

A Different Feel

Tuesday, July 1, 2003

A "Different Feel"

Villa-Lobos Prelude No. 1: Maybe there is a different kind of relaxation felt in the right hand finger tips.

The "fast feel" is a different feel: You feel the blood (rushing along) in every finger tip.

It's a "*different feel.*"

The fast feel is a different feel.

It may even be an *acquired taste*. Like success.

It may take getting used to.

Ma Nishtanah?

How awful: This guitar "different feel" is not a new place. It is an old place I felt twenty to maybe thirty years ago. But I avoided and denied it no doubt partially due to my teacher, Alexander Bellow's improvement factor.

Rather than new it is a rebirth of the old but with an important difference. Technically, that difference is in the finger tip feeling; but mentally and spiritually, the main difference is in the self-confidence factor. The twenty-to thirty-year period was not so much for technical improvement as for the revealing and building of guitar playing self-confidence.

This time around I know I am right!

Indeed, it is a scary thing to say: I know I am right! of my But now the difference is: I am not scared!

Ma Nishtanah? That's the nishtanah.

Okay, I have the confidence, I have the "feel." Now what?

I still want more!

Where do I go from here?

Start by playing all guitar pieces with the "I know I am right!" feeling.

Aging is ripening. Each year adds growth and wisdom, enabling you to deepen your spiritual quest.

The Beauty Feeling

I'm going back, singing my old yodeling songs. I keep breaking down and crying. Is it nostalgia? Is it over the beauty of singing and of the songs themselves? Is it both?

What can I say? I avoided this sadness for years. The combination of melancholy, nostalgia, and beauty was just too sad. Nevertheless, I ask the question: What am I really crying about? Why is it so sad? What is so sad?

Is it really nostalgia and melancholy? Or is it the long-time repression of beauty and the beauty feeling?

Am I crying for sadness. . .or for joy?

I am beginning to think it is over joy. These are tears of joy shed over the beauty of the music.

These are the same tears I shed over the magnificence of Beethoven's music.

Part of the beauty of these yodeling and other folk songs in particular and folk songs, and folk music in general, is also the majesty of simplicity. There is also a very close "human" connection. I wonder what that means.

All music is human. Perhaps the "human" connection I am talking about is again that beauty feeling coming to the fore.

The beauty feeling contains the majesty of simplicity and the magnificence of human and universal connection.

This beauty feeling comes out very quickly and primally in singing. Is that why I never “practice” singing, why I have been “avoiding” singing for so many years?

Have I been avoiding it? I don’t know.

But certainly I have been “avoiding,” shied away from, the beauty feeling.

In some way, acceptance of the Different Feeling and Beauty Feeling are related.

Do I Have the Dream?

My inability to build Jim Gold International into a large, multifaceted company with folk dance franchises, international tours, weekends, book sales, guitar performances, etc. is one of my great failures.

I’ve survived as an entrepreneur but I have not thrived. I wonder why this is.

Is it something about my character? Or my deepest wishes? Is it that, deep down, I do not want such an organization? Or did I want it but was unable to find the market for it? Was I in the wrong place at the wrong time?

Well, “blaming” outside circumstances will never get me anywhere. The main question is: What do I really want?

Is it to be a writer, an artist?

Or is it to become an entrepreneur?

Or could I do both?

Well, I’ve done both, but the entrepreneur part has definitely suffered, taken a back seat, to the artist part.

What does all this have to do with dreams? My dreams?

Here’s a great quote I heard on the radio last night. I forgot the man who said it, but I remember he was a truck driver who built a billion dollar enterprise. He said, “If

the dream is big enough, the facts don't count."

I love that one!

Certainly, my dream to become an artist was big enough. And in my heart, I succeeded.

Was my dream to become an entrepreneur big enough?

Maybe not.

How about now? I am at a new stage in life. I've succeeded in stage one: to become an artist. Now, do I have the interest, drive, dream to become an entrepreneur, to push all the beautiful and wonderful products and services I have developed? Good question.

Do I have the personality to become this kind of entrepreneur? Do I have the ability?

I think I do.

The real question then is: Do I have the interest? And the motivation?

Well, if I have (had) the interest I would have the motivation.

I am now at a new stage in life: the post-transitional stage. And, as I say, I have succeeded in solving my "Am I an artist?" problem. No question I would like to push and promote all the products and services I have developed. But am I ready, willing, and desirous of now taking on the world, of becoming "that entrepreneur," the entrepreneur who will do it?

I don't know.

I love being an artist. The entrepreneur part is something I have learned to do in order to survive. It is a necessary but secondary annoyance, an adjunct to the central artistic pillar.

Is this the reason I have not "succeeded" in it?

Probably.

But an aspect of myself does like going public. I do like the social give and take

of working with audiences. This is my entrepreneurial self on display.

Displaying myself and my wares: How much time and effort does my inner self want to put into this? And if I subtract the nice and necessary aspect of money and the financial security it brings, how much of the inner me is really interested? If I had all my wishes, wouldn't I rather play in the park? Isn't it more fun to squirt water at the fountain and dream great dreams?

1. Is it more fun to dream great dreams and to realize them?

2. Yet I do need the outside world to push me beyond myself.

First is the artistic self; second is the entrepreneurial self.

Don't I really need both? With only my dreams I would sink into myself, lose energy, and get depressed. With only my entrepreneurial self pushing I would lose track of my inner source, forget my center, lose energy, feel hollow, and also get depressed.

I must create my art, then push and promote it. The latter in itself is a learning process. Thus only a combination of artist/entrepreneur seems satisfactory.

So where am I? What about a new beginning for the post-transitional me?

Somehow the entrepreneurial me has to touch my artistic center. Somehow they must fuse in the middle. Entrepreneur and artist must become one. Am I ready to create this fusion? How do I do it?

Entrepreneurial self and gone public self are somehow connected. How do I fuse them with my artistic self?

Perhaps that is my present quest.

A Life of Study?

Or am I looking for the simple life of withdrawal and study.

This would entail simple teaching of folk dance classes, maybe one or two tours a year, and one (or two) weekends, scattered bookings.

The simple life would give me the (physical) time and (mental) space to study.

Would pursuing a life of study be the next adventure in my life?

It would mean cutting back on mucho stuff, mucho expenses; it would mean balancing my budget, and reorganizing much of my life.

But the goal might be worth it.

What does my post-transformational heart want? That is the question.

Devotion to a life of study is a type of retirement. My type.

But would I miss the entrepreneurial excitement, the ups and downs, of running after people? Probably.

Is there a way of approaching entrepreneurship as a student? Or am I again simply trying to find another way of avoiding the pain of (sales) rejection?

Am I running out of gas or do I need to find a new key to my gas tank?

Brief Disguised Return of the Old Neighborhood

Meeting Rama at Barnes and Noble opened the door of the past. I started to flirt with the old neighborhood. Soon I downloaded all the information on the breatharian, Shri Hira Ratan Mankek.

My "interest" in his breatharian life style slowly began to depress me; it gave me the perfect philosophical excuse and reason (as does the vacant, empty, removed feeling of the witness state) to return to the old neighborhood, and, in the process, kill my More with its desire for a Passionate life style.

These philosophies have the same attraction as death.

Morning Downs as a Hidden Fresh Energy Source

Each morning it is a question of starting all over, starting fresh, trying to get in

touch with my energy base. Just because I write about it in my books, and even put “starting fresh” in my New Leaf titles, does not mean I have the key forever. No, each day I start off as a virgin.

Right Elbow Awareness Day

Notice how my right elbow started to hurt as I wrote the above entry on wanting more.

Could my elbow pain be my “modern form” of resistance to wanting more? I’ve understood my other resistance forms, back pain, knee pain; I’ve even made progress on understanding instep pain. But right elbow pain? Up until now I have not been able to figure it out.

Self awareness has helped me close off my mental exits to “wanting more.” But new resistance forms ever rise in their place. Could my right elbow pain be such a form? Certainly it is possible.

On Self-Congratulation

Amazing: I am “falling asleep” during my fast tremolo.

No question that the sleep is the rock of resistance to my fear. Fear is the gateway to my energy. The door of sleep closes off my fear. (It is the sleep of resistance.) Thus it closes off my energy source.

“Different Feel” in the Stock Market

Yesterday the torturous June holding of my stocks paid off. Not only did they return to even (after being down almost \$7000) but they went up! This morning I am somewhat hesitantly happy and proud of myself for having the courage (and foresight. . . wow, dare I say such a word!) to have held on during the down month. I put all my stop losses at ten per cent below each stock. . . just in case. (One must always use stop

losses!) But my long range view that the market is generally going up, paid off.

Guitar

It's frightening to see how easy the tremolos and arpeggios are moving along. . . only this morning it is a little less frightening.

The trauma of being right is slightly reduced.

I also seem to have found a new spot in my right ring finger, a strong, confident, meaty place where the flesh meets the nail at a non-cracking point. It feels beyond the split nail effect. Its center is somehow deep in the relaxation point of the second joint of the right ring finger. It feels like a qualitatively different place. Indeed, a Different Feel.

On Wild Energy

On Thursday morning I ran. I "over-ran." I ran one hour and twenty-minutes. I ran fast. . . . I "over-ran."

What does "over-ran" mean?

I entered the wild. . . and I got sick. A bad cold. Sniffles, some fever, cough. I still managed to teach folk dancing Friday night in Goldens Bridge. I gave it my all, too. Got home late; went to bed at three a.m.

I didn't plan my recovery. So I woke up with a sore throat Friday morning. It was downhill from there.

What is the moral of all this?

I entered the wild. . .and I got sick. I entered that land of raw, dynamic, wild emotions, I broke all barriers, I let out the wild flow. . . and I got sick. Did the wild flow make me sick? Or was it my resistance to the wild flow that made me sick?

If the power of the wild flow made me sick, can the power of the wild flow cure me?

Can I burn away my diseases? Can I swallow my sickness in the wild flames of flow?

Why not?

If an excess of energy made me sick, why can't an excess of energy cure me?

Try it and see.

