

## A New Life

Saturday, October 24, 2015

Based on the fun and fulfillment question: "Am I Having Fun"

Be brave. Go deep into myself.

Give up tours.

Find another work.

Concerts and writing come to mind. FD teaching.

Even running a marathon.

Mop up my old life and begin anew.

### Released

I am and feel released from intense and all-consuming tour focus.

And certainly from Albania and its Kosovo extension. I can almost see the cloud lifting. And as the transition moves into my back I can feel it loosen, release and relax. Amazing.

Tours will now take on a new significance and place in my life. Realistically, they are not going to go away. But instead, they could indeed become a secondary priority.

Work wise, FD will bounce along as usual.

Top priority could become new directions and work: Concerts, writing, running.

Now we'll see if my back gets better.

### New Priorities "Fun and Fulfillment" Pyramid

Here's my next direction, new and possible, fun and fulfillment, priorities pyramid:

Concerts, writing, and running at the top.

Folk dancing next in line.

Tours at the bottom.

“Am I Having Fun?”

This is very inward, stand up straight, proud, and brave question. I’m asking the great “Am I having fun?” fun and fulfillment question.

Playing classical guitar: “Am I having fun?”

Playing classical guitar for others: “Am I having fun?”

Singing for myself and/or for others: “Am I having fun?”

Teaching folk dancing: “Am I having fun?”

Writing or running: Well, I know I’m having.

This is the significant question in the next chapter of my New Leaf life.

Sunday, October 25, 2015

Back to Sarno and the power of buried rage.

I never wanted to go to Albania, and certainly not Kosovo too! I have this attitude when I approach every tour, but more so this time with Albania and Kosovo. A letdown and putting all my heart and effort into Bulgaria a month before. No, no, no, I didn’t want to go, to tour again! Give me a break. Let me stay home. No more traveling. I hate, hate, hate it!

But I did it anyway. And now, post-tour, my back is killing me and it feels like the rest of my body, particularly my legs, is falling apart. Physically, I am falling apart. And I was in such excellent shape only three weeks ago! Before the tour. I even broke all records with my push bar weighs.

And now all these post-tour, buried rage, scattered aches and pains. Indeed, my rage was buried during the entire tour; it is, no doubt, still buried, even after the tour. I haven’t dealt with it yet. In fact, I hardly recognize it. That in itself, is no doubt, the big problem.

Where is my rage buried? And what is it, anyway? Why actually am I so mad? And why take it out on my back? All old, but now new, brand new questions.

### Why Run Tours?

I am a free man.

If I have such anger and rage at running tours, why run them? I don't have to. After all, I am a free man. Why do I chose to do it?

Do I get anything pleasurable from running a tour? At this moment, I can't think of any. Basically, leading and running tour is a grand pain in the ass! (Note, that is exactly where it hurts, or very close to it, in my gluteus, sciatica and lower back.)

In fact, except for language practice, and occasionally seeing a wonderful folk dance performing group, I can't think of anything enjoyable about running tours. When someone on tour asks me "Are you enjoying yourself?" I never know how to answer. Well, actually I do know. If I would answer honesty, I'd say, "Enjoy? Who enjoys running a tour? Endure, yes. But enjoy, no."

Of course, when a tour has large registration, I can make lots of money. And I enjoy making lots of money. But since my financial situation has improved, even that joy has faded a bit.

Therefor again the question: If running tours is so difficult, painful, and enraging, why do I do it?

Good question. At this point, I don't know.

I like the money.

I also like ("enjoy") the pleasant satisfaction from knowing I have developed the skill, knowledge and ability to run a tour.

But anything beyond that? I don't know.

Note the word: "enjoy." Maybe I can find my own enjoyment from the "satisfying" to "very satisfying" feeling that comes from running a tour well. That would be nice to find something I can or might actually "enjoy." On the other hand, I

may just be fooling myself.

Maybe the best I can do is “satisfaction” but never reach the high plane of enjoyment. That would be reserved for art or exercise forms. Joy is a special melt-down emotion and place which I feel when connecting with celestial events like listening to Beethoven symphonies, folk music, even folk dancing, sometimes running, etc.

### Joy or Satisfaction

Do I need joy to justify everything or activity I do?

Or can I be satisfied with mere satisfaction?

Truth is that joy brings grand meaning to my life.

Satisfaction creates mere dull, bring, drifting “happiness.” Thus I can pass on happiness, But I do need joy!

I have melt-down, celestial joy in music. Thus is it totally meaningful and filled with celestial purpose. I love it!

Satisfaction? Well, it’s okay.

Satisfaction is an intellectual thing, better than dissatisfaction, but not by much.

I may find satisfaction in running a tour but will I ever find joy? Maybe only when the music plays. (But I can find the music at home, too. So what do I need a tour for?)

The weight of responsibility is just too great.

### Responsibility

Much as a I hate to admit it, responsibility is the grand weight I carry when running a tour. I can’t escape from it, not even for one moment. It weighs me down from beginning to end of each tour. The weight and burden of responsibility even starts a week or two before the tour!

Responsibility is the grand weight that dampens, holds down, and pushes me to deny or suppress any feelings of joy.

So perhaps joy could exist on tour, if I could somehow get past my feelings of responsibility.

But could I ever do that? And how?

To feel and express joy, don't I need complete freedom?

Could I ever feel joy in harness?

Strapped in the harness of responsibility, could joy ever flourish? I don't know.

### Joy and Responsibility

So far responsibility and joy have not, and have never gone together. Could I ever change this?

Could I ever find joy in responsibility and vice versa?

Are they exclusive? Or could they ever be combined? On a tour?

I don't know.

I have never faced or dealt with responsibility: How responsible I am, how responsibility weights on me, not only don tours, but teaching folk dancing, giving concerts, and in just about any other kind of work I do. Perhaps the responsibility is just, or has been just too awesome. Plus it totally conflicts with my artistic desire for freedom, to joy-fully run wild and free on my lawn.

My moments of joy come and came mostly (only) when I was alone, playing violin along in my room, listening to Beethoven alone in the kitchen, etc. Let any responsibility in, and I would deny my melt-down joy. Too private. Going public with it, feeling and expressing it in public would be subject to criticism and thus destroy it, my savior, guardian, and grand meaning and purpose for living.

I would never dare to feel joy in public. Too threatening. Others might easily destroy this fragile savior.

Is joy really so fragile? I doubt it. In fact, I know it is not! Joy is powerful. In fact, since joy is directly connected to the Higher Forces, it is one of the most powerful

feelings in the world!

Love is another word for joy.

If this is all so, and it is, why not go public with my joy?

Could I join joy to responsibility and vice versa? In a tour? Other? Life in general?

Is joy more powerful than responsibility? Yes!

Responsibility is a hand-maiden of joy, not vice versa.

Joy comes first. Followed by is hand-maiden responsibility.

Joy is the spark of energy giving life to responsibility.

Without joy, responsibility is empty and meaningless.

Without joy, responsibility is dead.

With joy, responsibility shines in celestial splendor.

The pains in my back, legs, and more, come from the weight of responsibility.  
The cure comes with the flow of joy.

Monday, October 26, 2015

Lower back pain. And old "friend." I've been through this before. Only perhaps this time, slightly different "cause" or rather issue.

Bottom line: Back pain caused by (this time) tour terror that I can't make it. I'm too weak to make it through the tour, too weak to go without strengthening exercises for two weeks, too weak to lead, be in charge, take responsibility, run my whole tour, whole business, In fact, too weak to do just about anything. "Better to rest, Jimmy boy." famous words of my mother, ever repeating and echoing in my brain. "Don't work so hard, Jimmy boy. You'll hurt yourself. Better to rest, Jimmy boy."

Well, I began hearing their faint quiver in Bansko as I played my gaida, and felt

my first slight right nipple discomfort (I thought related to my new and hard gortex gaida brushing against my left nipple, coupled with Ventsi's words "Watch out that my name pin does not prick my gaida." In a twisted way, I wonder if Ventsi's words didn't start this long backslide into old neighborhood self-put down and weakness.)

The soft, quiet, but slowly gurgling and growing message was: Look, my Bulgarian tour is so successful and smooth, plus other aspects of my tour business are set and ready to grow, all is going so well on the expansion front, how can I, little Jimmy handle such a large enterprise, how can he, little weak, thin and incompetent Jimmy do such a large thing?

From there it mushroomed into denial of celebration gushing of my Bulgarian tour success. I squashed this even further but put my upcoming Albanian tour on top of it, further enabling me to not experience any post-Bulgarian tour joy, and weaken my resolve to run another excellent (this time Albanian) tour.

And of course, the Kosovo cancellation, which helped psychologically ruin my Albanian tour (further pushing me down), and the subsequent post-Albanian tour leg and back pains I'm experiencing now.

Why is this happening? What is its psychological origin?

As I see it today, it is a long, slow brip backward, a slide into the old neighborhood of "Jimmy boy, rest, relax, stop pushing, take it easy. You are too weak to do any of this. And ultimately, if you try, if you give it your all, you will hurt yourself."

"Hurt yourself," That is the key and bottom line. And it all goes back to my mother's words. Fear, nay terror of hurting myself has become ingrained in my brain; it is indigenous to my being: If I try, give it my all, I'll end up hurting myself. getting sick, injuring and destroying myself, and ultimately even dying! Result: Do not try. Do not give it my all. Simply go into your room, lie down, and rest!"

The old neighborhood returning with a vengeance. And the anger: I want to get

up, I want to try, to give it my all. But I'm afraid. The powerful contrary voice says, "Don't do it. You'll hurt yourself if you try, Instead rest."

I am caught in the middle, frozen in a vice-like grip of schizophrenic opposite voices and instructions. Consequently, I do nothing but freeze in place, which is expressed in squeezing immobilizing lower back pain, with leg pains thrown in for good measure.

How to handle all this?

One good idea is to introduce 3-5 times a day Moslem/Jewish type "prayer sessions" when I lead my tours. During these "prayer sessions" I connect with god and my true self by writing, and remembering my inner joy melt-down true self experiences, basically remembering who I am, why I do things, my reason and purpose on this earth, and remembering to worship God b'simcha.

B'simcha, true meltdown joy, some call it love, is my basic and true reason for existence. It seems like other things are done "on the side," a distraction.

In any case, it is most important for me to remember this truth while on tour. And in life as well. And when receiving emails, organizing not only my tour programs, but all the accounting and organizational details of handling the people as well.

Am I really so weak, as my mother implied?

Was she right? Is it true?

Intellectually, I know it is not. But we're talking passions, experiences, material reality. and daily life. Can I have confidence in my strength? Can I believe it deep in my heart, and use all my strength in real life?

Or must I retreat into unspecific aches and back pains with leg pains thrown in? Must I push myself back into the old neighborhood, with self-doubt, weakness, and my lack of strength?

Again, I know the right path. It is the one of confidence and strength. It has been proven correct over the years. And yet, the doubts of the old neighborhood still rise. The words of weakness still return and persist. (True, they happen less and less.

But nevertheless, they have happened again. Perhaps they will always be lying there in my psyche, and, like the devil himself, ever a persistent question to be deal with.

The old neighborhood is my devil. He may hide, but he never disappears. He's always lying there ever ready to pounce. Only vigilance and awareness of his nature can protect me.

He pounced again during my Albanian tour.

Time to meet him head-on again.

