.

Maybe my path now is to simply say the important old things, but in a slightly new and different way.

The “nothing new under the sun” idea without discouragement.

### Shift in Priorities

An amazing shift in priorities.

Guitar and writing wake up calls. I need them. For myself.

### Differently

Maybe I’m going to rewrite my old (former) books differently and for different reasons.

Just like I practice guitar and play my old (former) guitar pieces differently and for different reason.

Tuesday, April 28, 2015

Here’s a new one. Evidently, I’m depressed if I don’t find a way to keep making money! That means, I need to find new businesses, or grow my old ones.

Somehow tour sales have simply stopped. No one new has registered for almost a month. Maybe more. This can happen in business. It can suddenly stop for apparently no reason at all. And there is not much I can do about it.

Check tours. All my advertising is out, all my emails have been sent. The market feels saturated, at the moment. What can I do? I can either keep pounding on it, beating a dead horse. Or I can move on to something else. While I’m doing something else, the winds may change, the markets may shift, and eventually new clients may return to tours.

I remember this period, the May-September period, from the past. Tours



registration either dribbles into tiny numbers or simply stops. What to do? Move on to something else. A new business, even. Or grow and improve the old ones.

Settled: What new things can I do for the next five months?

Tours:

1. Mop-up operation for Bulgaria and Albania.
2. Plan the 2016 season.

Any new money-making ventures?

Now is the time to find and develop one.

### Connecting my Business Arts to People

Must I go back to guitar performing and even to public readings of my writing in order to make them significant? Maybe.

Must my arts and art forms ultimately be related to people? Connected and connecting to an audience, helping and improving their lives? Maybe.

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Woke up feeling unanchored, loose, drifting, unattached. No focus or force. Subsequent moments of depression.

Claustrophobia from MRI. Terror, panic. I refused to enter the MRI.

What, besides watching and awareness, to do about both?

Thursday, April 30, 2015

### Devil's Voice

#### Grateful Appreciation of my Blessings

Depressed again this morning. Why? "Nothing important or nerve wracking or worrisome, or fear/anxiety creating to do. I've always wanted such a situation! Now I have it. A vacation from fear and anxiety. Truth is, I am totally blessed.

My reaction? Boredom, depression, lack of appreciation and gratitude.

Disgusting!

My self-involved, egotistic, negative, spoiled brat, depressed, devil created, bored state is totally inappropriate. Why I listen to this inner devil's voice, I'll never know.

I am disgusted with myself!

A good healthy, powerful self-disgust at my negativity is the only correct attitude toward my blessed situation. My state of grace.

My success, my state of grace place could be upended at any moment.

Grateful appreciation of my blessings, inspired by my good fortune, thankful to God is the only way to go.

My next learning "challenge": How to glow in gratitude (and appreciation.)

Another learning challenge: How to share these blessings.

### Audience versus Customers

#### I Need an Audience

This is where the audience come in.

What's the difference between audience and customers? The word customer implies only a paying client. An audience, on the other hand, can be both paying and non-paying.

Thus the word "audience" is grander, wider in scope, more inclusive, I prefer to think of audience.

Consider my folk dancers and tour travelers as my audience (rather than my customers). Then share whatever blessings I can.

An important new realization and truth I've discovered today: I need an audience.

I need customers to survive financially.

I need an audience to survive (financially and) spiritually.

What can I share with the audience I need?

Idea: Teach something new in order to (better) learn it. Teach: Yoga, Bulgarian, Pinnacle computer, history, gaida, other.

### Ultimately, Only for the Audience

On practicing Villa-Lobos Prelude No. 4 arpeggio faster and more clearly: Of course, it starts with myself. But ultimately, the only reason I do it, try to improve, is to present it (make a present of it) for the audience.

Only: One-ly, starts with one, namely me, within myself.

Audience: The so-called outer world: Them

Ultimately: Goal, final connection between inner and outer.

Friday, May 1, 2015

Am I mostly afraid of the power? Maybe.

Colombo power in the right index finger. Energy flowing. I've got it! Great guitar playing. No problem.

### Strange and Subtle New Directions

Lots of strange and subtle new directions being born.

1. Gaida practice.

Christo's idea: Dance/Music Contest end Bulgaria tour.

2. Meditation

3. Guitar. Colombo power in the right index finger. Energy flowing. I've got it! Great guitar playing. No problem. Concert.

4. Video and Audio. Editing, up on Youtube, etc.

5. Writing. Funny and Off-the-Wall

6. Humor as creative defense and forward attack.

a. Left knee as funny bone in disguise

b. Funny yoga. It feels ridiculously, absurdly good.