I wonder if on Thursday, when I ran and gave it my all, the release of my wild energy into my system didn't frighten me. Have I been frightened into sickness? Or, is it "easier," less threatening, to get sick than to face the awesome power of the wild energy I released? After all, I'm "only" sick. If I looked deeply into the wild energy, felt its full effects, gone totally with its awesome power, I could have died.

The energy is hot, fiery, and dangerous. I am "playing with fire." If I'm not careful it could destroy me.

So is a part of me "wise" to get sick like this? I hate getting sick but the alternative could be worse.

On the other hand, I would like to be in touch with this wild energy, use it, and not get sick.

How could that be done?

I suppose awareness would be the first step. Focus and meditation upon the wild energy within me. See it, follow it, witness it, use it.

Bursting Through the Disease Wall:

Birth and Release of my Wild-Energy Self

I'm so mad about this cold! I can't shake it. But this anger is releasing some wild energy on the guitar. I'm flying across Alhambra, Leyenda, Alard, Zapateado, and Bulerias.

Is the anger at this sickness, the rage at my cold, breaking down the wall between my wild energy and my guitar playing, my soul, and my self?

In other words, is the advent of this cold, this physical (and mental) sickness part of the universal "plan" to help release my imprisoned wild self?

The release of this imprisoned wild-energy self would certainly create a Different Feel.

Am I right? What a question! And what a viewpoint, attitude, and approach to sickness!

The general approach to all things based on the release of a (my) wild-energy self, would certainly create a "universal" (in all things I do) Different Feel.

I am studying about Iceland; soon I'll be traveling to Iceland. What, if anything, does this approach to "all things" have to do with the Alþing (General Assembly, Parliament) in Þingvellir (Assembly Plains, Parliament Plains) in Iceland?

Is my trip to Iceland about to open up a new form of wild glacial energy? Glacial because my breakdown started with a cold.

Why is it happening now at the end of my post-transitional state?

As I fulminate, twist, and scream in my sneezing prison, even my lower back is hurting. Isn't this rage at its best!

Notice the term "rage at its best." I'm getting ready to use this rage in a positive, Different Feel, wild energy cloudburst.

Tuesday, July 15, 2003

Temporary Return of Old Neighborhood "Sick" Attitude

I'm thoroughly disgusted with myself this morning. (It means my energy is coming back.)

Yesterday, due to my cold which threw me off track for two days, I suffered from a "disease of attitude."

I'm just so furious this morning! But I've moved the anger out of my back and into my head. . . where it belongs!

What am I mad at? I have no idea. Except for getting sick, spending two days in bed, and the final "Jimmy boy, take a rest," debilitating Mama attitude of action

castration.

Well, the return, nay, the temporary popping up, of that old neighborhood attitude may have been enough to get me furious. In fact, I have to say that was the reason.

My muscles are cramping up, my bones “arthriticizing” in fury. Rage and anger are squeezing them in their vise-like grip.

What causes this fury? My wild energy held in check.

Could repressed rage create muscle cramps and arthriticized joints? Can the repression of wild energy create diseases as well as cure them?

At the moment, I certainly feel and think it can!

Greed dislodges fear with its attempt to jump into the wild river of energy; fear “protects” with its cautionary approach to such jumps.

Fear can be and is my protector just as greed can be and is my liberator. Just as one can never be free of either, one needs both.

After I pushed my speed running on Thursday (greed), had I recognized and given in to my fear (I overran, therefore I must now be cautious and rest), I would not have gotten sick. Had I paid full attention, my fear would have protected me. Instead I got sick.

What have I learned?

Pay close attention to your fears. They are your teachers. They are also your wise protectors. Respect them. Some day you may even learn to love them!

Never try to “cure” your fears. They are too important. Better to become aware of their power. Then deal and work with the them.

Yes, in the future, someone might still hire and pay me to perform on my guitar, to sing; they might even pay me for my books. But no one will ever pay me for yoga or

running. The latter are not and have never been professions. Yet all have been and still are needs.

Where does this leave me? I don't know yet.

On Giving Up Guitar;

On Giving Up Performing

What a horrible and sad thought: Suppose now that I have accomplished my artistic goals (Alhambra and arpeggio conquest), my guitar playing, professional and otherwise days are over.

Sure, I'd like to perform: "It would be nice." But if I don't put in efforts to promote and sell my performances, my bookings, then they simply will not happen. Financial need used to be my biggest motivation. But finances have long ago drifted into the folk dance field, along with running tours and weekends. Most of my bookings, too, are folk dance bookings. Truth is, dependence on money from guitar and song performances disappeared long ago. The only thing keeping it alive was my secret hope that someday, after I "improved enough," after I mastered the tremolo, Alhambra, and arpeggios, I would "return" to performing with a vengeance; I would make my comeback as an excellent, skillful, full-confidence performer.

Well, I have accomplished that goal! I am now an excellent, skillful, full-confidence performer who can also play, to my satisfaction, the tremolo, Alhambra, and arpeggios. Truth is, I was always an excellent and skillful performer. Only the confidence was lacking. Now I have supplied the confidence, too.

Thus, goal accomplished. Sure, it took over twenty years, but what's the difference.

Now what?

I no longer have any strong desire or need to promote my accomplishments, to make them pay off in money. Simply accomplishing them was enough. My dream of future artistic skills and gains is over. Now guitar, singing (always had), and perhaps

even writing can take their place in the Jim Gold Pantheon. What shall this pantheon be called? The Pantheon of What Now?

Why should I bother practicing? Why should I bother singing (I don't anyway)?

I know why I write, run, or do yoga: I have to. It is solely based on an inner need. I need no public acclaim (although for writing it would be nice.)

I am at a new attitude junction. Do I have a physical, mental, and spiritual need to play guitar or sing? Or will it go the way of the violin, disappear and die? How sad to even think it. But possible, nevertheless.

Give up the guitar?

Give up singing? (I've just about done that, anyway.)

Give up any hopes, desires, practice and preparation for future performances?

What terrible thoughts and questions.

Suppose I never performed again. Suppose someone called me and asked me to perform for their group, club, or school. Could I, would I say, "Sorry, I've given up performing. Now I only teach folk dancing. How about having dancing for your group?"

I gave up violin. I thought I never could.

Can I, should I, give up guitar, too? How sad. All that work, time, and effort. Of course, I put mucho work, time, and effort into the violin, too. I don't miss playing it at all. Will I give up guitar, will I not miss playing it either? Do I really need it, after all?

Wow, what questions!

Is this what post-transitional life is all about? Am I getting ready to move on?

The nature of mind is to constantly do battle. It is ever buffeted about by conflicting ideas. Monkey mind jumps here, there, everywhere; attention scatters in all

directions and runs wild. We struggle to concentrate, focus, and temporarily tame this wild beast.

No wonder we need constant sources of self-soothing.

Market Tops, Running Tops, Self Tops

The long fast run I did last Thursday, the one that got me sick, is similar to reaching a market top. At that point, one must get out and “give it a rest.”

I didn't. . . and got hurt. I've been sick for a week, physically and market-wise.

The rhythms of self and the market are so similar. Learning to catch them is a matter and combination luck and art.

Truth is, I get nervous in varying degrees for every public appearance I make. This is most true in business, less so socially; it may even be true when I am alone. My internal danger signals rise to face potential threats from the outside and perhaps inside as well. These atavistic instincts must go way back to antiquity and even further to neolithic, Cambrian, or even pre-Cambrian times.

Pre-performance and pre-anything nervousness is my ancient warning system telling me danger is lurking. My instincts, my body, even my mental self “know” and sense it.

Loving my Fear: Seeing its Beauty and Wisdom

One post-transition thing I was “worried” about was that, with success, I would lose my fears and, with them, my source of motivation.

Ha! What a joke! No question I have passed through my transition. But also, no question, I still have all my fears. True, some of the old ones have gone away. But new ones quickly came in to take their place.

Part of me breathes a sigh of relief. Fears are great motivators, and without them

I paradoxically “feared” I would lose my motivation. Thus, fears of fear bred lack of fear, which in turn bred more fears over the lack of fear.

This also means I can be successful and still keep my fears! They do not depend on success or failure! Win or lose, my fears will never go away. Thank God!

Imagine, part of me spent thousands of dollars on therapy and years of hoping I would somehow be able to cure myself, rid myself of my fears. Then, when I reached this idyllic point, I would be “free.”

Well, indeed, I would be free. Free of motivation, free of wanting more, free of all hopes and desires, and, along with that, free of the desire to live. Who needs or wants such freedom?

I want my freedom to include the freedom to fear. And it does!

That is tremendous learning. I feel “lucky” to have learned it. It is a post-transitional discovery and realization. Truly, it is fear with a Different Feel.

I love my fear just as I love my stop losses. I see its beauty and wisdom. Thank you for returning into my life!

The Memory of My Creation Will Last Forever!

I did a fantastic job teaching folk dancing and playing classical guitar at the Zelda Kimball 80th Birthday party. As usual. Of course, I was nervous before the event; of course, I worked very hard; and finally, of course, it was a great evening. People loved it. More important, I love it. Lots of love here.

Zelda paid me my \$600 check at the end of the night. I thanked her, pocketed it, packed up, and went home. On the way home, I stopped at a deli in Englewood to buy bagels and cheese.

When I got home I dumped my wallet, car keys, watch, and right pocket contents on my desk. No check!

What! I couldn't believe it: No check! Where was it? Had I lost it? This had never happened before. Had it slipped out of my pocket? Perhaps when I was paying

at the deli in Englewood.

I searched everywhere and found nothing.

I was so distraught: First I cried; then I hit the ceiling, furious with myself.

Where was my mind? Where was my brain? I'd left it in Englewood. I had worked so hard, and no reward! I went to sleep with rage and hurt still simmering in my head.

This morning I woke up with a headache. Of course. Then I thought: Why do I have a headache? Why, in fact, am I so terribly upset about this annoying incident? Sure, it means I have to call Zelda, ask her to stop payment on the check and send me another. It's embarrassing to me, no fun for her, and just generally a pain in the ass.