Every day and post every tour, I'm in a new phase, standing in a new place. Shall I give in to weakness and self-doubt? Or can I jump beyond the line, grab new territory, and move ahead?

Jacob wrestling with the devil and, although injured with a limp, after winning, changed his name to Israel.

I am now wrestling with the devil.

(Has he come to me in new left nipple form?)

### My Primal Scream

Again, the above seems very intellectual. I'll solve nothing until I get down into the emotional nitty-gritty. Deep into the snake-pit terror, the twist of choking weeds, the suffocation of push-down, wet blanket over my head of asphyxiation, claustrophobia of being locked in a box, buried alive, helpless and weak in an emotional grave of self-denial.

Terror and claustrophobia. Back to my infant roots. Sucking at my mother's left nipple, drinking the milk of fear and terror. (The same poison could have seeped in through the umbilical cord/belly button as well.)

This infant terror is so awful, terrifying suffocating, worse than death, claustrophobic, asphyxiating, and scary, so deep and profound, that I never want to deal with it.

A nipple and umbilical bone-chilling, skin-tingling terror. The original trauma of

the first order. My primal scream.

### Cosmic purpose of my Albanian Tour

Maybe that is the cosmic purpose of my Albanian tour. As I enter the next phase of life, evidently I need to look at, to revisit the roots of my primal scream.

Working is hard.

But not working is even harder.

And trying to avoid working is even harder yet.

### New Leaf Journal as Personal Therapy Journal

My New Leaf journal is indeed my personal therapy journal.

My personal therapy, although totally necessary for me, does not need to be made public. That is not its purpose.

True, parts could be edited. And the process of writing such a journal lauded for its personal purpose. Thus it would be made useful to the public and for others.

But there is no need or reason to make the actual completed daily written journal public.

For some reason, at this point in my life, I need to visit my primal terrors again. The Albanian tour with my Kosovo extension cancellation has brought this issue up.

I don't know why this is necessary or happening now, but it is.

What has "freed" me to visit or revisit these terrors again?

No question my financial fears have been softened almost to zero. I no longer have the monetary worries that haunted me since my marriage. The 50-year financial fear cover has been lifted.

This has "freed" me to look at other road blocks and old neighborhood challenges. Belly button, nipple, claustrophobia, weakness (physical and other), and

other challenges may be among them.

Perhaps I needed these financial fears to keep my mind occupied and away from even deeper fears which were so terrifying, so threatening, that I refused to, could not, or was not yet able to handle.

Perhaps (hopefully) now I am ready.

(Indeed, an optimistic view.)

My back, legs and knees are secondary and quite handleable. They are surface, open, have been dealt with in the past, and can be dealt with and handled again.

My belly button (and now my nipple) are my weakest and most vulnerable areas. They have never been dealt with or handled; they have been totally denied and submerged. Hidden, submerged, no protection, helpless and totally vulnerable, I tremble at the thought of them.

Business and financial problems are easy compared to this.

### My Center

What is my center?

What is the most vital, important part of me?

My joy center.

My "running wild on the lawn" center.

What is my greatest fear?

What is my greatest terror?

(My greatest belly button and nipple terror? And secondary my back, legs, and knees?)

Push down my joy center and asphyxiate, claustrophobiate me.

### Fear (Terror) of Closed Places

Look at my fears and terrors. They are all of closed places. Buried alive,

harnessed in work, straight-jacketed in my tour schedule/program, squeezed by my folk dance teaching, crushed into a small time and space commitment, imprisoned in my email answering, etc.

What and where is my joy center?

Running and roaming wild and free beyond all closed places!

My joy center is where I need and want to be.

How do I get there? And stay there?

I can't and won't drop my commitments.

So how do I get there – and stay there?

They will reach into my belly button and touch. . . what?

Not my joy center. It isn't located in my belly button but in my brain, high up in my mind.

They'll reach into my bell button. . and get nothing.

Same if they touch my nipple.

So what is the problem?

If "they" reach into my belly button, what will they get? Nothing. Not my joy center. It is located elsewhere.

Who is "they?"

On a personal level, "they" is my mother. But by reaching into my navel, she won't get my "running wild on the lawn" joy center. My center is outside her. It's on the lawn and in my mind. My running wild on the lawn joy center is totally mine.

On a "public" level, "they" is the audience. The critical audience. But again, if they reach into my (public) belly button, what will they destroy me? What will they get? My running wild on the lawn joy center is outside them. It remains on the lawn and in my mind. My running wild on the lawn joy center is and remains totally mine.

And this whether giving a concert or in private.

There is no way anyone, mother or public can take away my running wild on the lawn joy center. It is totally in my mind and totally mine. It is simply impossible for anyone, mother or public, to take it away.

Belly button represents mother and private self.

Left nipple represents public and public self.

Both selves feared, lived in terror of losing their joy center.

But reaching in and removing it or brushing against it and destroying it is impossible.

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

### First Sign of Hope

Woke up this morning with a slight feeling of self-disgust. Bring in on! I want more of that!

Self-disgust is the first sign that rebirth, a new beginning is forming, and new energy is starting to rise within me. I'm sick (self-disgusted) with the old ways, the old life; I'm ready to move on. Yes!

It feels like since my Bulgaria tour ended, I've been have a three-month temper tantrum. Fighting, flailing around, complained, aching, beating up my body and mind, thrashing about, trying to escape from the bonds of tour commitments, etc. And I couldn't escape. I was stuck. Basically, stuck in my old way of thinking, my old way of running tours, my old way of looking at (and trying to avoid) commitments, and ultimately, trying to avoid my gifts, talents, and even purpose in life! Avoid, avoid, avoid. Angry, rage, mad. Struggle to free myself from my public, audience purpose and service to others. Free myself from the Mosaic burden that the Higher One gave, placed, and put on me.

But this morning, with the rise of self-disgust, that black tantrum cloud is lifting. There's a peak of blue sky along with a puff of fulfillment cloud up ahead.

Nice to hear.

Even my study of the Hebrew language seems clear this morning.

### New Video and More Purpose: For my Own Satisfaction

#### Directing Myself from my True Center

Here's a new idea: Improve my Youtube vidoes, albania and more, not for sales or marketing reasons but only for my own satisfaction.

Is this a worthy purpose? (If I can do it.) You betcha!

In fact, if I can do anything "for my own satisfaction" that would be a step upward. I've been so outward directed lately, so sales and other-people focused, that I've lost direction, and somehow forgotten about my center and my own sense of running wild, freedom, love, joy, and my own happiness.

If I can somehow use these next two months of relative calm to restore, discover, use, and directed myself once again from my true center, that would be a grand plus.

Maybe my next (two-month) project is to forget about sales and marketing, and focus solely on myself, my center, what makes me tick, what inspires me to action, rediscover running wild, putting myself in tune with my teenage violin joy center.

The world has been "too much with me." I've forgotten how to operate from my true joy center.

I've forgotten the joys of yoga, running, guitar playing, singing, dancing, and most everything else. Over the past few months, maybe even years, I've slowly become a focused work-horse for others. And in the slow process, forgotten my true meltdown and joy center. Where did it go? Well, nowhere. It's still there, lying quiet and neglected at my base. Time to say hello again, and give it a good hug, a total embrace. Time to go to my true home again.

During the past months (or years), I probably needed to focus on others and

fulfill those worldly tasks.

But I'm now in a "been there, done that" place. Time to move ahead and recapture the joy center.

Doubts arise. Can I do it?

On the other hand, is there even a choice?

I didn't really lose my joy center over the past months or years. It's just that under lots of pressure, it has been pushed down and quite submerged.

Time to bring it back into focus.

So the next big project and focus is: How to bring joy back into my life in every miracle schedule activity I do.

"Are you enjoying, having fun on the tour?"

"Actually, I am/ But that is always my big challenge: How to find, remember, and dive into my joy center while still under the responsibility (weight, burden) of running a tour. How to "ride easy in harness."

### Playing for Myself

### Touching the Joy Center

### Success!

Late afternoon: I think this is the first time ever that I have played Alard, Alhambra, and Leyenda only for myself.

What a success!

Note: This is the first time, in such a real and personal way, that I have used the word success.

Perhaps this is true success really is.

What is success?

Reaching and touching the joy center: Eternity and infinity wrapped up in one.

That is success,

### Right Index Finger: The Finger of Divine Power!

The sensual, sexual, erotic, inner, joy-touching power of my right index finger touching and pulling the strings as experienced in Bach's Gavotte-en-Rondeau. A powerful mystery is wrapped up in that finger. Perhaps a lifetime or many year mystery. It has always held me back. Now it is opening up, revealing itself to me, give me some secrets and power wisdom. And allowing me (or vice versa) to play only for myself, and discover, reach, and touch my joy center.

I call it erotic. Yet erotic is not quite the right word. It is rather an itching, pulling, latent twitching power feeling.

I love it, love touching, feeling, and pulling the string with my right index. But I don't quite know what the power is or where it comes from. Yet it is definitely there, and seems to connect to a secret and central source of my guitar playing and my being.

Thursday, October 29, 2015

Guitar, language and more:

It seems the slower you go, the deeper you go.

Is this true in other things( areas) as well? Probably.

### Land of Infinite Love

### Playing the Guitar Well

Am I willing to play guitar slowly, focus on loving my right index finger, and give up appearances in the public arena?

Or am I fooling myself, secretly still seeing the public concert arena, secretly envisioning concerts, but pushing them further ahead into the invisible perfected

future?

Can concert appearances be made out of slow, focused self?

Will this kind of playing ever go over in public?

I doubt it.

But nevertheless, it doesn't really matter. Basically, I am secretly still fooling myself. I can't give up the idea of a future concert, that "some day" I'll be good enough." Seems this dream will go on forever. Basically, I'm saying that some day the Messiah will come, which means that some day I'll be able to play the guitar well, right, good, and "perfectly."

Of course, realistically such a day will never happen. However, I cannot give up the dream.

What is the dream? Perfection. I know it is impossible for a human being, but nevertheless, I keep dreaming.

Perhaps my true dream is to escape the pain of imperfection. Sounds right, but so what? I still want to escape it. I want to dwell in the Land of Perfection.

Does that mean the Land of Infinite Love? Maybe.

Reaching it is the impossible dream.

Impossible, indeed. It means I shall forever be vulnerable and live in the Land of Aching, the imperfect realm of pain and postponed pain.

Yet, I keep dreaming about the coming of the Messiah, when all will be perfect and perfected, and I'll be able to play the guitar well.

On the other hand, maybe it is achievable. I only have to make peace with my slow focused guitar self. Then take this peace and go public with it.

Can I appear in public slow? (Meaning "stupid" in Mama terms.) Or can (and will) slow and focused be a new "gravitas" strength?

I've never "done" it, always avoided it, always jumped around in public, secretly trying to avoid to barbs of criticism that might be shot at me if I slow down for a

second. (I'm always on edge in public, expecting the arrows any moment, and waiting and poised to dodge them.)

Thus, in public, I'm always on edge and afraid. Never totally confident. The highest I get is "calm, confident, and focused." And that's pretty good. I was that way on the Balkan Tour and even on some others.

Can I ever achieve such an attitude playing classical guitar?

Can I ever have one giving a concert? Certainly, I could sing folk songs, along with a stand-up comic routine. But classical guitar? So far, no luck.

But maybe, with the index finger pointing in the right direction of "calm, confident, and focused," things are changing.