Saturday, May 2, 2015

Saying "No!" to Bad Thoughts  
Pushing Them Away is my New Strength

New day.

Even though I know the thought is totally wrong, often my curiosity pushes me over the cliff.

I know I am wrong to think insecurity while playing my Bach on the guitar. Yet I do. Why? As an experiment to "test my strength." Somehow if I can handle the miserable, I am stronger. Yet I know, though experience, that certain thoughts are simply bad for me. Wisest and best if to push them away, totally avoid them.

Why then, since I am now older and wiser, do I still try them out, experiment with them, test my "strength?"

Perhaps my new strength is not only knowing but actually avoiding bad thoughts, pushing them out of my mind, denying them a place in my constellation of thoughts. Saying "No!" Do it!

Monday, May 4, 2015

Repressed Joy

Came back from the Folk Dance Festival in Princeton feeling quite stuffed. What happened? Among other things, 2 registrants for Bulgaria, and 4 interested in Albania. Truly, a great success.

I'm stretched between the antipodes of overwhelmed and joy. But basically, am I "suffering" from repressed joy? I think so.

Friday, May 8, 2015

Choosing Fright

I could be (have been) resisting language lessons, Bulgarian or other language lessons, because they, like giving a concert, are too frightening.

Putting myself in such a vulnerable position, hardly able to speak or express myself, or as vulnerable to the audience as giving a concert, is just too frightening. And I thus avoid it.

Well, quite a realization that.

Now I choose to be frightened. I choose to wake and stimulate myself by choosing the path of fright: Bulgarian language lessons.

Some might call it excitement.

I call it fright, nervousness, fear, even terror.

But whatever one calls it, no question, it stimulates and motivates me. And I improve.

By avoiding my fears, I am avoiding growth.

What fears can I dive into?

(What fears are worth diving into? Fear of concert, Bulgarian lessons, gaida, technology, running race, other).

Let's face it: Putting myself in front of people makes me nervous. Frightens, stimulates, and motivates me. People ("they") push me, frighten and even terrify me into becoming my better self.

They frighten (scare) me out of my hole and force me to be my better self.

Sunday, May 10, 2015

### Burdens Lifted

Two great burdens have been lifted. Finally, and hopefully forever:

1. Guitar arpeggios: The burden of treble has been lifted. (Bass is the only answer.)

2. Language lessons. (At least in the European and Eastern Middle Eastern languages I "know.") Reading and studying languages is only for self-entertainment.

Period.

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

My Spartan Obstacle and Challenges

1. Stay focused
2. Not get overwhelmed
3. Keep the joy and luxuriant fun in my life.

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Fear or New Development on the Horizon?

Suddenly, at least in yoga, it seems I am gradually, even suddenly, afraid to take physical chances. Afraid I'll hurt myself? This as manifested in "hesitancy" to perform scorpion, head stand, lotus, and legs over head.

Also afraid, or at least hesitant to do fast Romanian type, ecstatic folk dances. Afraid they'll "hurt" my body, that I'll "get injured" in the process.

Is it really fear? Am I really afraid?

Or is it "something else?" A new development on the horizon?

Am I in a holding pattern? Is it a prelude to transition?

Probably all of the above. Often fear signals a new development.

Let's go with the "new development" idea.

New physical development? New yogic and folk dance direction? (Note: What does the fact that I'm starting to do long runs symbolize and mean? Long slow efforts, not fast.)

I'm hesitant to lift myself into the ecstasy world, to push myself beyond my limits.

A holding pattern, a transition? I wonder why?

New thought: Am I getting ready to go slower and deeper, do less, but in greater depth?

What would this mean?

Note: In guitar, exercise, even running, I warm up more quickly and “within the pieces of guitar, running, gym.” Doing less, but in greater depth.

Direction: Maybe I should “experiment” and get into my yoga, folk dancing, and even ecstasy, more quickly, too. Basically, I am saying I should get into my ecstasy, my running wild on the lawn, more quickly, too.

Talk about new development, here’s one:

Enter the ecstatic wild world of running wild on the lawn more quickly. Even immediately! Wow, now there’s a fear and a challenge!

### Ecstatic Practices

Ecstatic practices are “running wild on the lawn” practices.

Do this as soon as I pick up the guitar. No warm-ups at all! (That doesn’t mean I start off playing fast, but I start off playing in ecstasy.)

As soon as I start running, no warm-ups at all. (That doesn’t mean I start off running fast but I start off running in ecstasy.)