Nevertheless, this headache is familiar. And it is not because I messed up and lost the check. Rather, losing the check gives me a perfect reason to deny and forget the glory of the evening, what joy I gave to people, and what a great job I did!

That satisfaction is really my ultimate reward. Sure, I want and need the money. No question about that. Nevertheless, the headache and the denial of my beautiful guitar playing, and folk dance leading, and general "running" of the evening (due to so much experience running events and being in tune with the participants) is so typical of my old neighborhood problems.

Denial of my goodness, pushing away the glory, drowning the wahoo! Typical, indeed.

Not getting my money is annoying. But I'll get it back. A temporary pain. But the glory of the evening and the memory of my creation will last forever!

The money is my earthly reward; the glory, wonder, and satisfaction of a job well done, of bringing such beauty and joy to others, is my celestial compensation.

Cosmic Purpose in My Sickness:

Sickness Clears the Path, Removes the Debris of the Old Life

Sickness can be a cleanser, a big brush used to sweep away no-longer useful

patterns, to remove the debris of habits that have served their purpose, to free you from the dead wood attitudes and approaches in the old life.

If it's true that now I can go to the center faster, then the cosmic "purpose" of my sickness (caused by my non-recovery from a long and fast run) was to clean out the old, pre-transition, mental and physical patterns and habits I used in running and calliyoga; the ten-day rest and recuperation period helped me meditate upon my past, and, in the reassessment process, clear away the debris of old approaches and thus, prepare my mind to start fresh in my new, "go to the center" post-transitional life.

Different Feel for Trading and the Stock Market

I may have to give up my dream of making lots of money in the stock market. . . fast!

Let's face it: That is (or was) my dream. Now I am beginning to see how difficult and consuming it is trying to realize it. Sure I had a good day Friday with mucho gains; then I had a bad day Monday with mucho losses. Result: after mucho work I'm right back to where I started. And this back-and-forth, up-and-down process has been going on for weeks. Plus I'm spending mucho time and mental effort. As I spend full days thinking about and working on the stock market, I've been neglecting my core businesses and the development of my core skills.

That's why I was so down after yesterday's losses. Something hit me in the head. Perhaps it was this realization: I am investing too much in the stock market. It may be time to cut back to "a little," perhaps even on my experimental Watch List holding site of 200 shares per company. And maybe a maximum of 500 shares per other company. The days of fighting for big gains (and receiving big losses) may be over. Smaller investments of money may lead to a smaller investment of hope which, in turn, may lead to a smaller amount of time and mental effort spent in the market. This may free my mind for "other things," a Different Feel for trading and the stock market.

The market touched my fear and greed, but mainly my fear. Thus it touched my

energy source and energized me (even as it made me suffer.)

I feel somewhat lost without this (fear-creating) energy source. With interest in the market diminishing or “getting realistic,” what will now touch my fear? Where can I create fear and awe, and thus reinvigorate my energy source on a daily basis?

Much as I sometimes hate fear (and awe), I desperately need them. They help center and focus me.

Can I create or recreate fear by re-promoting Jim Gold International? I keep feeling “I’ve done that.” No energy left in that old way. Well, that may be true. But can I find energy in a new way, a “fear-and-awe filled” approach to promoting all the aspects of Jim Gold International? In other words, some kind of return?

Before I can draw other people into my center (through advertising, publicity, promotion, and sales calls), I have to find my center.

I can’t ask people to join me when I don’t know where the “me” is.

This speaks to the culmination and ending (the end) of my transition period.

Thursday, July 24, 2003

“Different Feel” Towards Pre-Tour Anxiety and Limbo Land

I was doing fine physically until I got sick (after “overrunning”) two weeks ago. Since then my body has been on the decline.

But not so my mind. That capability has been on the upswing.

Thus I have a classic split between mind and body: mind moving up, body moving down.

Okay, I am now recovered from my sickness. Why have I then stopped yoga, running, and all my delicious physical forms? Well, perhaps this stopping has run its course. Perhaps, also, I am at the point where I can view the ceasing of physical activities as put down, old neighborhood return, opposite reaction to excitement and enthusiasm!

Wow, imagine that: At this point is it the repression of these qualities that is causing my fatigue and aches? Maybe.

If I look at things reasonably, mentally, and analysis my situation I have to conclude: Why not?

True, my tour is coming up and the usual pre-tour anxiety is throwing me into the usual limbo land. Nevertheless, I have to admit that everything is in order tour-wise. All that is left to do is become enthusiastic and exciting about my present and upcoming situation. Perhaps that is where I really am, too.

Perhaps, at this point, it would be “unrealistic” not to go with my excitement, not to become enthusiastic.

My hobgoblins have always been the repression of running wild on the lawn, the downplaying of excitement, the wet blanket thrown over enthusiasm.

Well, I am in a new post-transition place. It is time for me to enter the world of E and E, excitement and enthusiasm, and “apply” it to my present situation. And, at this point in my post-transitional life, it would be realistic and right. Plus, of course, it would be a different attitude and approach, a Different Feel toward pre-tour anxiety and its concomitant limbo-land mind set.

Energy Obstacles

Aches and Pains as Anti-Enthusiasm Mechanisms

See each pain as an anti-excitement mechanism, an anti-enthusiasm device.

Thus pains don't go away; they are the same pains. Only viewed differently.

Viewing them differently changes the purpose and perhaps even the nature of the pain. Thus, viewing them differently changes everything!

This is a mental choice I am making: I choose to view them differently. Such a choice is totally within my power.

And, as an added bonus, I could even be right.

Saturday, July 26, 2003

“Overthrown” or “End” of the Miracle Schedule?

Or Will It Be Miracle Schedule With a Different Feel?

An amazing thing may be happening: I am beginning to see the overthrow of my whole miracle schedule.

Is this true? But the idea did occur to me; it fell into my head. If it is true, I feel both a sense of freedom and a sense of loss. But more freedom. . . peppered with wonder.

If this were true it would indeed be a different feel. . . to my entire life. . . certainly to the last seven years. It was seven years ago that the idea of the miracle schedule was born.

Is it still true. . .and as vital and strong and important as it used to be?

Or will I retain the miracle schedule “differently,” that is, without the miracle or the schedule?

More truthful would be a Miracle Schedule with a Different Feel.

I cannot see dropping any aspects of the schedule. They are still important and necessary to me. But maybe they are totally necessary and important to me in a totally different manner. And part of this different manner is the elimination of the “totally.”

Could I be eliminating some of the passion? The obsession? Both?

I don't want to eliminate passion. After all, that is what this entire leaf is about. But maybe I have “solved” or “resolved” the passion problem. Maybe there is not question about passion anymore because the passion has now, after almost a year of writing this leaf, become totally mine.

Passion may not be a problem anymore: it is now mine!

So what else is new? How about the drama of release, the fire, spontaneity, serendipity, and sudden spark of joy at new happenings and events?

I don't know what all the above means. But something is opening up; something

is beginning to feel different.

Am I getting ready for an entire post-Iceland, Sweden, and Norway new leaf?

Where do I fit in?

What did I do about my childhood adversity? I turned it into my room of imagination and became an artist.

How about my aches and pains? I turn them into signals, hidden directions for my mind. . . and ultimately, lessons from Above.

These are all optimistic, up-beat, positive creations built from adversity.

I couldn't be in my own business without this attitude towards adversity.

Part of me hates it, hates the struggle and fight. But part of me, when I have no struggle or fight, creatively finds a new way to struggle and fight. So part of my wants the adversity.

I hate the adversity; but I want and need the adversity.

I am split, a paradox. Yet I lean towards the adversity side. Somehow adversity fires my blood. Without it, on some level, I die a bit. And when I am in the dying process, I search out some adversity to create some friction and fire and thus raise me up.

Every ache and pain is another struggle, every tour and pre-performance anxiety is another struggle, every bill, debt, and the fear of bankruptcy is another struggle. A larger part of me loves the struggle than hates it. That part realizes I need the struggle in order to survive mentally, spiritually, and even physically. On a deep subtle level, although as much as my conscious self dislikes the fight, my unconscious mind realizes I need adversity to add spice, flavor, and zest to my life.

Saturday, April 12, 2003

I Need a Cloudburst Miracle

I am stuck. That may be the reason for the sudden appearance of all these new-place arthritic pains. Look at them: elbows, wrists, fingers, knees, insteps, and probably more upcoming, too.

It must be that I am stuck. Sure I can say my transition has ended. But is it really that simple? Does it end just because I say so? And what really new and dynamic directions have I taken? So far, none that I can see.

Sure I am returning to the old, retracing former steps, going “deeper” as I say. But is that really dynamic and different enough to constitute a miracle?

Probably not.

What brilliant new idea and direction will I discover?

Arthritis is a stiffness of the mind expressed in and through a stiffness of the body. Only the rain from a cloudburst will heal my aching joints and muscles.

This miracle will come in the form of a dynamic new idea, a flash of fresh, powerful vision.

I’m waiting with eager and open mouth.

The Center

Maybe once you’ve reached the center, there is no more. Maybe the center is passion! Thus, when you have arrived, the feeling there is of no other place to go. Maybe that’s what “maintenance” is all about: maintaining the Passion, the More, the All. You have entered the home of God Himself. Once you have come home, where else is there to go?

Depression Is Elation. . . and Vice Versa

If success is being there, passion, arrival at the spiritual center, standing in the center of More, of God Himself, why is it depressing?

Why is standing in the middle of More depressing?

Well, maybe it isn't!

Maybe it is elating!

Maybe I have misinterpreted depression for elation. Maybe I have misinterpreted elation and called it depression. Maybe, instead of calling it joy, wonder, and awe all mixed together in Passion, I have totally misnamed it, and falsely interpreted it.

Starting Over Based on Passion!

Why would I get involved with Norway, Sweden, or even Iceland? Only for the Passion!

Perhaps this symbolizes a Starting Over in tourism, history, language, all, but based on the passion.

It's not to learn a lot of to conquer it. It's only for the Passion! Post transition: That's what's new. Connect to Go in the Present through Passion!