I have experienced and known "calm, confident, and focused" for tours. How about applying it to classical guitar playing and concerts?

Friday, October 30, 2015

### Slow and Focused

I wonder if "slower" is the next step and stage for me.

Notice: Since returning from Albania I am moving slower in (classical) guitar and Hebrew. (In slow-mode classical guitar playing, my right index finger is flourishing!) It feels like my "rush through life" is closing, coming to an end. "Been there, done that."

Somehow I sense that slower will lead to, place me in the land of "Calm, Confident, and Focused."

Truth is, when I play guitar slowly (mainly Alhambra and other arpeggio pieces) I have more confidence. I'm calmer and more focused. (And my right index finger flourishes!)

When I study Hebrew slowly, the pressure to "conquer and learn all" is diminished, dissipates, drains away. Subsequently, I have and am more confident,

calm, and focused.

When I slow down my thinking, I'm a more confident leader and folk dance teacher.

Imagine approaching a folk dance teaching class "slowly." And subsequently, with more calm, confidence, and focus. Or a guitar performance, or speech. Or almost anything.

Truth his, I can hardly imagine it. Until now.

So maybe I'm on to something. Perhaps "slow"th its subsequent "calm, confidence and focused" is my next stage.

I secretly hope so.

Plus consider this: When I think slowly, I often move faster! It's a lovely, truthful contradiction: See the "fast in slow" and "slow in fast."

An Alhambra gravitas or a zippy Alhambra. Two sides and approaches to the same Alhambra. Leyenda, Alard, or other.

Expand this "calm, confident and focus" to other areas.

See what happens.

A new pace, sandwiched in confidence.

Paraphrasing Boris Pasternak: "In times of great speed (and social change), the hero moves slowly."

For the past 50 years, or longer, I've been pushed from behind by the "If you don't move faster, you're stupid" demon. So my movements have been largely driven by fear, with excitement not far behind. The excitement usually when I've outrun my demon.

Slowly down, both mentally and physically, requires, for me, great mental control. But beneath that, it requires courage and the aggressive use of my rebel, don't push me, fighting-back force. I ever hear the critics about to pounce on me. So I ever am trying to avoid them, run and jump away from them. Thus constant pressure to

move quickly, speed, and jump. Thus, the long-time,. 40 year pressure on my to play Alhambra fast. Other pieces, too.

In any case, I'm coming to the end of that long speed-thru-fear, jump and move fast period.

I'm approaching and am ready to enter the Calm, Confident, and Focused period. I'm ready to move slowly, or rather, I'm ready to give up these external/internal push pressures, to find and accept my own speed, and move at my own comfortable pace!

What does this mean?

How to navigate in the Pace of Slow?

How to live in the land of Calm, Confident, and Focused?

Start off by remembering that slow means focused.

Mental focus slows you down. Physically, moving slowly leads to focus.

Focus leads to calm and confidence.

Be proud to move slowly.

Be proud to play a slow Alhambra.

Slow (for me) is courage in action.

Idea: Go to Cuba "for myself." Thus, go with only 5 people, with small to very small group. I am not going for the money, or size of group. My reasons to go are different. I am going for myself.

What reasons am I going for myself?

1. I made the commitment to go. This is something I can decide to do "no matter what." I have total control over this decision. It is not dependant on the market place, the number of customers who register, etc.

Thus, I need a different reason to run my tour, to go on tour, to visit a country. I need a personal reason to go regardless of how many people join me.

“Taking” a Concert, “Taking” a Tour

This means finding a different reason to run tours. It means taking my tour (giving myself something) along with leading it.

It means finding a different reason to play a concert. It means taking my concert (giving myself something) along with playing it.

Add exercising, and teaching, and more?

“Taking,” whether a tour, concert, or whatever, means taking something for myself. Giving to others while, of course, in the process, I give to myself.

Yes, I’ve got to get back to doing things for me. Bottom-line things I want to do only for myself. Then if anyone else comes along, want to join me, all the better.

Saturday, October 31, 2015

Down and Deep:

Standing and Falling Through the Mud

I feel like I’m standing in the mud of Hebrew. I’m not moving, but not necessarily going down, sinking, or even stuck either. But I’m standing still. I’m focused (stuck?) on one or two words, delving into their meanings, origins, uses, etc. It feels like I’m going anywhere. I feel both stuck but also not stuck.

A strange place.

Is it a new place for me? Not progressing, going anywhere. But I also feel there’s no place to go anyway. So going nowhere and getting nowhere is okay. I’m standing in a dynamic resting place tinged with a “been there, done that” tainted overlay.

Is this a Hebrew version of a new guitar resting home of self acceptance Alhambra playing? A “been everywhere” and “no place else to go?”

Well, it actually is a depth place. And so it is new. Different. Instead of skimming across the surface covering horizontal distance, I’m moving vertically downward toward material, emotional, psychological and even spiritual centers of

substance, a new, deeper understanding of self and things.

At least, I'd like to thing so.

We'll see where this leads.

### Speak to them for the Fun of it

Idea: Call my travelers, dancers, etc. Speak to them as humans rather than customers; speak to them as interesting people "for the fun of it."

Could I even "waste my time" by doing such a thing?

Shocking, indeed. Is this part of "no place to go but down, deeper, in depth" new thought and place pattern emerging?

A new phone call experience.

This feels like a step beyond growth and expansion. I never knew there was such a step. Is there? The human value of a good-in-itself. Conversation "for the fun of it?"

Is this a new and right path for me?

Or is it simply that I'm bored and have nothing better to do? I sense the latter.

But I could be wrong.

### Qualities of Character go on Forever

People often look pretty hard for excuses to give up.

For example, the fight against old age, narcopenia, decline, and all temporal negatives of flesh, mind, and spirit is the next battle.

Some say it's a losing battle.

Nevertheless, just because it's a losing battle is no reason not to fight it. In the long run we all die. So what?

Fears of decline, sickness, death and dying are really just another excuse.

Even the excuse of death is in question. After all, no one knows what the future will bring, what's ahead, or even where death leads.

So persistence, grit, self-control, confidence and other great qualities of character

are universal, infinite, and eternal qualities! These jewels of character go on forever!

### Introducing Myself

#### Saying Hello to my Audience

Maybe I feel it's just plain impolite to meet someone and hide behind a guitar. Maybe I feel when you meet someone (or an audience which, in essence, is a large "someone"), that's its best, easiest, most polite, etc. to simply say hello. And do this by facing them directly, and reaching out to shake their hand with a song.

Hiding or philosophizing behind a guitar may come later.

Maybe that's why I feel most comfortable when first meeting and greeting an audience by facing them directly, talking, singing to them, or both.

But facing them directly is the first step. First, I know what and with whom I'm dealing with (just like my folk dance teaching opening, which, I think is brilliant!), I can protect and defend my being while I introduce myself.

Why not invent, develop, create and have a brilliant concert opening? After all, the opening, the first piece, is really my way of introducing myself by saying hello.

Thus a classical guitar opening, (and certainly, the Alhambra) may simple not be the best way for me to say hello. It is simply not my nature. I'm an in your face, direct hello kind of guy. Hiding behind classic guitar, an instrument, or anything else for that matter, is simply not my way.

A friendly smile, coupled with humor and ease, that's my way to say hello. It's easy and natural for me. And this, whether it's an individual or an audience.

That's just the way it is, and the way I am.

Why fight it any longer? Accept who I am. Say hello with a song, a humor, a handshake, anyway but not the indirect, hidden face way of classic guitar. It's just not my way.

Maybe not even a song. Just talking. That may be my new way. And it's so natural and easy!

New "Stand Up Comedian" Place?

New Stand Up Comedy Self

A Good Gaida Start

The words "Stand up comedy routine" come to mind.

Am I a secret stand up comedian? Do I secretly like to talk? In my own way, my own laid back, quiet, subtle, drifting, fantasy, off-the-wall style. Maybe.

(Is that what nipple is all about? Diving in deep into my belly button (there no one there. Even talking about this stuff is making me quiver, But I'm talking about it! Amazing). My navel, right into my gut (and grit); my nipple, my left opening straight into the outside world and my stand up comedy self. Amazing, unbelievable and wow. Am I on to something? Could be. I can't believe I'm even saying such a thing. But I am.

Behind my Alhambra is there a comedy self dying to break out (of Alhambra prison), dying to explode?

Why the word "dying?" Could an old self be what is dying?

Comedy would certainly be a radical displacement of the Alhambra/Classic Guitar opening shield. Do I need a shield anymore? Has my nipple stepped beyond it? Powerful transforming stuff.

Could comedy replace classical guitar. (Of course, I'll always play classical guitar. But perhaps for other reasons. Also and or: would I become the Victor Borge of classical guitar. Is that a new route for me? I always love Victor Borge.)

Or the Victor Borge of tours, of folk tours, of travel, history, culture in general. And throw in guitar and folk dance. Everything I know in fact. The comic approach. My fiction novels and writing come to life. On stage.

I hate that word! I hate the word "stage."

Why? I don't know.

Perhaps its because subtly that's where I belong? I am avoiding my destiny and

have been avoiding it for years? Moses did it. He avoided his destiny until he was eighty. I'm almost eighty. Why not me? Why not the same for me?

Breaking out at eighty. A new career and self-identity.

Well, why not?

The gaida, guitar, folk songs, ad libs, folk dance, tours, writing, history, culture, myself and more all in a comic light.

Sunday, November 1, 2015

Give Up Period is Over

New Projects and A New Life

Embracing Overwhelmed

The New (Year) Vision

Somehow in my mind, I have (had) given up. Perhaps it is because of the long post-Bulgaria, pre-Albania burn out feeling, or post-Albania fatigue, and the usual post-tour depression; and all this coupled with a general lost of energy, focus, and direction. And, of course, totally forgetting about the amazing benefits of following my miracle schedule.

Well. Whatever it is, or was, with the conscious realization that I had internally give up, this give up period is now over.

I need new things, new directions, new projects. And I am moving on to them.

Maybe I've hit the bottom of my cycle and my energy is about to return. In any case, I'm moving from emptiness. coupled with angry lower back pain back and strange leg pains) to overwhelmed by all the things I have to do, the miracle schedule fulfillment want to do.

If I have to choose between underwhelmed, with its concomitant depression and body aches, and overwhelmed, with its pit-of-stomach fears, and fire in the belly bounding energy, I'll choose the later.

So shut up and start.

I've got so much—too much—to do!

Note “too much.” I've embraced overwhelmed with its wild (running wild on the lawn) feeling of limitless, boundless energy!

My first project of the year is learning two, maybe three languages. They are:

Language: Hebrew, French. . .and maybe Greek?

Anger and determination are twins. Just as this commitment came down I could feel my anger—and determination starting to rise, and my back pain disappearing.

Guitar: Where does guitar fit in? Fuck concerts. Play it only for (my own) rage and glory. I'll play the shit out of Alhambra, Leyenda, and the other arpeggio fuckers, and that's it!

### The Next Guitar Step

Dare I make the leap from slow to fast?

What will bridge the gap between slow and fast?

Could it be anger and rage duo?

If I add focus and determination, I get a quartet of anger, rage, focus, and determination. This will eventually, and with much practice equal a fast arpeggio and legitimate Alhambra.

Funnel anger and rage (the aggressions) into focus and determination (the social goods) to reach the perfect arpeggio, the castle on Alhambra hill.