As soon as I start my yoga. No warm-ups at all. (That doesn’t mean I start off yoga fast but I start off yoga in ecstasy.)

As soon as I start my gym: No warm-ups at all. (That doesn’t mean I start off gym fast but I start off gym in ecstasy.)

Could this also be done with language study? Why not?

How about folk dance teaching classes, even tours! Something to think about, but later.

Ecstatic practices can be done in a slow warm up. It’s the attitude (and goal) that counts, not the even itself.

Ecstasy is also the antidote to death, and fear of death.

Why? Ecstasy centers you in the eternal present.

### Guitar Ecstasy Finger

Is my right hand index finger my guitar ecstasy finger?

Let's assume it is! That means I shall focus on bringing the fruits of that finger to justice in the Ecstasy Court, the Court of Ecstasy Justice.

That's why playing (Alhambra, Leyenda, etc.) fast or slow doesn't matter. Only ecstasy matters.

Thursday, May 14, 2015

### Anxiety/Fear as a Secret Motivator

#### The Gift of Anxiety

I wonder if the stock market, and trading stocks in the stock market, in a strange way, since it is so uncertain, ever changing, full of surprises, never goes the way I anticipate, keeps me in touch with the unexpected, dealing with the unknown and sudden challenges, keeps me nervous, uncertain, a bit worried, on my toes, and thus, keeps me grounded.

This doesn't mean I have to day trade, or even go on margin (although I might). But it does mean that, in some fashion, it's good for me to keep trading.

Dropping my margin account is a restraint, which may even be good for me. Why? It forces me to slow down. Is that good? I don't know. But slowing down keeps me from being haunted continually by the market fluctuations, it somehow takes my part of my mind off it. So the verdict on having a margin account is still out.

Why am I talking about all this today? Because I'm feeling very vulnerable, nervous, afraid and fearful. About something. What? I'm not sure exactly. It's a vague anxiety, an insecurity, even bordering on lack or loss of confidence. Although it quite vague, it is definitely there.



The difference between this anxiety and past anxieties, is that it is not related to money. It is not a financial anxiety and thus cannot be “cured” by more money. (Although it’s always nice to get more money.) The difference now is, although I have “enough money” so that I’m no longer constantly worried about it, even with “enough,” I am still anxious.

So it must be something else. My upcoming tours, perhaps. Or mortality, death, getting old, losing my powers, losing my ability to function, etc. Truth is, I can find hundreds of “reasons” to be anxious.

Why do I create and even want them? I don’t know.

Maybe I need them. Maybe they are my secret motivators.

Aha, that sounds right. That’s why I create them: To motivate myself!

I create anxiety and fears to motivate myself. It’s not exactly comfortable, but it is true.

Do I even want comfort? Yes, I like comfort, but evidently, not too much of it. Too much comfort makes me uncomfortable. I need some danger, challenge, the discomfort of obstacles and things not exactly right.

Evidently and paradoxically, I want and even need some discomfort. Voila the gift of anxiety. How Spartan Up of me.

I always wondered what would motivate me if I ever made any or “enough” money. For many years, I was “depressed” because finances were improving. Since money worries was my prime motivator, as my finances improved, I was afraid my motivation would dribble away.

Well, that fear is now over. I’m financially better, and my anxiety is nevertheless, still there. But in a new form. Fears of mortality, etc. I can make them up as I go along. But no matter what new fears and anxieties I create, the bottom line truth is that: I need my anxieties as motivators. Period. End of report.

Well, since my motivator is back, next question is: What new goals will quell my anxieties? What new training program will focus my mind and thus help me achieve a

state of calm confidence?

Leading and running tours: The tour obstacle course is one of my Spartan races.

How to train for it?

1. How to train for my upcoming Bulgarian (& Albanian) tour?

### Secret Spartan

Maybe I'm a secret Spartan. A Spartan Up kind of guy. Maybe I like hard things but don't want to admit it. And this because I aim for joy, ecstasy, and running wild on the lawn. Somehow the words "hard, difficult" don't seem to fit into the running wild/ecstasy narrative. But maybe I'm wrong. Maybe they absolutely fit in. They challenge, joy and focus of doing something hard to aim for and achieve a goal is a constant theme of my life.

Maybe Spartan Up by Joe de Sena is a pivotal book for me, one that explains myself in the transitional, motivation searching, "post-money" state.

So ends a New Leaf.

Friday, May 15, 2015

### New Spartan Motivation

Spartan Up may well be my transitional book.

The big transitional realization is that I am no longer motivated by money. Yes, I like money, but it is no longer my primary motivation. Rather, a new "Spartan" motivation is unfolding.