In the third century, B.C. what motivated Pytheas, the Greek navigator, to leave Marseille? Business and sales. He went northwest to investigate trade routes, to the amber and tin markets of northern Europe. On the way, he found Thule, or Iceland.

Friday, April 18, 2003

Practicing the Sales Passion

Blank this morning – and pleasantly so.

Sold one copy of New Leaf I and one copy of New Leaf II to the Ark Bookstore in Santa Fe.

The first bookstore near the square wouldn't buy it. They sent me to the Ark. They bought it.

I felt the old fears of rejection when I went to the stores. But, of course, I went

anyway because Sales are Important.

Indeed, the nervousness before sales, its fear of rejection, touched my energy center. It put me in touch with my nervous energy.

Isn't that energy a form of passion? Indeed.

Thus book sales (and, of course, all other sales) are a form of passion.

Sales as Passion! I like it.

But if sales are passion, should they be part of the Miracle Schedule? Am I ready to make such a leap?

Indeed.

Business has two aspects: Organization (preparation) and Sales.

I organize a tour, then I sell it; I organize a concert, folk dance class, weekend, tour, I sell it. I write a book, I sell it.

Organizing is creating. God organized the world by creating it. Thus, as a creative act, organization belongs on the miracle schedule.

How about its sister, Sales? Is Sales also a creative act? God organized the world, but He didn't have to sell it. Nevertheless, could sales ever be called "creative?" Maybe I don't see it as creative because sales contains fear, the fear of rejection.

There is little (to no) fear in organizing, creating, preparing, writing, etc. Why? It takes place in the safe chamber of my mind; it has yet to go public.

Bringing my creations public carries them to fear's door. Perhaps the fear is the lid that prevents me from seeing sales as creative. But that does not mean sales are not creative; it only means I fear sales. Thus I fear an aspect of the creative process. It becomes most evident in the public, gone public, world of sales.

All the above is a fancy way of trying to convince myself that sales is part of the passion.

Well, I want it to be! Therefore, in my mind, it is!

Settled and done: sales is part of the passion. Better yet, sales is in the Passion!

To practice this truth I can start with New Leaf book sales.

The Sales Center

The center of sales is not sales itself but the nervous energy it touches. The nervous energy is the passion.

Thus when selling focus on the passion (nervous) energy it engenders and not on the sale itself. This kind of focus keeps you centered. It also takes you beyond the fear of rejection and all other fears.

Focus on this Center can be applied to all other creative and artistic endeavors: guitar playing, folk dancing, tours, etc. It is, after all, the Center.

Use my nervous energy.

In yoga, too? Why not? All!

History is Alive and Well. . . Always

History equals fantasy or “dead” people.

Relationships equal “real” or live people.

What is the constant? Interest and love of people.

Actually, on the deepest level, I not only create the “inner” historical characters in my brain, but also the “outer” relationships. What then is the difference between historical characters and “modern,” present, personal family or other “relationship” characters?

Perhaps not much.

The former are “dead;” the latter are “living;” but both are created and exist only in my brain. My mind is the great creator and it is connected to the great Creator.

Ma nishtanah? What is the difference between history and the present, between characters of old and characters of new?

Not much.

Thus when I read about history I am really reading about my family relationships, others, all the present people. Isn't Abba Abraham part of the family? My father and Abraham of Ur. Isn't David part of the family? King David and my son, David?

Indeed, all are One.

The great secret is that history is a study of the present. Its characters are alive and well. . . always.

Refresh

Why do I turn the page and immediately try to forget what I just wrote? And this, even though I know it is a great idea.

It is a form of refresh; I click on the inner refresh button.

The Passion Teaching

It's all about having confidence in what you truly, deep in your heart, know: that you are connected to God.

There is no question about this, no doubt at all. But it is so hard to believe, and to tell others, even harder. Many will think you're crazy. Thus admitting it to yourself and telling others requires courage.

This is the foundation of the Passion Teaching.

Sheer Delight of Study

I read and study not so much to remember or improve but rather for the sheer delight of hearing the words bounce around in my brain and ricochet off the walls of my mind.

Sheer delight is close to Godliness, to the Shining, the Radiance, and the Great Unnamed.

Losing is the Best and Only Lesson

Arrogance is based on an unreal sense of self, an inflated – and Godless – sense of power.

Stupidity is based on naivete; it often leads to arrogance. Naivete is okay for children. Children, however, shouldn't handle money or lead wars.

How do you learn the lessons of arrogance?

You lose.

Losing, although painful, is not only the best but also the only lesson.

“Can” and “Will”

Can I have more energy by eating carefully?

Will I have more energy by eating carefully?

Can or will: What is the difference between these words? I don't know yet. But it is interesting to think about them.

“Can” has possibility. It derives from the Anglo-Saxon word cunnan: to know. (German: kennen; English: knowledge). Thus “can” as in I can do it means I know how to do it. No learning is involved since I already know how to do it. However, I still have to use my will power to motivate myself to do it.

“Will” has intention and rational power: “I will do it.” It comes from an Indo-European root wel: to wish, to choose.

Tuesday, April 22, 2003

Publishable, shpublishable, writing down my basic thoughts is a need. Sure, it's nice to publish and be heard. That is really the secondary (tertiary even) reason that I write. The primary reason is to explain myself to myself and clear my mind.

This morning that mind is looking at soft, fast arpeggios with open focus on the

base (alone). The treble thus “relaxes” along for the ride.

Tremolo and Arpeggio

A twenty-five year illusion is shattered. The bass is the powerful, rick, and elegant melody.

The treble is the distant echo, the gray shadow against the brilliant light, the soft, gray, subtle contrast against the powerful dominant sky.

This tremolo realization ends my transition. It’s over. (Gulp, gulp!)

Yes, my transition is over.

That’s why I’m calm at the center. . . and happy.

Learn to live with it.

There is no other choice.

Focused Passion!

Easy: The New Me in Concrete

Again it felt easy. No effort, effortless, on the Weekend. I’m proud of “no effort.” It’s an accomplishment, an attitude, an I-am-there place.

The same place as I-can’t-believe-this-is-me-playing-the-guitar attitude. I have stepped beyond transformation: The new me in concrete.

Guitar – tremolo and arpeggio – with total melody in the bass (Leyenda chord clusters included) also feels amazingly easy. Same beyond-transformation me. Passion in concrete.

When I say “easy,” what do I mean?

What is easy?

Confidence is easy. Weekend confidence and guitar confidence are easy. This does not mean there are no challenges, no nervousness or nervous energy. It only means I see all these energy forms in the light of focused Passion!

Audience Love Fest

Weekend: A people love fest.

I love it; I love the fest

I love me facing them

And them facing me.

I love working through them

I love seeing them, over the Weekend time, developing, growing, changing, as their inner selves open and are revealing through my efforts.

Yes, I dare see and accept this relationship love development, this gone-public, gone-to-Passion love relationship.

What is this love relationship? It is definitely a Love-Me-Love-Them thing. A total connection through the universe. A oneness and passion. A Oneness and Passion!

Plus I loved the yogic sleep workshop (semi in chairs) and the quiet discussion it engendered.

How do I dare love so openly? The Weekend shows it; it shows I do.

I just have to recognize and accept it.

Very much like recognizing and admitting that I can now play the tremolo.

There is a tight relationship between my love of audience and tremolo. Both broke through together.

Is this my love and Passion in relationship? Yes, I believe so.

Cry for Beauty!

What is the meaning of the headaches I so often experience during my Weekends and tours?

I think the pain results from a repression of the ecstasy, the overwhelming inner

wave of cosmic Beauty that sweeps over me.

I cry for the beauty of the event.

Good Norway/Sweden "If" Thought

Good "if" thought on this summer's Norway/Sweden tour: If, due to low registration, it gets canceled, I can spend the summer focusing on editing all my New Leaves. And I'll plan to do the tour again in the summer of 2005! Or, if there is another Bulgaria Koprivshitsa festival, I can do it in either May or September of 2005. In any case, if it doesn't work out this year, I can postpone it to 2005. . . or even 2006.

Energizing Aspects of Fear

I've been doing well in the stock market during the past week. My account and my stocks have been in the green gain column. And I've even made a little money.

Paradoxically and strangely, part of me misses the energizing worry, the energizing fear of the red loss column. This is an important kind of self-knowledge. Once again I recognize the energizing aspects of fear. Paralyzing fear, panic, is an awful feeling. But a tinge of worry, a touch or "pinch" of fear, often acts as a stimulant. A pinch of pepper in your food wakes you up, makes you alert, focused, on guard, and ready for action.

Searching for the Perfect Leyenda

(Alhambra, Tremolo, and Arpeggio)

Why am I hesitant, nay, afraid, to go practice so slowly, to focus so deeply on this meditative relaxation with the Leyenda barre as well as the Zapateado, Alhambra, etc. tremolos?

Am I touching the deepest levels of relaxation?

Am I afraid I'll "slip back" to the old methods of slow practice which I did for so

many years with no results?

Am I afraid of touching these deep levels of relaxation? Am I afraid to restart my search for perfection?

“Aim for perfection. Settle for excellence along the way,” says Vince.

I like the idea that I’m hesitant, afraid, to restart my search for perfection. I like that search. It energizes me and give me hope. Sure I’ll “settle” for excellence along the way but I’ll keep searching for that perfect Alhambra, that perfect Leyenda, that perfect tremolo and arpeggio.

One of the illusions of my lifetime is that I should aim to achieve perfection. No! Perfection can and should never be achieved. Only in death do we achieve it, and even that is questionable.

Perfection is a constant goal. Thus it is a constant stimulant. We can achieve excellence. But perfection, never. Thus we stay ever in the Flow, not beyond it.

Left foot stands in excellence, while the right foot constantly steps forward towards perfection.

One may feel the perfection “feeling.” This is really disguised feeling of excellence; it is the glory of success on the road to perfection. But one never arrives at perfection itself.

Perfection and death are very close. Thus does one fear perfection, stand in awe of it.

This fear of perfection (awe in its form of death) is ever a stimulant.