### Alhambra: Emotion and Passion

Tap into emotions of rage and anger. Then transform them into passions of focus and determination.

Plough them all into the Alhambra.

(Divine) Sloppiness

Sloppy and/but Wild

Allow some Alhambra sloppiness in order to let the wild anger through.

Maybe the Alhambra problem has always been that I'm too restrained, too holding back, ever watching my (Alexander "Alhambra" Bellows) back. Restraining. Not releasing the wild. Giving in to exactness through restraint, perfection through careful, instead of release into uncharted, unsafe, criticized territories of sloppiness, uneven, and wild.

Move into sloppy and wild. See where it leads me.

Monday, November 2, 2015

Depth

Depth is the true and right direction for me. This year and the rest of my life!

There is nothing beyond my miracle schedule. It is the field in which I dig, and holds everything.

Digging in this field expresses and creates depth of direction and purpose.

How to implement this digging?

Business and clients:

a., Client depth: Pay closer attention to each one! How to create financial security from their purses? Mine their money and brains.

b. Milk old markets or create new markets? Probably both.

C. New Markets: The French connection. French club, etc. Hit all French connections, Make it a French year etc.

3. Guitar: Two New Principles of (classical) Guitar Playing

a. Divine sloppiness

b. Running wild

Perhaps divine sloppiness is running wild on the lawn. And vice versa.

Note also: I would be proud and happy to play in front of others. before an audience (I've never said this, or used these words with classical guitar before) if I ran wild, displaying my divine sloppiness. Or rather, if I displayed my divine sloppiness connection by running wild. Or rather, if I ran wild with and through divine sloppiness connection.

I'm not quite sure how to put this, but I get the drift.

The divine sloppiness/running wild approach: It may be a mess or have many messy parts. But better a proud mess, than an uptight, fear-filled aim for so-called perfection.

Tuesday, November 3, 2015

### Depth

First steps forward.

I like this new depth idea. It gives me substance and direction. Hebrew and language. Delve down deep.

Dive (taval) into each word, one word at a time, its roots, etymology, etc. Slash it around meditation-wise in my mind finding cognates and more.

### New Strength in Wrinkles

Looked at the wrinkles in my leg and saw new strength in them! Interesting and wow. Is the new strength found in my new depth direction? Could be.

### Why the Aches?

The mysterious and sudden leg, knees, etc aches I've had over the past few weeks, and especially since returning from Albania, could be due to transformation of my body parts, cells in my muscles, nerves, and more as I transform and transition into the next step, my future world of depth.

As your mind changes (grows and expands) its attitude, approach, direction, and purpose changes, your body changes (grows and expands) with it.

“Analyzing is paralyzing. Shut off your brain and move.”

As a T-shirt:

Shut off your brain and move!

Swami Rickananda

### Divine Depth

Divine sloppiness, running wild (and, along with, divine details) are part of the divine depth program.

Guitar: Start with Alhambra divine sloppiness practice. (This contains running wild within it.) Expand practice to arpeggio and other pieces.

Divine depth will follow.

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

### How to Support my New Scholarly Life?

I am very angry. It is consuming my body.

It started before Albania. I resented going to Albania; I didn't want to go. It was anti-climactic after Bulgaria. I was tired and burned out. (That's why I "jumped at the chance" to cancel Kosovo thus making my big "inexcusable" mistake.)

My anger and resentment still has not ended. And I still can't quite figure out what I'm mad at.

But I am mad. My body is screaming it, telling me with every ache, from back, to knee, to thigh, to whatever. I am totally pissed, furious, enraged. But at what? I'm not sure.

1. Giving up on my dream by cancelling Kosovo. I'm sorry about that, but truly, I'm not really mad at it. I really was tired, burned out, and did not want to go.

2. Mad at my clients for complaining about my cancellation? I'm annoyed at them, but as I said, I really can't blame them. Maybe they overreacted a bit, but so what? Annoying, but not central to my anger.

3. Anything else? Maybe tired and burned out with tours in general. That feeling is a big threat to my financial existence. I can see fear and anger threading their way into that one. In fact, I may be onto something here.

I (may) need and want to do something different. Tours have gone as far as they can go. Witness my low-level sadness, and even a touch of relief, with the cancellation of my Cuba tour. I may be at the end of some road, but hate to, refuse to realize it. (This feels right. Oh, how I hate and fear to say it!)

I need a rest, a break, a change. First questions: Can I afford it? How can I afford it?

I sense this is the right direction and the right question. Where is my next challenge, my next adventure and direction? If it's not in tours (and it is not), then in what? That's why my back hurts, and knees and legs, too.

I doubt it is in go back to performing, either.

Study is non-paying. Whether Torah, language, other, all are non-paying.

What will support me? How will I get my money? Should I go through a financial analysis, a financial reckoning, to see "how long I can last?" Not a bad idea.

No wonder my back, legs, and more hurt. What a threat I am facing to my existence. If I want to soften my interest in tours, mentally give them up, or move away from them for awhile, what will support me? How can I finance myself? Where will money come from?

On the one hand, a big threat to my existence! On the other, a possible challenging new adventure.

That's why "tour burn-out" or even strong softening of interest is such a threat to my mental, physical, and financial existence.

How to support myself?

How to support my new scholarly life?

(How can I afford to “retire?”)

### Pull Back/Vacation Costs

May be thinking in extremes. Do I really want to give up tours? No. I only want to pull make, soften my commitment, give myself more space. Take a short, or even long vacation.

Next question is: Can I afford a short vacation?

How much would it cost? Do the numbers.

Three months?

Six months?

A year?

Truth is, I would also get bored with only a scholarly life. I need to also be involved in the world, dynamically diving into material things and business events. It all fits my personality. Basically, I need a break, possibly a long break. To reassess, re-evaluate, redirect, reconstruct my energy cycle. How long will this take? I don't know. Somehow I see three months. Which gives me to February, when the tour season starts again. I expect a softer year, but that may be okay, for now.

### Tailor the Tour Business (Back or Forward) to Fun and Fascinating Level

Thus, the real threat to me was the burned-out feeling, and that it would make me give up my tour business, and my great source of financial support.

But truth is, I don't want to give it up the tour business. Rather, I want to tailor it (back or forward) to fun and fascinating level.

How to do that?

Languages, history, other.

Get “divine sloppiness/running wild on the lawn” involved.

### New Tour Motivation: Fun and Fascination

Note the absence of money as a motive and motivation for tours. That’s a big deal, a huge mental jump,

My focus is now on fun and fascination.

What burned out? Perhaps my money motivation. So I ran the Albania tour with an empty center, “between motivations” as is it were. Thus I had to reason to run it, no purpose or direction. I was “lost” during the entire tour. (No wonder my body ached.)

Now however, a new tour motivation is being born: Run them for fun and fascination.” Thus combining scholarship, languages, divine sloppiness, running wild on the lawn, and more, all in a grand mix of Fun and Fascination.

Thursday, November 5, 2015

### Feeling Good

I am on the border of feeling very good this morning. Freed from my Albania demon by yesterday’s analysis and understanding of tour burn out and its financial threat.

### Health and Wonder Routines

I also ran an hour and a quarter on Tuesday, and did an hour of yoga Wednesday evening. I’m drifting back to my physical health and wonder routines (I like that name!) namely running, yoga, and gym. Also sprinkling them with the heavenly spices of divine sloppiness and running wild on the lawn. This will help create Fun and Fascination in my Health and Wonder routines.

Guitar: Running wild on the lawn drips out of divine sloppiness. Thus divine

sloppiness is primary. It has within it the Divine principle. Running wild expresses it. Thus running wild on the lawn is second (but not secondary).

Practice divine sloppiness.

Running wild on the lawn will show up and follow (just as night follows day, or day follows night.)

### Infinite Potential and the Limitless Life

Divine Sloppiness opens the road to Infinite Potential and the Limitless Life.

Friday, November 6, 2015

#### Questioning the Hebrew Sources: The Next Step Upward

Dare I question the deep Hebrew source books, the etymological Hebrew dictionaries I cherish? Evidently, I dare. I wonder and question. Perhaps I am no longer the linguistic and etymological beginner I used to be. I'm stepping somewhat beyond myself and questioning their etymologies.

Somehow I feel like I don't want to "work." I only want to do things I want to do. Folk dance teaching is fun and I want to do it. For my classes, at least. Bat and bar mitzvahs are basically a drag, pain-in-the-ass jobs that I did really only for the money. (Is that really true? Maybe.) They were, in nature, very annoying. (A la Kosovo extension?)

That's two "jobs" I turned down: Kosovo and the bat mitzvah (which I really didn't get, but I had to sell it, and I refused to sell it. Same thing as refusing or giving up the job.)

What's going on? In my brain? Burn out? New direction?

Probably both. I need and want time to think and rethink my direction, goal, and life. During this time, these extraneous "jobs" or offerings are annoying and distract me. However, something is happening, and I don't quite know what it is.

Saturday, November 7, 2015

One reason to read the Torah, Tanach and bible is to find out why the Jews are so tough. And subsequently, why, if and how I can be tough.

Also, knees killing me this morning. Last night's bad sticky floor in Darien big contribution. Could hardly walk when came home. Is it stiffness? I'll run this morning and check it out.

Sunday, November 8, 2015

### Three-Month Schedule and Goals

Creating Running/Yoga three month schedule with goals.

Should I create other Schedules with other goals?

If yes, what would they be?

Singing? Languages? Business? Weights? Writing?

So far I have:

### Three-Month Goals

#### Running:

Days: Tuesday, Thursday, (Friday?) Saturday

Three-month goals: Improve speed, times, run faster. How to measure this?

#### Yoga:

Days: ???

Three-month goals: Head stand, scorpion, shoulder stand, legs over head, lotus position, thigh bend.

#### Classical Guitar

Days: Daily ?

Three-month goals: Perform (for imaginary concert audience) Alhambra, Leyenda, Alard, Villa Lobos Prelude No. 4, Bach Prelude in Dm, Flamenco: Bulerias, Soleares,

### Three Month Maintenance

Singing: Maintenance. Imaginary concert audience

Languages: Hebrew, French. Maintenance. Continue path. Mental stimulation, relaxation, "break," other.

Business: Maintenance. Send weekly group emails

Folk Dancing: Maintenance. Keep choreographing.

Weights and gym: Maintenance

Writing: Maintenance. Keep NLF journal

Three goals areas enough. (Too many will cloud my perspective, passion and focus.)

See maintenance activities as "breaks" from my major goals.

Sunday is my day of rest.

The above a personal goals. They are not (necessarily) social goal, that is, they will not, directly at least, help other people.

For example, my personal classical guitar goal is only to prove to myself, and to others. that I can play classical guitar, that I can do it. Others may benefit a bit, if I succeed.

However, folk songs other will definitely benefit, since they will participate, sing them, be involved. Also, I can and will be easily able to offer them this service.

Thus folk songs, especially group folk songs, are a definite social good. No ego is involved. Is there any ego of mine involved in leading group folk songs? I can hardly find any. It is basically so easy and natural for me to lead this kind of group singing, almost like breathing itself.

### Group Song Program

If anything, plan a program of group singing for December's Adat Emunah program. Easy and no ego and no problem. Maybe 5 group songs and that's it.

Save the three-month goal program for myself and my own personal aspirations and inspirations. I need these to survive and flourish, but I don't need them to be public.

Group singing goes with (group) folk dancing.

Leading group singing goes with leading group folk dancing.

All one (Jim Gold Show) program

### Make it Simple, Keep it Simple

One of the hardest things to learn in life is to be simple.

Make it simple, keep it simple. It takes years of study, learning, knowledge, blended with much wisdom to make it simple and keep it simple.

Leading group folk singing is simple (for me)

Leading and teaching folk dancing is simple (for me).

Dare I be wise enough to keep it simple?

### Radiance, Miracle Schedule, and Talent

#### Leading Group Folk Singing

All my miracle schedule activities create light and radiance in my brain. And this radiance shines and, in so doing, affects others. Periods. My miracle schedule activities are private activities that personally inspire and elevate me and make me happy. And if I am happy, I radiate happiness. And the glow of that happiness shines upon others, making them happy in turn.

Thus, in that sense, my happiness and radiance, my own personal mitzvah, is also good and a mitzvah for others.

However, my happiness, and what makes me happy (through miracle schedule activities) is not necessarily my God-given talent. My talent, evidently, is a social director talent. It is somehow easy, very easy for me to deal with others. Why I have this, I don't know. But I do. Somehow leading groups is easy for me. Perhaps it is because somehow, my happiness (from my personal miracle schedule activities) manages to shine through. I have a secret, a miracle schedule secret life, which creates inner radiance, which then shines through my God-given, un-ego driven talent.

My talents is evidently, an ease with people, a natural social director.

My method of leadership? I enthusiastically say, "Let's go!" and somehow, people go. (Perhaps that in itself is its own miracle since I have no idea why I have this ability. But somehow I do.)

What this all means is, after a mere 50 years, I am ready to accept the simplicity and beauty of leading group folk singing.

This is good.

Monday, November 9, 2015

I'm sort of frightened and upset this morning, but I don't quite know why.

Bernice's knee operation? Annoying and worrisome.

A new level of energy charged by the usual life of fear seems to be opening up. Maybe I'm getting ready to re-enter the world again post-Albania, but I don't quite know how or where to do it. That feels right.

I'm in a new place, ready to enter the work-a-day world, but with new things to do, new attitude, and in a new way. It just "feels" different this morning. More energy in the air. I feel the energy partially in the old form of worry and fear. But it's also more than that, something "beyond worry and fear. Bu I don't know what it is. . . yet.

Am I ready to enter the world on a guitar level? Stronger commitment to the

running, yoga and other new schedule program I spoke about yesterday? This feels partially right.

How then can I use my new fear/worry energy in these new, post-Albania projects and directions?

This question feels right.

1. Dive into my new guitar program. With is group songs!

Prepare Temple Ada Emunah program. As a prototype for other and more similar future programs to offer all.

Now I know what this morning's new energy tinged with nervous, worry, and fear is about. And I know why it is not as worrisome as previous energy-fear motivation charges.

This wake-up new energy means that my guitar performing program is finally (after a mere fifty years) in place and ready to roll! It's not even a guitar program, but rather a group folk song singing program! It is new, but it is also so old, and more important, so easy to put together and do!

I'm definitely not used to doing something so easy. The old question used to be: "Where is the challenge?" But somehow, that question has disappeared. (It only took fifty years!)

Just get up there and lead a few songs. Period. That's it. That my new easy forum. I'll add the one scary "perform" word: This is my new easy performing program. It is the Jim Gold Show without steroids. Although it feels a bit uncomfortable, even adding my name to it, calling it the Jim Gold Show, doesn't feel as awful, as egotistical and fearful as it used to. Adding my name to it is still a work in progress. However, that leaf has at least and at last fallen from the tree. (And it only took fifty years!)

The Jim Gold Show (maybe coupled with Jim Gold Folk Tours, or Jim Gold Tours

(dropping the word "International") may mean and new step forward into a more confident, less egotistical self.

The Jim Gold Show: Group Singing . . . and More

The Jim Gold Show: Group Folk Singing. . .and More

The Jim Gold Show: Group Singing and More!

The Jim Gold Show: A (Communal, Group) Laryngeal Lift (Experience) and More

Folk Singing in the rough.

The above is part of my three month schedule.

Three-Month Goals

1. Running: Days: Tuesday, Thursday, (Friday?) Saturday

Three-month goals: Improve speed, times, run faster.

2. Yoga: Days: 6 days a week. Sunday off.

Three-month goals: Head stand, scorpion, shoulder stand, legs over head, lotus position, thigh bend.

3. The Jim Gold Show: Group Singing . . . and More

(The Jim Gold Show "What Fun!" Group Singing and More)

Three month goal: New business. What fun! Put it together for future shows in the new "What Fun! method.

Immediate show: upcoming Temple Ada Emunah in one month. New business: What fun!

4. Classical Guitar: Days: Daily?

Three-month goals: Perform (for imaginary concert audience) Alhambra, Leyenda, Alard, Villa Lobos Prelude No. 4, Bach Prelude in Dm, Flamenco: Bulerias, Soleares,

My show needs a new title.

An Evening in the Morning (or Vice Versa)

with Jim Gold

Based it on "What Fun!"

This direction is totally new!

Getting the audience involved. . .immediately! "Social Director of the Garbage Dump" approach. But this time leave out the garbage. How come? There's no hostility left.

The devilish fun approach of my Chaits Hotel social director self has transformed into the fun approach without the devil. (And it only took fifty years!)

"What Fun!" Approach

Is this the next stage of my life? Redo everything I do and did, but now with the new, updated, "What Fun!" Approach.

How to soak this attitude, the "What Fun!" attitude, the Exclamation Point life! into everything I do!

Can I take the "What fun!" approach to my classical guitar playing? That would be a total revolution!

The "What fun!" approach is a totally me and my approach.

To my knowledge, no one else is using or doing it. "What fun!" with its exclamation point, implying the exclamation point life, feels totally comfortable, totally mine, no problem at all. It's easy and fun, fits my personality to a "T" and is, no question, the best way for me to go.

I'm ready, too. (And it only took fifty years!)

Could I carry the "What fun!" approach into tours, running yoga, fd, all? Something to think about.

Such sadness down, dirty and deep on the depression. But why? Such are the swings of life.

Yoga 6 days a week has been decided.

Thursday, November 12, 2015

Bernice went into knee replacement surgery yesterday.

Today I came home to an empty house. So sad. I cried.

Memories of Bernice. I hardly mention her name in my journal (of course, she wants it or wanted it that way). But maybe now things will be different. She's not gone yet, but this home coming, coming home to an empty, silent, still house, a dead house, is a hint of the feeling, utter loneliness and devastation, that I will feel when death happens.

I've built my life and career around her. She's the subtle, quiet force in the background, every motivating me. Shall I say inspiring me?

I thought only God or enthusiasm, "en-theos-ism" inspires me. But Bernice may be my messenger from God, my life-helper sent to smooth the road with hard stones, pebbles, flat stretches and ditches, ups and downs, all to teach me about life.

But what is life? A living dream? 50 years, 60 years, 100 years, it's over in an instant. A flash of memory and it's gone. And this must be true of 1000 years, civilizations, all.

So with loneliness, devastation and nothingness up ahead, why bother? If life itself is a flaky passing dream, a cloud with the vapor of nothingness at its center, why bother? Why bother creating, with goals, challenges, progress, inventions? Why even bother with love, metaphysics, or exploration of the so-called Higher World. Yes, there may well be a Higher World, with Hashem looking down, up and sideways upon us, but again, so what? How does that help fill the cloud, the loneliness, devastation, and emptiness? Can Spirit really fill the void?

What do you do when you lose everything?

What is "everything?" And, if everything is an illusion, a passing dream, what really have you lost after all? Are the Hindu sadhus right? Grasping and holding on is worthless. Only fools cling to clouds. The wise and enlightened have seen through the illusion, and accepted the grand void.

Is my life then with Bernice a mere passing dream, a happy/sad, challenging/frustrating, up/down illusion? Maybe.

But if it is, so what? The blackness of soul, infinite bottom pain of loss is real. Or at least in feels real.

They transience and change is the rule of life. And only the Infinite last forever. Intellectually, I know it is true.

But again, so what?

What about feelings, of which I have so many? Do they count? Maybe we all live in the clouds, with the sun shining but hidden behind us.

On the earthly level, Bernice is my sun. Hot and cold has been my life without her, it is neither hot nor cold, but empty.

Empty. Motivation and meaning have dribbled away. "Why bother?" has taken over my life. Waves of mourning fill my mind and soul where once abundance reigned.

Friday, November 13, 2015

Better today.

Hebrew as my three-month project.

Saturday, November 14, 2015

### Folk Songs

#### Not for a Show; Only for Myself

Folk Songs: I've lined up[ all my folk songs on my desk.

Ugh! I hate to "start over."

Is that why I "accidentally" punctured my left index finger with a knife opening

the rose Raki bottle, purchased in Koprivisthtisa?. It will take a few days to heal. Does this stabbing mean anything in a new direction, cosmic? Why did it happen now? On the one hand, it “forces me to consider doing something else with the guitar. This would be singing. . and folk songs.

I resist. I hate to “start again,” to “dredge up” the old songs. So much work to re-energize the past. And yet, maybe my very resistance subtly signals that a new start is in sight. I vaguely hope so. But I also say, “Oh no, not again. Not another beginning, another project.”

Do I always resist a new start? Maybe. Plus there is nothing new or fresh about this start. It’s a return to the past. Or is it? One can never really return to the past. One can only regenerate it, in a new contemporary form. Thus the only real direction I can go is freshening, a new look, a renaissance. Still I resist.

Folk songs are on my desk staring me in the face.

Can I incorporate them into my new “three-month plan” schedule? Beyond intellect and resistance, I secretly “know” my folk song renaissance is up ahead. But how and where?

Finding the center, a new reason. Folk songs: Not for a show. Only for myself.

How can this be?

### Three-Month Goals

1. Running: Days: Tuesday, Thursday, (Friday?) Saturday

Three-month goals: Improve speed, times, run faster.

2. Yoga: Days: 6 days a week. "Daily." Sunday off.

Three-month goals: Head stand, scorpion, shoulder stand, legs over head, lotus position, thigh bend.

3. Classical Guitar: 6 days a week. "Daily." Sunday off.

Three-month goals: Alhambra, Leyenda, Alard, Villa Lobos Prelude No. 4, Bach Prelude in Dm, Flamenco: Bulerias, Soleares,

4. Folk Singing: The (wild) animal in me wailing.

5. Hebrew: 2x a day.

6. Gaida?

Sunday, November 15, 2015

### Depth Approach

Sinking down into the depths of one (Hebrew) word: in this case: Hitchil: to

begin.

### Day of Rest

Does day of rest mean that do my MS things only to “enjoy” them? 6 days a week I aim to improve. The seventh day I rest. How? By doing them, if I like, calmly, with no pressure, for so-called “enjoyment.”

But I enjoy them anyway.

So what’s the difference?

Six days focus on improvement. One day with no pressure to improve? Is that what “rest” or “day off” means?

Maybe.

Question: since I love my miracle schedule and can’t think of anything better to do, why would I, on my so-called day of rest, stop doing all the things I love? Since I am “free” on my day of rest, I might even do more of them! Or do them “differently.”

6 day improvement. Okay. But I’m not sure “day of rest” means yet.