By practicing so infinitesimally slowly, am I wasting my time or achieving bliss? The latter, indeed.

In this busy world, is it right, legal, and wise to “waste” my time achieving bliss? Or is working to achieve it the best use of time?

Talent

At yesterday's Bar Mitzvah at the Rolling Hills Country Club in Wilton, Ct. Most people got up to dance. Giuseppe said to me, "It's a talent."

Yes, I've got a talent. . . with people. I can get them to do things, I can lead. It's always been "easy" for me. I hardly ever even think about it. But it is the foundation of my success.

Relationships. That's the talent. Group leadership and relationships. . . that's the talent. Peter Drucker has said that talent is usually what comes so easy to you, you don't even think or or recognize it as a talent. It is so simply and easily "you."

I agree.

Monday, May 5, 2003

I'm cracking through the hemispheres, riding my tires into the sun! This is a good thing.

Wild and wooly, open but firm, I'm standing tall as I float by in my carriage, the wide whip whirling through the air, picking up passengers along the way.

How could she be so absolutely wrong on everything? How could she be so absolutely wrong on me, on my going public direction, its reasons and motives?

She's wrong on her political opinions, too.

Well, she's a liberal. What can you expect?

Focus on the Blaze

In the passionate life, how does one avoid the pitfalls of over-excitement?

By focusing on the blaze.

A deep, inner calm comes when you focus on the blaze. . . and not on what is being burned (by the blaze).

Wednesday, May 7, 2003

Why Edit? Why Publish?

Accepting my Passion, Accepting Myself

Why write? Because I must. I enjoy it. Why publish? Because I must. I enjoy reading my writing. (Maybe others will too.) Thus my zany humor.

I may develop a small audience of fans. Those who also appreciate and enjoy my writing. But I may not. It really doesn't matter. The main thing to remember and realize is that *I enjoy, get a kick out of, reading my writing*. My sense of humor is a blast, so is my sense of beauty. As I reread *Mad Shoes, Crusaders Tours, Handfuls of Air, Songs and Stories for Open Ears*, what fun! What an off-beat sense of wild imagination! I love it. When I *admit it*.

Thus I must face the fact that I love reading what I write. That is the real and only bottom-line reason to publish it. It is based solely on my enjoyment. Just as others (may) follow me when I enjoy my dancing, so others may enjoy reading the books I write. Or they may not. They may buy them. . . or they may not. But, bottom-line, I must enjoy them. And, truth is, I do. I just have to recognize, realize, and admit it.

Passion, luxuriation, enjoyment. All are forms of love. And before I can love others, I'd better love myself. Before I can love editing or publishing, I'd better love the process of editing and publishing. And this is all based on loving, not only the fact that I write but also the content, imagination, poetry, humor, and beauty found in what I write.

On Winning and Losing

Winning creates fun;

Losing creates resolve.

How does the above apply to my body. . . and folk dancing?

See body pains as losses; they strengthen my resolve. . . to (cure them through)

exercise, run, do yoga, etc.

Missing the folk dance steps are losses; they strengthen student resolve. . .to master these and even more steps.

Missing Alhambra (and other) tremolos and arpeggios creates resolve to master them.

Rejection by customers (losses) creates resolve to get even more customers.

Losses in the stock market create resolve to master my emotions of greed and fear, and to make money in the market.

Losing stinks.

But that is precisely why it is energizing.

It's a good reason to welcome your losses.

Going Public with my Demands

I am very demanding of myself. I demand my best effort; I demand perfection (although I usually have to "settle" for excellence.)

Would I dare demand this from others? Would I dare "give" them the best of myself, my finest energy and perfecting demands?

Would I dare ask them, nay demand that they strive, push, sweat, and struggle, that they give their all in the endless pursuit of perfection?

If I went public with such demands, it would be a great gift to them. . . and myself.

Sales Calls of Demand

This changes the nature of my sales calls. Rather than coaxing, cajoling,

convincing, pleading, asking, nay begging them to dance, come on tour with me, or whatever, I am now demanding they do so. . . for their own good!

This demand will be subtle, of course. It may take the form of a persistent or subtle “insistence.” But it will be a demand, nevertheless.

At bar mitzvahs, I do not request that they dance. I do not “ask” them. Rather I say they will dance. “Let’s dance!” I demand it (subtly, of course.) I do it with presence and voice tone.

Friday, May 9, 2003

Riding the Cycles

At first I was calm. I bought well. The market went up.

But greed overtook me. I went too fast, bought too much. Now the market is going down and I am “uncomfortable.”

What is my lesson?

Cycles. Does swing trading mean riding the two-to-five day cycles?

How long did Lucent and Triquint go up? Five days? Check it out.

On Learning to Read my Emotional Mind

In the “recent” up market I had reached a “stuffed” feeling where even the idea of making more money didn’t “thrill” me in the old way. I was on the edge of becoming “sated” with success.

I wonder if that feeling symbolized the beginning of the down cycle, the down market. . .and the time to “get a new thrill” by selling everything. And stimulating myself by facing the “new” fear of emptiness.

Should I take that thrill today, recognize my “mistake,” and sell everything? Or sell down to comfort level?

Should I jump into the “fear losses” philosophy? Begin my “fear loss” practice today?

The lesson is: Fear losses, hope for profits.

My only “hope” now is that the market doesn’t fall further. Living in this kind of hope is not a good place to be.

Wouldn’t it be better to either sell down or sell out?

Wouldn’t it be a good practice to sell quickly or at least sell down before worse happens? I can always buy back later.

Selling down seems to be a good middle ground.

At the bottom of my cycle, I cry for my loss. I feel sad, vulnerable, and scared. Hope, energy, and dynamism have fled.

Everything aches.

Listless and hopeless, I can hardly walk.

Before Bedford Folk Dancing:

Disciplined Freedom

Over-excitement is the new problem.

I thought running wild on the lawn was my highest and best state. Only inner Ma stopped me.

No more. Now I’m free. No one and nothing is stopping me. Yes, I’m running wild on the lawn, all the time; and I’m out of control, spinning wildly, scattering in every direction. No stops. It is not pleasant; it is not fun; it is not beautiful.

Since Ma is not around to control me, I must control me. Since I’ve broken down the wall of inner Ma – and am consequently running wild on my inner lawn – it is I who will have to build my own wall. To my specifications. Yes, that is my contribution. Run wild with my own man-made, Jimmy-made, not Ma made, walls.

Evidently, I need a lid – my own lid. Made by me. To my specifications. That's the difference.

Former lid: Ma and inner Ma.

Present lid: None. I need my own creation, my own self-made lid built to my specifications.

Since I'm in control, in charge, I'd better also control or be in charge of my running wild on the lawn. I must create a disciplined freedom. My own discipline for my own freedom.

Evidently, I am nauseated and disgusted by such total undisciplined, wild, and atonal "freedom." The energies of a wild rushing river need to be controlled, directed, and channeled. Otherwise there is a mad, destructive flood.

That's my job: to channel my river. But first I needed to become aware that mad shoe freedom needs channeling.

Sales calling is also over-exciting, over-stimulating. (So is winning in the stock market.) Is that why I have avoided, nay "hated" sales over the years? Too exciting. I couldn't stand all that excitement. Wow! Why not? What a realization.

Sales, market, everything else: now I must learn to control myself on the up side.

Aim for inner calm, quiet, and peace even while my outside world "runs wild on the lawn." Move from Mad Shoe to Serene Shoe.

One way of controlling my mind on the up side is to keep growing.

Have I been growing recently? I think not.

1. Editing my journal is not "new."
2. Phone sales are not "new."
3. Organizing tours, etc. is not "new."

What's new? Not much at the moment.

During the past six months studying web design and the stock market were new. But now it's mostly "done."

I need to reach for new levels, studies, directions, and projects.

Monday, May 12, 2003

I wonder if the aches in my shoulder and body are due to and reflections of not only the computer, but of the pressures of editing my whole New Leaf. Hmm.

How should I try to handle this pressure? Try limits.

Will I succeed at such stops? Or will realization of my passion and awareness of the causes of my aches decrease my pains and thus win the day?

The Editing Burden

I know my nausea was (is) caused by the burden of editing, the "shoving the editing down my throat" feeling.

Could this also be true of my aches and pains? Could it be "editing arthritis?" Probably.

Arthritis pains, nausea, burping, bile, all are caused by anger against the burdens I am carrying. "Forced" to carry. Well, nobody is forcing me. . . except me. I am creating my burdens; I am responsible for them. I am even creating the nausea and arthritis as internal resistance to doing them.

Since I am such a creative person, perhaps I can now create a new way of handling my editing burden. And this minus nausea and arthritis.

How would I do it? What new thoughts would penetrate my mind? What would I think? What new attitudes would I create?

But first comes awareness: Be aware that my nausea and arthritis is (partly or wholly) caused by my editing burden.

Wednesday, May 14, 2003

The Hidden Power Behind Sleepiness

Guitar. . .folk dancing, running, yoga. . . and other:

The relaxation point is discovered in slow playing. The power of the relaxation point, the power of *fast*, is found in *slow*.

This kind of slow practicing brings on a sleepiness. Does the sleepiness, really the deepest of relaxations, put me at the border of a deep, great, and hidden power?

When I fall asleep I lose consciousness of it. But if I can “stay awake,” stay in touch with it, put it into my body and use it, then it may well turn into a power.

Am I right? Do I dare turn sleepiness into power?

Should I just “give in” to sleepiness. . . by falling its delicious arms? Or should I try, consciously, to turn that deep relaxation into a strength?

This “new use” of relaxation and sleepiness would initiate a totally new approach to the physical art forms, that is, art forms in which I use my body: guitar, dance, running, yoga, etc.

Once I reach the center of relaxation and sleepiness, and I am in touch with this source of power, then *fast and slow become the same*.

Mentally, once I reach this deep relaxation center, this warm place of hot, nay, molten power, it becomes an instant warm-up. I don't have to physically warm up my body; I do it up mentally by placing myself at the molten “warmed-up” center.