Monday, November 16, 2015

Strange, it is Monday morning and somehow I feel I have to do some “work,” which, in this sense, means business work. At means it has to somehow relate to money and people, providing services for other people.

It’s fine to take my vacation modes in languages, studying Hebrew and French, and following my yoga and running, and other miracles schedule pursuits. But evidently, I must also somehow and sometimes apply my brain to working with and for others. Otherwise, the solo miracle schedule projects somehow lose their meaning.

So be it. Today is a new day. Back to “work.”

What to do?

1. Make new folk tour ad. This without Cuba. Email it to all advertisers.

Anything else? Somehow sending out another tour group email seems cruel and

insensitive after the Paris attack. I'll wait until after Thanksgiving.

2. Folk song program?
3. Think of a new business?

### New Business Step

#### How to Put Business in my Miracle Schedule

Somehow all the glory and fire has been drained out of my schedule. Does that mean I have to add something to it? FB, photography, videos skills, even Iphone and tech stuff? After all, they are all contemporary and directly concerns business.

Thus, yes. How to "fit it in" is the next question.

Wednesday, November 18, 2015

I'm somewhat washed away and exploded by my right ankle "injury." I don't know what it is or where it came from. I'm surmising it has to do with tensing/tightening my right ankle while balancing on my right foot, and/plus dancing fast and hard on Monday night. As I say, I'm guessing because I really don't know. I woke up Tuesday morning okay. Then I stepped in the "wrong" way and suddenly my right ankle began to hurt.

Big question is: is this a tight muscle that can be "worked out?" Or is it an injury that needs rest? I could use the "Rick three times test." What's that? Use the muscle three times. If it feels better each time, then the pain/discomfort is due to muscle tightness. If it feels worse each time, then it's an "injury" and needs rest.

What's next? Hebrew. Read it as poetry, soaring on and into each word. What's so good about poetry? I'm good at it, for one. It helps me dream and learn, for two.

What about the stock market? I am slowly realizing, knowing, and even accepting that I am absolutely terrible at trading. Yet I keep doing it. Why, I'm not sure. Somehow it keeps a vague dream alive that some day I'll improve and even be good at it. Someday the Lord will shine on me, and give me the gift and satisfaction of trading

well.

It's a strange dream, and, at this point, has nothing to do with making money. It is, after all, "spare" money, that I can even afford to lose.

But I hate to lose. I love to win. In the stock market, I mostly lose, and once in awhile, for a short time, I win. Long term, I lose. Short term, I mostly lose, and sometimes (rarely) win.

Why do I keep doing this? Maybe a better question is: Am I allowed to keep losing money like this? And this, even though it is my own money. Truth is: I hate losing and hate to lose money.

And the stock market is "competitive." I'm competing with myself along with all the other invisible traders.

My desire to trade is a puzzle I won't be solving today.

Thus today has three subjects:

1. Ankle
2. Hebrew
3. Stocks.

Ankles is most important, visceral, and worth dealing with and thinking about.

Hebrew also important, but in a dream sequence way.

Stocks; basically worthless, not worth thinking about (but, since it's a puzzle, I'll probably think about them anyway.

4. Might be my punctured left index finger, which is slowly getting better. (This may relate to my ankle.)

### Meaning of Stock Trading

What is the meaning of the stock trading? (Not stock market, but stock trading.)

In stock trading: I always lose. In the short run, I may and even do win once in awhile. But my history is: In the long run, I have always lost! In others words, to universalize and immortalize it, I always loose.

I'm using the "always" word because secretly, I'd like to stop trading, I'd like to stop losing and I'm hoping this kind of personal beating myself over the head will, through the power of self-humiliation, "force" me to stop.

Two good questions:

1. Lose: Do I secretly want to lose?
2. Stop: Do I secretly want to stop?
3. Hopes: Do I secretly want to keep hope alive that some day I will win?

### Stock Trading and "God is on my Side"

It's the daily "God is on my side" phenomena. If my stocks go up, God is on my side. If they don't or they go down, I'm not so sure He is.

Why do I need trading to "prove" that God is (or is not) on my side? Good question.

Friday, November 20, 2015

Are the bonds of material reality slowly being loosened? Am I slowly moving, or being moved, to a new mental place? Seems like others are dying, or slowly being misplaced. Cancer has put Barry in hospice, Phil close to the end; on top of that, Bernice is in rehab and I'm getting a liver MRI. Suddenly, hospitals, hospices, and graveyards are appearing in my present and future.

Of course, they were always there. . .but in potential. Now they are staring me in the face, standing in front of my nose. They are subtly, and not so subtly reminding me of my transience, telling me the next world is beckoning, and that soon, eventually, all of us will be there together.

Not an optimistic assessment for those existing in the material world. Basically, it is reminding me that, in the end, we'll all be dead. What does that say about the future, or even the present with its goals and purposes?

Indeed, we all need daily goals and purposes to exist well in the material world.

But how about the next world? What good are goals and purposes there? Do we even need them? If not, why bother?

The old "Why bother?" question. It comes whenever I feel down or discouraged, I feel sad and meaningless.

There really is no long range answer to the "Why bother?" question.

Well, if that is the case, what to do?

Material life lives in movement and stillness.

I'd say first thing is to mourn the miserable transient of life. Have a good cry over your liquid state. When tears are exhausted, drainage finished and spent, mind and heart emptied of sorrow, continue on.

There is nothing else to do but move on.

I know that is the "correct analysis and advice." I'm just not ready to do it.

I'm also so self-involved in my own world, that I rarely stop to realize how important all these people around me are to me. That they are my life support!

How important Barry, family, friends, even folk dancers and travelers, work-mates, etc are to me. Due to self-involvement, they mostly remain in the background. Until death and dying remind me of their importance.

What can I do about this? I can't change the nature of life or the transience of existence. Can I, should I, even bother to change my attitude and remember their importance?. Or simply rage at the ultimate dying of the light? Maybe both.

I am definitely not facing what a blow it is for Bernice to be away from me. And that some day, this will be forever.

That's one of the reasons Barry's hospice is so sad. Suddenly, I realize eventually, I will lose everyone I love and cherish. And especially my beloved wife.

My ultimate helplessness before the juggernaut transience of life. Nothing I can

do about it. Eventually, all will be taken away. No wonder people wish for and worship the Eternal.

What a comfort to know the Eternal exists. Ultimately, it may be the only comfort in a dire and disappearing world.

But does it exist?

Sadness is clouding my mind. I am too sad to even think about it.

### Gratefulness

This knee surgery separation is forcing me to see how important Bernice is to me. I've mostly just taken her for granted. Taken her and my marriage for granted. And, along with that, taken my family for granted. And, along with that, taken my friends for granted. Taken all my blessings for granted.

Some day my blessings will all be gone. How sad. What can I do about this? Appreciate them now.

Yes, it's temporary, transient, and leads merely to a grateful smile and thank you. But that's all I can do.

Is gratefulness for the temporary blessings in my life the only thing I can have? Maybe.

That I had Bernice for a short time.

That I had myself for a short time.

That I had my children for a short time.

That I had a career and friends for a short time.

That I could mourn the transience of life a short time.

That I had a short time for a short time.

### Are We Really All One?

Is the only reason I work for money to please Bernice?

I the only reason I work for anything to please others?

Do I do anything to please myself?

And what is the difference between others and myself?

Are we really all one? Maybe.

If that is true, and I believe it is, then I cannot please myself unless I please others, and I cannot please others unless I please myself.

Bernice is buried and burned into my flesh. It is gut-wrenching to lose even a piece of her.

### Transience

A terrible bout of tears, a gut-wrenching, painful emotion, a cutting to the bone sorrow. . . and it passes. Could such an intense and painful emotion along with the feeling that is the only reality, be a “mere distraction?” Even with all its intensity, it eventually passes. My mind empties and I get ready to move on.

### New Start

New things:

1. Sold trading stocks. Ended stock trading.
2. Yoga: Adding breathing and meditation
  - a. MRI practice. (The turning point. MRI sent by HasShem to deal with claustrophobia, death and aloneness.)
    1. Dynamic tightening
    2. Practice with clock, ask for timing
    3. Breathing:
      - a. Panic, fast breathe
      - b. count the breathes

3. Business: New website and etc.

4. Read Tanach: 5 year plan.

It's 9 p.m. Back from rehab with Bernice.

Basically, the last ten days to two weeks have been pretty bad. Bernice knee surgery, Barry going into hospice, me needing an MRI, etc. It's just been about degeneration, old age, body part replacement, sickness, dying, hospitals, and rehab centers. I even stabbed my left index finger so I can't play guitar for a week! A grand ough! I'm getting sick of it all! How about something positive, uplifting, and a dynamic future direction. Maybe I needed some pits post-Albania, something to "relax" me and bring me down. Well, I've just about been down long enough. The ground work bass line of misery has been drawn; I've anchored myself in it and now have covered most of the misery.

I'm sick of it. . .and ready to move on.

Okay, tomorrow I start.

What's in place? What's new?

Maybe what's in place is what's new.

My three month goals are in order. I need to add breathing and meditation to the yoga part.

Remember and reiterate my Three-Month Goals:

1. Running: Days: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

Three-month goals: Improve speed, times, run faster.

2. Yoga: "Daily." Sunday off.

Three-month goals: Head stand, scorpion, shoulder stand, legs over head, lotus position, thigh bend. Add breathing, meditation. "MRI practice." Claustrophobia, death. Use dynamic tightening, and clock. For panic breath fast, count breathes.

3. Classical Guitar: "Daily." Sunday off.

Three-month goals: Alhambra, Leyenda, Alard, Villa Lobos Prelude No. 4, Bach

Prelude in Dm, Flamenco: Bulerias, Soleares,

4. Folk Singing: Group song program, throwing in solos.
5. Hebrew: Daily. Read Tanach: 5 year plan.
6. Gaida?

Saturday, November 21, 2015

I may need a woman just to inspire me and get me out of the house.

Do I need a bible study group for inspiration, vibrations, camaraderie, and rubbing shoulders?

#### At My Side

My incentive to dump the garbage and do the laundry (or even make money) is dribbling away. Without Bernice at my side to guide and/or goad me, why bother?

God is giving me a preview of what life would be like without Bernice at my side. I'm crying.

I am in the midst of developing an entirely new folk dance/folk song program! One that would work for groups, one that I'm comfortable with, one that is mucho fun, and thus one that I would actually enjoy and love doing!

The model will be the Temple Adas Emunah program in December. Here's how it goes:

#### A Get-up/Sit-Down/Get Up Evening

##### Possible Titles

A Get Up and Sit Down Evening of Folk Dancing and Folk singing with Jim Gold

A Get Up and Sit Down Evening of Folk Dance and (Folk) Song with Jim Gold

Sit Down and Get Up with Jim Gold:

An Evening of Folk Dancing and Folk Singing

Get Up and Sit Down! Folk Dancing and (Folk) Singing with Jim Gold:

Get Up and Sit Down! Folk Dance and Sing with Jim Gold:

1. Everyone gets up. Start off with folk dancing. . . 45 minutes to an hour.
2. Break (for refreshments, socializing, whatever
3. Everyone sits down in a circle for group folk singing. This last about a half hour.
4. Everyone gets up. Return to folk dancing for review and some new dances.