This calls on tremendous mental power, the power of the mind to control the body. It changes the warm-up order, “replacing” physical warm-ups with mental warm-ups.

The body still moves. . . but the mind moves first.

It also replaces numbers (counting the number of push-ups, arm rotations, scorpion poses, etc.) with focus on the relaxation spot.

Friday, May 16, 2003

Performance

Starting Over

On the Leyenda bar and Alhambra five-finger tremolo:

I like the “starting over” state. In a Who-am-I? And What- am-I? sense, I don’t know my hands at all; I don’t know my fingers at all; I don’t know my wrist at all. I don’t even know my own body. I’m starting from scratch, starting fresh.

Money

The market will become my musical instrument, my art form. I will learn to play it. Some of my mental tools will be my creative skills and artistic intuition.

Music and the market, the swells and falls of a Beethoven symphony: I like it.

Thus I am approaching the market as an artist.

But first, I have to learn my instrument.

This is a great way to handle my financial problems. Finally, I am diving into the total study of money! Market money. Is this the cause of my twenty-five year fascination with the market? Is this God’s way of teaching me about myself, by constantly frustrating and annoying me with financial worries? He knew I must ultimately come to this market study place.

Isn’t it another area to test and expand my self knowledge through boldness, daring, adventurousness, and love of study?

Saturday, May 17, 2003

Money

Idea: Hold my stocks for six months to a year. *Short term.*

Even though the past few weeks have been good, my stocks have gone up and I've made money, nevertheless, remember: *I am still a beginner.* My next stage starts in November, 2003. That will make one year of entry and study of the market *on my own*, We'll see by then if I can make money on a *consistent basis*.

How to measure consistent? Not by making money every day but *every week*. This pushes me past the daily wiggles (two to five days) of the market.

Maybe I should look at my totals every week instead of every day. Say every Monday morning. Hmmm.

I also like this definition of a professional trader by Toni Turner: "Commit to the following goal that defines a professional trader: *To consistently take profits out of the market.*

By November, 2003 I should know more about myself. So far during the first six months of trading I've lost money. A few weeks ago the second six months began. The tech market (and the market in general) is going up. I started to make money. We'll see where this takes me.

On Accepting No Tremolo. . .Ever

Guitar thought: Maybe I should just *accept* that, for some unknown reason, the tremolo is something I am *never going to be able to do*.

And I will never understand why.

This may be the understanding that comes at the end of my transition. Acceptance of this. Perhaps the only why or reason I can or will find is: It is the will of God.

Perhaps this is where hope and greed meet. I have always hoped I would get the tremolo. Just as I hoped that someday I would, through the stock market and my tour business, become a millionaire.

In both cases, the opposite happened: In guitar playing, no matter how much I practiced, I could never master the tremolo; and in the stock market. . . and tours, no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't make enough money. And, in the end, I lost all my money.

Thus if greed is a sin, and you tie hope to greed, then I have definitely paid my fee: the wages of sin are death. Well, I died in tourism and the stock market.

But that life is over. Hopefully, (there's that greedy word again) I will study my mistakes and learn from my misjudgements.

Well, I'm sure I will. These losses, these life experiences are indelible. Through the long-term pain and suffering they have caused, they made a permanent mark on my mind. I shall never forget them. Thus they shall ever effect the attitudes of my post-transitional, future life.

Do Personal Feelings Reflect (or Affect) Public Feelings?

Could I (and others, the general public) be becoming "weary of terrorism. Weary of economic "depression," the down market, stagnation, Enron corruption scandals, and all the depressing news of the past two or three years?

Will I (and others) simply starting "accepting" the threat of terrorism as part of daily life. . . and move on? Will we adopt the attitude of "Well, that's the way life is today. . . What else is new?"

Certainly I am beginning to feel that way. Do my personal feelings mirror a growing new attitude of the public? Do they, will they, in their small way, effect or affect the stock market in general?

Am I sensing the future "general conditions, a feeling of ennui and even

boredom with the fearful events and down attitudes of the past two to three years? If I am and I am right, how will it effect my stock speculation, my short term (six months to a year) and even long-term (two to ten years) view of the market?

Ecstasy is The Healer

Ecstasy and pain are related.

There's a place where pain crosses the border into ecstasy.

Without looking into pain, there is no ecstasy.

Pain is the land of body, ego, and lower self.

Ecstasy is where man meets spirit, higher self, and God. It is his cradle of the Infinite.

In order to get there, you have to accept, face, and deal with pain. . . and get past it.

Pain happens. . .but it's worth shit.

Ecstasy happens, too. One must strive for it.

But it's worth every star.

In a practical way, how does this knowledge of pain and ecstasy apply to me?
What does it mean?

It means striving. Push a little harder in running, yoga, guitar, and my other activities. Try! Break through the ego barrier and its fear of pain.

Reach for the state of healing ecstasy.

Ecstasy is a healer. The Healer.

It cures the pains of ego, body, and mind,

What's the difference between ecstasy and joy?

Joy is a lower form of ecstasy.

The struggle to achieve ecstasy. . . and remember God. . . is a daily struggle.

On "Moderation"

Man needs a little defiance of conditions in his life. Otherwise he will be killed by boredom.

The road to ecstasy is the road of boldness, daring, adventure, and creativity; it is the path of heroes and daring deeds.

During the past few months, even the past year, because of losses in the stock market coupled with constant financial badgering from my wife, and concomitant aches and pains in my own body, I have tried, been experimenting with, the road of "moderation."

Well, this road sucks.

It is not my deepest nature to follow the straight, flat, boring road of moderation. I thrive on a path of sharp curves, rugged mountain peaks, and deep twisting valleys.

Some might call this path one of stupidity. But I would call it the path of wisdom.

Why?

First of all, these roads may open the door to ecstasy. Ecstasy in turn will cure my aches and pains. In fact, maybe I had those aches and pains in the first place: I had "given up" my ecstasy, traded it in for tight-assed, straight-jacketed, nauseating and disgusting moderation. In other words, much of my energy went into keeping myself back, putting my brakes on, holding myself down, repressing my wild and ecstatic energies, and swallowing the best of myself. No wonder I felt like throwing up so often; no wonder I felt like shit and was plagued with an almost constant disgust.

Moderation is just not my way. I admire and love artists, wild men, passionates, and fanatics.

How about suicide bombers? In newspapers and the public mind, they're represent today's fanatics. Does killing yourself (and others) lead to ecstasy?

The answer is yes. But you can only do it once. Aha, there's the downer. Of course, there is also the moral reprehensibility of the deed. But suicide bombers, being delusional and following their own interpretation of morality, probably believe they are doing a noble deed. But we are not discussing morality here. Only ecstasy and its curative effects.

Sunday, May 18, 2003

Money

My Most Comfortable Position

I have mentally moved from the philosophy of investing with its foundation on finding security to speculation with its foundation based on a attitude of boldness, daring, adventure, creation. . .but not stupidity. This attitude is very similar to running-wild-on-the-lawn. In the past, such an attitude was somewhat uncontrolled and uncontrollable; it suffered from the pangs of over-excitement.

But now, in my post-transformation state, I have dealt with and partly conquered this wild and formerly uncontrolled state. I am "more stable" in myself. And thus, am I ready to move on.

Move on to where? Why, to a stock market philosophy, of course. And this based on my true personality, a combination of the four-year-old kid running wild on the lawn and the mature adult who is aware of and can handle the concomitant over-excitement.

I am ready to look at, devise, find, develop, and accept my own stock market philosophy: a speculative (trading) attitude based on daring, boldness, adventure, and creativity. And what can this attitude possibly lead to? Why, ecstasy, of course.

Ecstasy in the market? Am I *crazy*! Well. . . yes. But this ecstasy is and will be tempered by the knowledge of pain, the pain found in the constant awareness and ever-

present threat of losing all my money. Thus awareness will keep my ecstatic mind grounded; it will prevent, nay, save me.

Of course, no one is immune from all dangers. And truly, no matter how aware I am, and how many stop-losses I put under my stocks, I can still lose all my money and fall again into the financial abyss.. . .although, with stop-losses under my stocks, I don't see how this is possible. Nevertheless, I'm sure it is. One must always expect the unexpected. And it is the unexpected that could ruin me.)

Nevertheless, in a dangerous and unpredictable world, I still can choose the life of boldness, daring, adventure, and creativity. And I will. It is, believe it or not, my most comfortable position.

Hoping for the Power of Paradox

Post-transitional guitar playing: Based on "I'll never get the tremolo. . . so fuck it! I'll play it sloppy or any way at all. What's the difference? I can't get it, anyway."

Hoping for the power of paradox.

"Looseness" as a Cornerstone of the Post-Transitional State

Giving up hope on the tremolo is definitely a "loose" attitude. The "I'll never get it" frees me to make any mistake, play it sloppy, do whatever I want.

The Difference Between Discouraged and Humbled

Very discouraged this morning. The stock market down did it. My hopes were dashed. Also my "new" concept of self as a competent trader. A rising stock market with subsequent money making (no short sales) makes me feel smart. A down market with subsequent money loss (no short sales either) makes me feel discouraged, down, and dumb. Evidently, although my skills may have grown, I'm still not as smart as I

thought.

Yes, I am “humbled.” But I’m also discouraged.

What is the difference between discouraged and humbled?

Discouraged is when you lose all perspective; it simply feels like shit.

Humbled is when you realize there is more in and to the world than your ego; there are higher forces. Humbled connects you to God.

Can Any Good be Found in Stock Speculation?

Somehow I must find my God connection in the process. I must see playing the stock market game as a good-in-itself.

Are you kidding? How will that ever happen? The world of stock market, manipulation, gambling, money, as goods-in-themselves? Aren’t they sins? Aren’t they evils? Aren’t they part of the lower, sinful world?

Maybe not. But I certainly don’t see it yet.

Can the process of stock speculation ever be a good thing? Can I ever take pride in it? Can anyone? How about folks like Jesse Livermore?

Maybe you can take pride in your skills. But how about the stock market speculation process itself? Can that be good? And what would mother say?

And how about all the other communists? What would they say? Surely, if I think this way, I will be expelled from the Party. No good communist would ever embrace “gambling,” much less any aspect of the capitalist system.

Maybe a good can be found in stock speculation. But my upbringing and background disable me from seeing it.

On “Over-Use” Injury and “Getting Tired” or The “Hidden” Fear of Energizing Myself

or Giving It My All Energizes Me

I'm afraid if I exercise too much, if I "over do" it, I'll:

1. Tire myself out
2. Injure myself

But suppose if I exercise "too much," and "over do" it, instead of tiring myself out and injuring myself, I energize myself. That's a possibility, too.

The fears of tiring myself out come from the old neighborhood. The fears of injury through over use come from experience. But here, awareness and care, should be able to handle it.

So perhaps my biggest fear is that I will energize myself! And, bottom line, what does energize myself mean? The very real possibility of touching Passion! and ecstasy.

Rather than something to fear, this is something to embrace!

Giving it my all energizes me.

Rather than tiring me out, giving it my all releases the endorphins and energizes me!

As for over-use injuries, the best defense is self (body) awareness.

The best cure for the downs, depression, and whatever is to give it your all!

THE EDITING LIFE

First Editing Steps

What is so frightening is I thought my writings were so sacred and that little to nothing could be eliminated. Now, while reading and editing my New Leaf journals, I find many entries can be dropped.

It's my first reading. Am I right? I think so.

I'm happy about this: I have too many pages as it is. But I'm also partly shocked.

Can I really eliminate these pages without a problem?

Then there is “catharsis” writing. Do I really want to have my customers read – and, years later, have myself read – about all my miseries? And my debt problems? And others, too? Well. . . maybe. It all depends how it is written. Is the writing good, inspiring? And this even though it may be about misery and a misery.

Do It Anyway!

I have no interest or passion in following any aspect of my savior miracle schedule. What should I do in such a listless, aimless, energyless state?

Do it anyway. Follow the miracle schedule. . .without interest. Just as I am looking for repetitions as I edit my journal “without interest.”

“Without interest” seems to be the “motivating factor” this morning. So be it. Do it anyway. Perhaps interest will follow. . . perhaps not. . . Do it anyway.

Hypothenar Teacher

Guitar: A never-before-felt “resistance” pain in the hypothenar muscle of my right thumb. It’s brand new. I wonder what it means?

Could it have something to do with this morning’s “lack of interest” approach? I doubt it. But who knows? The pain is so new. . . . Why did it(does it) appear today? Why is it there? Surely it is a teacher in hypothenar form. What will it teach me?

A Fundament Shift in my Travel Views

Tours as Inspiration and Education

Think of tours as inspirational and educational rather than money making. Big hmmm. (Sure, they might make money and I hope they do. But that is lucky and secondary).

So where will I make money? As usual, here and there.

Also there is the idea and possibility that out of the inspiration and education will come, grow, fall, some lucre.

This idea would put education in the form of inspiration at the heart of my tour activity.

This is a radical shift in perspective.

It would also mean I want to find inspired tourists to travel with me. These would be “true traveling friends,” special positive people who are uplifted by the adventure and education of travel.

This would make a very specialized mailing list of people I want to call. Yes, I want to shout out the good news, bring them the gospel: a great, inspiring, educational tour adventure is about to come up!

Tremolo Ma

Tremolo and arpeggio: Part of me does not want to let go of the idea that I don't have it.

Part of me has a vested interest in keeping the “I don't have it” idea. Part of me does not want to step out and into “I've got it” land.

Why do I want to maintain the old? Why do I want to keep one foot in the house of the past? What's in it for me?

The connection. To stay in touch.

But isn't there a better way?

Yes, I definitely want to maintain the connection; I want to stay in touch with Ma. But can't she sanction my new, free, and competent self?

Perhaps I need a *new* Ma. . . or at least a new *concept* of Ma. Since I made her up, invented her, in the first place, perhaps it is time to make up, to invent, a new Ma.

That way I can still stay in touch.

The new Ma is born from the old; she rises like a phoenix from the ashes. Thus she is connected to the old but new and different, too.

Indeed, I *need* a new Ma to fit my new post-transitional guitar self, one who will allow me to play tremolo and arpeggio with competence and in freedom to move forward in an “I’ve got it” mode. I need an arpeggiated mother, a new tremolo Ma.

So ends a New Leaf

ICELAND AND BEYOND

Saturday, August 2, 2003

Let Fascination Win

This terrible fatigue, rumbling in my stomach, legs hardly able to move, even a vague dizziness, a feeling of heavy resistance. . . could be panic!

I feel overwhelmed by everything I’m doing, seeing, trying to absorb. Plus learning three languages and visiting three countries. Yes, it is panic. And this even though I love and am fascinated by it all.

Fear and fascination juxtaposed, struggling with one another. I think I’ll let fascination win.

Realizing this, I broke down crying over the beauty of what I am doing. Imagine, I am now sitting in Stockholm, the original home of the Vandals!

Monday, August 4, 2003

The Next Wild Step:

The Little Troll Within or Finding the Troll Within

Could wildness return?

How about in writing. . . or my exercises?

Could I “wild” a bit further?

Notice, I do not say “push.” There is a difference between “push” and “wild.”

What is it?

“Push” tries to improve. Part of it still tries to please the public world.

“Wild” tries to plug into the inner wild man who is crazy and, yes, divine. I need to be in touch with divinity. But I need a new, post-transitional term for it.

Can wildness return—in writing, exercises, and yes, even the rest of my miracle schedule? (I may even need a new term for “miracle schedule.”)

Is that what this Scandinavian tour is all about—the rediscovery, on the next level, and return to wildness?

Well, the best way to return is to start today. Now.

Presently, I have writing, exercises, and study. All are members of the miracle schedule. Notice I have combined running and calliyoga into the term “exercise.” I don’t like that word. Maybe I can find a better one. But the development, the idea of combining them is good. It is another step towards unification and All-Is-One.

How does one, do I, write wild, exercise wild, study wild?

Wild Word for Divinity

I can begin by ever remembering the little troll within.

What is a troll? Could such a mythological figure become my next wild word for divinity?

Could the search for wildness, the wild man within, open up my own personal study and connection to mythology?

Study mythology. . . start with Nordic mythology. Fairy tales and fables. Personal mythology expanded and going wild. I am searching for a new term for the wild man within.

One thing about the troll within: it is wild and scary; it lives and thrives in darkness. It retains its power in caves but turns to stone whenever sun light shines upon it. Just as light kills darkness, so it may turn my inner troll to stone. Evidently, great powers dwell within the kabbalistic darkness of fear, dread, and panic. These represent the black side of challenges living in caves or at the bottom of the wild abyss. The inner troll can ride my wildness into a fiery hell of laughing challenge.

What is the troll philosophy? Turn your living hell into a laughing challenge! Let your dark abyss feed a bottomless adventure!

Thursday, August 7, 2003

Bring Back the Miracle

Quite empty and down this a.m. Diminishment, through loss, of my stock market dream is the reason.

Where will I get my thrills if not from the market? Where will I get my more? Is there any replacement for such a drug?

Once it was the violin.

Then writing. . . and performance glory. . . or fame and immortality. As they disappeared the market became my last hope. Now that is gone.

My more, more, more, hope, creativity, and the more: Where will it come from?

Is this the first stage of my graduation?

I've read all the philosophies, too. Which one can save me? None that I haven't studied and used already.

Creativity has always been a kicker. How about that? Well, it's true. There's nothing left but creativity. But the creativity I know and knew now feels old, used up, and worn out.

I need and want my drug high. Yet, simultaneously, believe it or not, part of me is happy about this death of my stock market dream. Part of me feels it will somehow

lead to greater freedom.

Where can I turn for my thrills? Icelandic or horse mythology? Wouldn't that really knock me off the deep end?

Performance and Performing

By "showing off" I inspire others. (If he can do it, so can I.)

If this is so, then how can I "show off?" Guitar, song, yoga, dance, writing, etc.

Did I "help" Myra by doing yoga at the pool in front of her? Or did I make her jealous and envious? Maybe a bit of both.

What then is best for me? To display myself before others and let the chips fall where they may.

(It turns out by doing yoga in front of Myra I inspired her to start yoga classes in the fall.)

Thus I should return to performing— and inspire others through my daring to display my talents, laugh at my foibles, and basically, stand my ground.

(These "thrills" might even replace (or at least stand side by side with) the stock market.

Performing and selling my books are part of the same displaying myself and getting myself out there.

Money!

Up or down—the stock market takes (took up) too much of my time and effort. Plus, I hardly make any money at it. In fact, up to now I've mostly lost. If I do make money, I usually put it back into the market where. . . up to now, I lose it again.

So ultimately, I "waste my time" in the market. Yet, deep down, still resides the old hope: If I have money I'll be secure and safe. . . and then I can "safely" be and become an artist! This old hope, and means of achieving it through Mother Market,

never seems to die.

But I'm getting closer.

1. I realize I cannot. . . and should not. . . give up the market. But I can cut back so that it does not occupy so much of my mental and physical time and space. And, I can use that free mental time I space to become an artist!

But I have discovered over the past few years that I am already an artist! This has been enhanced with post-transformational confidence. Now I am ready. The only thing "stopping me" is my stock market hope.

That hope is, thankfully, fading.

I will have to, and I want to, make money with and in my arts. I will have to, and I want to, make money as an artist. My art skills will lead the way.

And, the funny thing is, I know I can make money as an artist! I have the full belief and confidence. I also know I can make more money as an artist than in the stock market.

(Unless I become an artist of the stock market. Is this a possibility or rationalization? Good question.)

Next question: What do I mean by an artist? What skills and talents will I, and can I, use to make money?

I have:

1. Artistic sales skills: I am an artist on the phone and with people.

2. I also have and sell artistic products. All the products Jim Gold International sells are artistic products. These consist of tours, weekends, folk dance classes, guitar and song concerts, booking, and my books. Promoting and selling these could be, can be, and are an incredible way of making money! By putting all of my efforts into selling and promoting what I already do and have done, I can make mucho money. It would dwarf any stock market earnings

Adjustments

Could I have made a mistake? Four-words a day sounds good. But is it? Can I do it? Is it really my way?