#### New Folk Song and Folk Singing Program:

Possible Titles:

1. Singalong with Jim.

2. Folk Singalong with Jim,

3. Gold Karat (Folk) Singing with Jim!

Smelt your Voice! Raise your Ingot Level! Increase your value! Sing Along with Jim Gold

4. Gold Karat (Folk) Singing with Jim!

Increase your value! Smelt your Voice! Raise your Ingot Level! Sing Along with Jim Gold

#### Get the Audience on my Side Immediately

Get the audience on my side immediately.

Start them singing (or dancing) immediately.

That eliminates all nervousness! Having them on my side immediately make me comfortable immediately! And when I'm comfortable, my talents, skills and strengths emerge. That is my strength and desire. And that is what is fun, joyous, comedic, anll the goodies wrapped up in one!

“Come on. Let’s Go!

If it is so important for me to get people, others, the audience on my side, that means I have been trying to escape from their criticism for years. Maybe that’s part of the reason why I like to be alone. No criticism.

I can’t study, or “be quiet” with others because they’ll eventually criticize me for being anti-social. For not paying attention to them. (How can I be so selfish as to only think of myself when they are standing or sitting there. Somehow it is always about them. Somehow they always need my help and attention. I have no idea why this is so. But if I do not give it to them, they criticize me. Thus, I have to neutralize them first, quiet them, get them on my side, before I can really relax and be myself. Why this is so, I don’t know. And truly, it doesn’t even matter. Truth is, it is so. And the best way for me to handle it is to immediately put the others, get the others to be on my side. Putting the “pressure” on them to sing, to dance, to whatever, is my best method. I can encourage (I’m good at that), lead them (I’m somehow good at that, too), subtly put the pressure on them to come out of their shells, become their better selves, open their inner selves, and release, express and enjoy themselves. This is my social director, God-given talent. It is easy and even natural for me. No problem. Period. Somehow, I’m good at smiling, leading and encouraging. It’s my God-given talent. I’m good at saying “Come on. Let go!”

The only thing worse than failure is success.

Returning to the Tour Business

Vacation Hiatus is Ending

I just got a couple of emails about tours, Albania, Norway, Israel. The thought of returning to tours made me very sad. I even cried. I wonder why.

Am I really burned out? Do I hate returning to the hard work involved? I love the free time I have now. Is it about Barry in hospice, dying, losing my right hand man?

Is it Bernice in rehab? And eventual death for everyone? Is it all of the above?

Or am I simply sad because vacation is soon ending? I am plunging back into the morass of sales, participant lists, and attention to all the details.

No question, I'm sad to think about it, sad to return.

The tour business will definitely cut into my "free time" and "keep me from doing what I want to do."

What do I want to do?

I'll find it in my new three-month schedule.

Can I return to the tour business and fulfill my new three-month schedule? Aha, that is the good question.

Maybe the new answer is: Why not?

With slight adjustments, I can fit it all in.

### Humans Excite Me!

Humans excite me! My lips and brain vibrate when I meet one. That's why I smile.

Evidently, I love my customers! I love the people that go on tour with me.

True, I rarely stopped to appreciate them. I'm too busy dealing with organizing business, anxiety about money, travel, tour details, getting the program right, etc.

However, since my desires center around leadership, encouragement and "Let's go!", my ready smile means I am excited about meeting people.

My smile reveals the best part of me, the running wild on the lawn, best part of me. It vibrates with personal excitement: I love meeting another human being! Humans excite me!

Fears about their possible criticism and non-acceptance have blinded me from this bottom line fact. However, in spite of my fears, my first reaction to meeting someone is still child-like excitement.

Yes, human excite me. That's why I smile.

Put more love and time into each customer.

More love into each Hebrew word.

Sunday, November 22, 2015

### Stillness

Facing stillness.

How can I accept deep silence and total quiet?

How can I learn to be still?

Stillness to me dignifies death. No motion, no movement, silence, total stoppage, death.

It also touches higher meditation, and union with the One.

I cannot conquer everything. I cannot learn every Hebrew word, play every piece, sing every song, make infinite amounts of money, etc. Of course, intellectually I know all this. But emotionally, my running wild self always want to move, move, move. I can't stop. Running wild and free on the lawn in my passion, love, and basic nature.

And yet stillness exists. Within its limitless confines paradox, a deep truth lies, one which I rarely experience.

Am I missing this richness by ever wanting to move? Maybe.

Indeed, I would expand and grow a great deal, if I could accept limits, dive into the limitless confines paradox, and learn to be still.

Am I ready to learn?

The fact that I'm adding breathing, meditation, and MRI Stillness Training to my yoga practice means I'm taking the first step.

### Time and Friends

How to use my limited and valuable time?

Should I put some time into seeing friends? Am I interested enough? Is it worth

it?

Or is it only through work that I want to see them?

Do I have any friends?

Do I want or need any? If yes, doesn't that mean I have to spend time with them?

Truth is, there are all kinds of friends: Business friends, family friends, miscellaneous friends and more. They all fit in somewhere. The only time question is: Where and how to fit them in?

I'm thinking about friends mainly because I'm sad, somewhat alone (lonely?), missing Bernice, and thinking about Barry in hospice and dying. Not happy morning thoughts.

In fact, I just broke down crying.

I don't think friends, family, Bernice, Barry or anyone can fill this hole. All things are transient and will eventually die, The best I can do about this existential emptiness and metaphysical truth is to dive into it, cry, watch the thoughts dissolve in my mind, disappear, slowly forget about them, and move on.

There's no avoiding the process. However, the good news is that mourning, sadness, alienation, and emptiness eventually end and a new beginning begins.

But I'm still crying; so it hasn't happened yet.

### Classical Guitar: Alhambra Freedom and More!

Now that I've put my wonderful group folk song program together, and really never have to play, or think of playing classical guitar before an audience again, I am starting to enjoy playing Alhambra, slowly, easily, at my own pace, but more important: with absolutely no pressure on me to somehow perform it in public in the future. Finally, finally free! And I don't even feel the spring and joy of freedom. It is now a mere fact. I am free. Plus, on top of that, I have a truly greatly fun group folk song program.

### More on Classic Guitar Freedom!

With absolutely no (internal or external) pressure on me to ever play classical guitar in public again, I am finally totally free to play classical guitar at my own pace, in my own way, with no one looking over my shoulder and absolutely no expectations from the audience.

Fantastic and different! I wonder what I will find now.

### Secret Wish To Go Slow

Leyenda, Alhambra, whatever: I can just go as slow as I want, luxuriate and enjoy it.

Is one of my secret wishes to go slow? To have the freedom to go slow? If yes, how does that relate to stillness, silence, and meditation.

### HaShem MRI Meditation

No doubt HaShem sent me the MRI now.

Should think of him as I'm lying there?

Does He want me to think of Him, as I'm lying there? Is that the "message?"  
Could be.

What a good 22-30 minute HaShem MRI meditation.

### Slow is Profound and Wise

### Hand-Maiden of Slow is Stillness

Fast used to mean smart; slow used to mean stupid. Certainly, this was true in classical guitar playing. But it also extended to other parts of my life. Running wild on the lawn is after all about running fast and wild in a wild, whirling dance of fast freedom.

The pressure to go fast is slowly ending.

I'm moving into slow, with its hand-maiden: Stillness.

Slow plumbs the depths. It is deep, profound, wise, relates to wisdom and the sage.

Fast is not stupid, fast is different.

Monday, November 23, 2015

### Classical Guitar Revelation

Revelation: Truth is, I don't mind playing classical guitar in front of an audience, but it must be on my terms! No pushing from internal, or imagined (or real) external critics. It's got to be only me, whatever tempo I choose, whatever "mistakes" or "variations" I choose to make. It's got to be me playing totally and only on my own terms.

### The Highest Reality

#### Audience and Artist are One

And I can start today, mentally performing for others at my own pace, on my own terms. Only!

Should I even use the term "for others?" If it's on my own terms, it is not, first and foremost for others. It is rather "for myself" with others listening in, perhaps enjoying it, perhaps not. But in this childish formula, "others" are secondary, and I am first.

Evidently, I need this illusion before I can move to the higher truth: There is no separation between audience and artist. The childlike vision, the highest reality is that audience and I, audience and artist are One.

Leyenda bar 8 etc. Let the audience see into the interstices of my mind. Let them watch me think it out, "see" me placing each finger, and listening to each note as it arises and leaves my guitar. Let them in. Let them watch, and see in fascination, how it all works.

Note: Letting them in is all on my terms!

Should I call them guests in my house? I'm not sure. Guests imply an obligation. Or does it? Maybe these kind of guests are different. (Maybe I'm not ready for this yet.)

Letting them in to the interstices of my mind. Letting them see how I think.  
That's a big step.

Is it also a daring step? No, rather it is a development. Brave and daring have little or nothing to do with it, since "letting them in to the interstices of my mind" is totally on my own terms.

Tuesday, November 24, 2015

New Goal: Slow Down/Focus.

It started with Rick's balance workout.

My new goal is: Slow down and focus. Mostly it is to better focus. Move slowly, evenly, stop. Dive into depth.

Do more by doing less.

I can start with Hebrew. Focus on even one word, one sentence, one paragraph. Rather than "I'm slow and not getting anywhere," chose "There's no place to go but here."

Slow down to the stopping point. . . focus.

Stop and Focus: A Good Practice

What's the historic panic and claustrophobia? I'll never finish. I'm stuck until I finish. Once I finish, I'll be free.

Free to do what? Something new, something else. So I start again. The cycle of

unfinished realism never stops. I am ever unfinished.

Of course, that is a fact and truth of life. Stopping to focus recognizes it. By learning to stop and focus, I recognize and accept this truth.

Practices:

1. Balance exercises (right leg)

### Right Leg Thoughts

Interesting Sarnoian question: What relationship, if any, is there between my legs hurting today and yesterday's decision to open the interstices of my mind to others?

And note, for the first time, it is my right leg. Is this significant? Leading: I lead with my right. (This "leading" thought sent chills down my back.)

Also, my balance problem is on my right leg.

### Classic Guitar: Sharing the Interstices of my Mind

I'm handing out guitar notes to each person in the audience. I want each note-gift to be pure, clear, and sweet.

I have to rethink my repertoire in a hand-them-beautiful-note-gifts manner. Stupendous difference.

It certainly makes classical guitar playing more fun.

What a stupendous statement. Will I now want to play more classical guitar?! Maybe.

I walked away, paused, then came back. The answer is: Yes!

Yes, I will play more classical guitar. (Handing people notes is simply more fun!)

Wow, now what? Where will this lead?

An old neighborhood thought just popped into mind: I've got to play classic

guitar more now, overdo it, so that somehow I destroy my fun, repress my joy, crush this “fun” concept.

How does “crushing fun” concept relate to my right leg?

I’ve discovered the roots of classical guitar joy.

How about now looking at the crushing of folk dance joy, or the crushing or rather neglect of yoga joy, or suppression of running joy, or the basic body pleasure and joy of feeling blood and energy coursing through my bones, muscles and skin.

How about now the rediscover and reclamation of this joy.

### Giving Out Guitar Notes

I break down crying for the beauty of this idea. Imagine sharing, giving my notes with others, thinking of each note I play on the (classical) guitar as a gift to someone else, to the person sitting in front of me. I like giving. Notes are something I can give.

And what a fun and glorious way to do it.

A whole new way of practicing, thinking, and playing.

Wednesday, November 25, 2015

### Taking the Plunge Together

#### Letting Them See Imperfection at its Best!

I’m ready to take the plunge, with the audience, into the arpeggio sea, of Alhambra, Leyenda, and the others.

I’m letting the audience in on my mistakes, my speed and speeding sloppiness, vulnerabilities, and who knows what else? I’m letting them see imperfection at its best! (A funny way of putting and accepting it.)

I’m taking a chance with them.

But my humiliation and fear level is way down. In fact, I’d say it has somehow

totally dissolved, and somehow does not even exist anymore.

### Forgetting

One of the great chances you take is that you'll stumbling and forget the entire piece right in the middle.

The answer to this is: So what? Your choices then are:

1. Fumble on
2. Invent something new
3. Simply stop, and move onto something else.

### Audience and Risk

I'm taking a chance on them; they're taking a chance on me. Thus we're together  
We're both taking chances together.

Thursday, November 26, 2015

### Hebrew and the Price of Depth

What's the price of depth?

Patience. Along with small coins of frustration. How frustrating that I can't move faster, be smarter and accumulate more. Frustration, then eventually (hopefully) patience.

Patience means fighting greed. Greed and fear are twins.

Patience also relates to meditative stillness and silence.

Can I stand patience? I don't know.

But what other choice do I have?

I'm learning one deep Hebrew word at a time. I look up each root and verb form.  
Slower and slower, I'll be going even slower!

That's the price of depth.

### Patience and Frustration

Patience is thus related to stillness, silence, quiet, balance, focus, concentration, being in the here and now.

Frustration is the opposite of patience. It is thus related to fear, greed, acquisition, emptiness, lack, off balance, wild movement, no focus, disconnect with the moment.

### Some Practices of Patience

1. MRI practice
2. Balance exercises
3. Yoga dead pose
4. Word focus (linguistic focus: one Hebrew or other word)

A touch of self disgust is rising within me. I wonder if that is what's being "expressed" in my leg and knee "fatigue."

Self disgust signals energy rising and pointing to a new direction. A good sign.

Time to practice patience. I have no choice.

Or rather, practicing patience is my choice.

### Learning Patience Through Language

Use Hebrew to practice patience.

I'll never completely learn Hebrew or any other language. Such a goal of conquest and acquisition is unrealistic and totally frustrating.

Maybe language study is not about learning languages but rather, learning patience.

Patience definition: A minor form of despair, disguised as a virtue. [Ambrose Bierce, "Devil's Dictionary," 1911]

What does patience mean on the classical guitar?

It means I'm not going to "get anywhere?" No matter how much I practice and play, it will never "get perfect." I'll always and ever be on the path. Perhaps it's an upward path, but its endless nevertheless.

Patience means do it anyway.

Patience means play, not necessarily to "improve" but rather for depth.

Can depth be found in a fast, sloppy Leyenda, or fast sloppy anything? Why not? . . . Well, yes!

### Can't Do It Alone

I can't do this by myself. I've run out of personal gas.

I'd better ask a Higher Power. I've exhausted my options and personal power.

Dare I believe in the power of God to reconstruct me, to remake my guitar playing into a holy mode entity?

Just as a pray before each tour, maybe its time to pray before each guitar playing. Time to include Him in my practice. Tie Hebrew to my guitar, and a new classic guitar relationship with HaShem.

That's something to be thankful for this Thanksgiving Day.

Could I expand this Higher Force to everything I do, and really make it a Thanksgiving day!

I'm out of personal gas. I need some help. How about HaShem?

Friday, November 27, 2015

Discouragement, Frustration, and Patience

Glory is in the Struggle, not the Conquest

I felt discouraged over Alhambra and Hebrew.

Why? They take so long to learn and master.

This points once again to the importance of dealing with frustration and the virtue of patience.

Watch out for discouragement! It's the devil's best tool.

Facing frustration and substituting in its place the endurance and suffering burden of patience is the only antidote to discouragement.

Patience was defined by Ambrose Bierce in his Devil's Dictionary as "A minor form of despair, disguised as a virtue,"

Beyond patience, the only other choice is giving in, giving out, and giving up. Such choices usually lead to death of spirit, crushing of soul, depletion of energy, and destruction of motivation. Hardly good choices.

Thus, my advice to myself: Plough ahead. Keep practicing Alhambra and Hebrew. Conquering them may take years, a lifetime, or never. But glory is in the struggle, not the conquest.

Remember my slogan: "The only thing worse than failure is success."

I am definitely taking a chance, taking an emotional risk by sharing my New Leaf Journal writings with my family. But sharing, revealing my true myself, opening it up to the public, putting the audience in me and vice versa, is the direction I want to go.

Sickness and injury is often the price of wisdom.

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### Underestimating New Leaf Journal

Maybe I'm making a grand mistake by underestimating my New Leaf Journal. It may be helpful and important to others.

My "modesty," coupled with fear of self-revelation, prevents me from seeing it. Dare I even say that it is important?

Is this a hidden case of "Jewels rarely see how they shine"?

### Price of Wisdom

Injury, sickness, and emotional pain are the price of wisdom.

### The Wisdom of Speed

#### Depth in Speed, Depth in Fast

Guitar: What's the difference between speed and fast?

I don't know yet. (Speed applies to guitar, running, dancing, etc, in general. Fast

applies only and specifically to guitar.)

Nevertheless, I'm finding depth in speed, depth in fast.

I'm finding the wisdom of speed in the Alhambra touch and relaxation of my right hand finger tips.

I've always been terrified of speed, guitar speed. Now I'm diving into focused calm in the fire of touch and relaxation.

I wonder if I'm in the middle of an earthquake, a herculean guitar breakthrough.

By winning this morning's battle against discouragement, with its attendant rebirth of hope. I believe I am!

#### Soft Are The Roots Of Speed

Does speed come through soft? I believe so.

Playing, running, dancing softly, I touch the root of speed.

#### Knees and the Angel of Soft

The soft is indeed a different feeling. Can I hold onto it in running and dancing?

Is this the reason for growing pains in my knees, to usher in the different feeling of soft? Maybe.

Were the pains caused by the destruction process of hard to make space for the entry of soft?

Breaking the hard is a break through.

Through the break enters the angel of soft.

Saturday, November 28, 2015

#### Dark Cloud of Discouragement

#### Versus the "I'm Quite Smart" Revolution

As I study Hebrew and try to conquer it, the dark cloud of "It's hopeless" and "Why bother?" rises and passes before my eyes. This happens for a moment, almost every

morning, even every day.

I wonder why.

A cloud of discouragement and giving up. What is its purpose?

Is it an appearance of the devil?

Does good and evil really exist? Probably.

Can I, dare I believe that it does? Indeed, it would militate against my communist upbringing which claims that all things on earth can be changed for the good. The secular, atheistic view. I grew up with.

Am I then stupid to believe in good and evil? What would mother say? I imagine she'd say I was stupid.

I faced this question dealing with reincarnation. Was I stupid to consider and even believe in it? What would mother say? I imagine she'd say I was stupid.

I hide behind the question: Would it be, at least, useful?

But bottom line, I hear my mother saying "You're stupid to believe in such rot."

Criticism, both potential and actual, of my stupidity and slowness is so bottom line. And one of my great internalized fears. Ma really made her powerful, indelible mark on my virgin, open, tabula rasa soul.

However, I am older, wiser, more experienced now. I don't have to agree with Ma anymore. I can make up my own mind. Time to step out of this old neighborhood.

Thus why should I believe I'm stupid? No one agrees with that but me. I can change my self belief. How about choosing "I'm quite smart!" That would indeed be a revolution.

In fact, I wonder if that dark cloud of discouragement is the dark cloud of my mother returning to put me down, to say I'm stupid and because I'm stupid, I'll never succeed, in mastering Hebrew or anything else.

This is a secular psychological analysis, beyond good and evil. My dark cloud of stupidity is a slip back into the old neighborhood.

Is that why I do things to prove myself, push to be better, strive to improve? Not for

their own good, good-in-themselves, but rather to prove to myself that I'm not stupid?

Probably.

Time to change all that. Time to marry "I'm quite smart."

If I do, will the dark cloud of discouragement soften, fade, and eventually disappear? We'll see. But I'm starting this new path today.

### Male Nature

The power drive, pure push to conquer, master, and improve is part of male nature. That's okay and good.

The push down "You're stupid" cloud is simply bad. And certainly not part of male nature.

### Instilling the "I'm Quite Smart" Thinking Habit

The dark cloud of discouragement has nothing to do with God, good or evil. It is simply a memory of my mother's voice, echoing in the chamber of my mind. Thus, like a bat out of hell, or mosquito in the corner, it keeps returning to bite me. This noxious memory and thinking habit has never been cleaned out.

Time to sweep away the noxious memory and change the "You're stupid" thinking habit.

Blow the Clouds Away! Blow away the dark cloud of discouragement. Replace it with the updated "I'm quite smart" habit.

### Results of "You're Quite Smart"

Imagine daring to think my old songs are so good that they're worth reviving and singing again.

Imagine daring to think this of all my creations.

What would that mean for the present direction of my life?

Truly, I'm afraid to even think it.

If I imagine my stuff is really good, even great, what a burden that would be. If it is really great, it would be my obligation to bring it to others, spread it around. This would mean both mucho work and, more difficult and important, believing in my talents, skills, and creative self. It's pushing way beyond the "You're stupid" curtain. It would mean creeping out from behind the protective "You're not good enough" wall.

Note how a low self-image protects me from the obligation and mucho work of spreading my works around. And seeing myself as great and worthy, Great, in this sense, does not mean egotistic, but rather worthy.

Would I dare to be great? Would I dare to be worthy?

Remember my beautiful song "I Am Both Small And Great."

Would I dare sing my old songs?

By creeping into the past, digging up my graveyard masterpieces, and performing them again, wouldn't this be a public admission that I'm old? Thus showing, demonstrating, admitting in public, and to myself, that I'm worthless.

People return to the past, to the Renaissance or Classical times for inspiration. Why not go back to my own Renaissance and Classical times for inspiration?

Why not push my won Renaissance and Classical times?

Would I even dare? Am I not too old not to dare?

Do I have better things to do with my time? If yes, what are they?

### Legacy

Is this about legacy? What I'll leave behind? For my children, grand children and others.

How sad that I'm coming to the end.

Is this what one thinks about near the end? Probably.

### The "Old Fool" Feeling

I'll feel like an old fool singing songs from my twenties and thirties. Note "old" meaning useless, and "fool" meaning stupid. Return of the "You're stupid" feeling.

Is "useless" related to "stupid?" Maybe

### New Obligations in the Wisdom Phase

Am I in the process of coming to terms with old age, seniority, my new place in life, even my new obligations in the wisdom phase, etc.? Maybe.

### Artistic and Business Personality Trait

I wonder why I run away from, even avoid, my past creations. Including my choreographies.

Am I running away?

Or am I simply bored with them, hating to repeat myself. Am I ever looking for a fresh start and, rather than fall back on the boring old, search for the dynamic new spark of and in the creative moment.

Is it my artistic personality trait?

As an artist, I'm also a businessman. I do business.

What about my business personality trait? Would it tolerate, accept, and even promote and advertise my old creations?

Two traits: Artistic and Practical, celestial and worldly.

Something to consider and think about.

No question I am entering into the old age phase.

The question is: What does that mean?