Or is the real meaning of this commitment to study language every day, say, a half-hour or an hour or so in the morning. Part of this study is learning the words, the “four-words-a-day.”

But study is open and fluid. A fixed goal may be too tight, rigid, and fixed. . . and will thus die on the vine.

I have returned to America. Some adjustments will (no doubt) have to be made on my Icelandic ideas.

Stock Market

The Heroism and Glory in Fulfilling Commitments

What do I have going for me?

The heroism and glory that I fulfilled my commitments both the myself and others.

1. Commitments to myself: Following the dictates of my miracle schedule. Specifically, on a physical level this now includes the daily doing of my four-part exercise program (for at least six-weeks to two months.) The program’s order is:

- a. Warm-ups: callisthenics and salutations, etc.
- b. Singing
- c. Running
- d. Yoga stretches and “warm-downs” including shoulder stand, head stands, leg stretches etc.

Commitments to others:

- a. Going through with my tours, etc.....

I set myself a challenge on a daily basis. If I fulfill my commitments, what is my

reward at the end of the day? What can I say?

I can say: "Yes! I did it!"

I become my own hero. Then I can revel in the glory!

The "Stop Here!" Point

At this point, does practicing Alhambra, arpeggios, etc. create diminishing returns? In other words, have I perfected these areas as much as I can? Have I really gone as far as I can go? At this point, if I keep pushing, trying, tinkering with the system, will I start going backwards instead of forwards?

Is there a certain point where you've "got it," a point where it is best to stop, to say, This is the pinnacle I can reach? At this point, would not wisdom dictate that the thing to do is realize you have been realized. . . and stop? Stop there?

Is there a point where you have to "Stop there?" Isn't this the point where one must move into other fields in order to grow, change, and develop. Is there a time where one must accept success, even "total success" . . .leave it alone, and get ready to move on.

Have I reached this point in guitar playing, in Alhambra, Villa-Lobos Prelude Number 4, Leyenda, five-finger tremolo, and etc., where it is never going to get any better? Or am I simply giving up?

I'd like to experiment with the original idea of reaching the "stop here!" point, a spot, a place, I have never been to or even considered.

Making Money to Impress, Please, and Make Her Happy

How much of my stock market interest is so that I can make money to impress my wife and make her happy?

Why do I want to make money in the first place? How much of it do I need? How much of it is merely to make her happy? Ironically, making money in the stock

market only seems to worry her and make her unhappy.

At this point, if I were out of the market, she would be thrilled.

Before I got married, I needed (and wanted) very little money. I wanted mostly fame, recognition, and immortality; money was obviously necessary. . . but very secondary. When I got married, everything changed. And I've been on a frenzied make-money trip ever since. But most of it may have been to please and impress my wife!

How about pleasing and impressing myself? Well, that was the become-an-artist part.

Becoming an artist was to please myself. Making (most of my) money was to please my wife. Oh sure, I have to support myself. But I could always do that in a minimal fashion. I've always supported myself, gotten along.

Dealing with this new recognition of the role of money will take me months to deal with. But it is a stunning revelation, a wow thought.

I also have to ask: Is this money idea something she actually wanted? Or is it something I wanted?

Maybe it may belong to the financial trauma of marriage. A residue, a left over, a post-transitional recognition.

Perhaps it is time to take another look at money, my relationship to it, and my desire to be an artist.

Would this revelation diminish the importance of the stock market?

Truth is, I don't need the stock market in order to make money. Although it is a fun, even challenging game, I can make more by promoting my own businesses.

So why do I need the stock market?

Do I need it?

Sure it's "fun" to play it, but do I really need it? And to play it with such fervor and intensity?

Suppose the answer is "no." What a let down. But it could be true, nevertheless.

Without the hope of her potentially cheering for me and my victories in the market, will I still maintain the same interest? "Doing it alone" may take a lot of the fun out.

Without the woman, the girl, and the hope of getting and pleasing the girl, will I lose interest?

Could I earn an extra \$40,000 this year in my business? Good question.

The answer is: Why not?

How? Through tours and bookings, of course. With some folk dancing on the side for "daily expenses." Also the folk dance base does feed the tours. . . and a few bookings, too. Nevertheless, my main emphasis must be on tours and bookings.

This means advertising, mailings, and mucho sales calls. WE know I am good at this stuff. Now it a matter of doing it.

We can keep the stock market interest "bouncing on the side." Most of my learning in it has been done. The "art of stop-loss" is the main learning. I can do the market on a smaller and less mental time, space, and effort basis.

This is a new year, a post-transformational "Icelandic" year: I must spend it totally promoting and pushing my tour and booking businesses.

Sunday, August 31, 2003

Work and Vacation

I love work, and I love to work. Without it, I fall into a funk; my inner self

becomes lost, energyless, discouraged, and slowly then rapidly frizzles away.

Thus, I need work at all times. . . even on “vacation.” For me there really is no such thing as a vacation in the traditional sense of the word. I hate the idea of stopping work; I hate the vacuum and emptiness that the so-called traditional idea of “vacation” creates. Getting away from it all? Who wants to get away from something I love, namely, the work I love to do?

Not I, indeed. Change yes, vacation, no. That’s my motto.

So, in the light of these “love of work” ideas, what should I do and how should I think about this trip to Canada, this so-called “vacation?”

First, do not think of it as a vacation. As of today, totally give up all noxious ideas of vacation, cutting back, getting away, etc. These notions are terrible for my brain. The best I can do is think of the upcoming trip to Canada as a “working vacation.”

What is a working vacation? It boils down to simply working in another location. I’ve built my life around having my own personal vacation twenty-four hours a day. Canada will be no different.

What work shall I bring to Canada?

All work: Writing (my computer), running and yoga, of course. Language study: French (and Greek).

New career work books. New career? Now there’s a new one. Stock market books.

I am redefining work and vacation.

For me, work and vacation are synonymous. Thus when I run I am going to work; when I do yoga I am going to work.

Running and yoga are part of my work.

Studying languages, or anything else, is part of my work.

Playing guitar and singing are part of my work.

Sales calls, running tours, writing and sending out ads are all part of my work. All my work blends together into one great Work. And that Work is called vacation. Or better, Vacation. Capital letters say it all.

Monday, September 1, 2003

I can't stand lack of structure. But I also hate it when others try to impose their structure upon me.

Best is for me to impose my own structure upon myself.

I ran beautifully yesterday. An hour and a half, much of it in fast mode. I also added a phenomenal meditation: I turned each physical pain in my body into a miniature stimulus packet. Instead of mentally avoiding pains, denying them, trying to get past them, I looked directly into their face, saw them as hidden, kabbalistic energy packages, stimulants delivered to me in the form of pain. Slowly, mentally, by visualizing the thinking of them thusly, they did indeed not only go away, disappear, but did indeed turn into stimulants! What a wonderful way to view pain!

Also by seeing running as part of my work, I turned it into a job, my job, my calling. It rose in importance and slowly became part of All-Is-One.

This is such an important idea for me. It may, indeed, be part of the post-Icelandic, post-transformational life. My miracle schedule activities are no longer separate from so-called outside life. They now belong to All Is One. Miracle schedule vacation time has turned into work time. . . and vice versa.

Now to start applying the work idea to study. Begin today. . . with French. . . and guitar.

Bodily (and perhaps also mental) pains are caused by energy shifts. When too much energy gets locked up in one area, it causes pain by creating a "blocked," pain-filled, energy packette. The pain dissolves and disappears when the blockage is

released. Then energy, once again, flows regularly and evenly through and throughout the body.

New Views of Pain

A pain appears under my left knee cap during the slow squat. Reinterpret the pain as a hidden center of energy, an energy packet located now under my knee cap.

Focus on this pain center as an energy packet. See how the pain slowly dissolves. Soon it actually does turn into energy. As it does, the pain (or my “interpretation” of it as pain) disappears.

Thursday, September 4, 2003

The history of nasalization in the French language: Now there’s an unknown (to me) story.

The history of phonetics is the history of the mouth and its uses as a linguistic instrument.

I read in the morning until my sense of wonder is awakened.

Visceral Linguistics?

I’m trying to memorize the French word “blafard” (pale, wan, livid). I realize as I search for synonyms, memory devices, etc. part of me is saying: Why bother? Why make the effort? After all, how important is learning an insignificant word like this? In fact, how important is learning French or any foreign language for that matter? Truly, I can “get along” without it. I can function and survive without French. Maybe my life will be “richer” with it, but truly, bottom line, who needs it?

If part of me is thinking these killer, deadening thoughts then no wonder it is difficult for me to memorize words, learn foreign languages, and, in general, make a

total effort, give it my all.

Why should I bother?

Well, what's the answer? I still don't have one. But until I get it I will always study languages "half-way" and half-assed. I don't like to study that way; I don't like to be divided. But I will remain that way until I can heal my internal linguistic "Why bother?" division.

I don't feel a visceral need to learn languages. The effort is not like music or the arts, or even the study of money. Or is it? Perhaps it is quite visceral, only I don't see it yet.

Thoughts on a Good Stock Market Week

Most of my buys are through limit orders put in at the end of the day. (Hoping for a dip in the overnight trading.) But not all. Sometimes I buy when I see one of my listed stocks is down; sometimes, though rarely, I buy when I see it moving up (buying on momentum.)

I seem to be getting a "sense" of the market; and particularly of the five to ten stocks I work with. I'm beginning to develop an instinct, timing, and "feel." Again, I hope this is right.

I'm generally much more cautious. . . and calm.

Am I getting better? I hope so. And why not?

But I do not want to push this "getting better" idea. I want whatever pride and confidence I am developing in the market, to be based on my new found caution; and the deep, pain-learned realization that I can lose money awfully fast. Remember my fear, nay, my terror! Remember my trembling and pit of the stomach nausea! It is ever alive and well and lurking in the background ready to pounce. No more pie-in-the-sky, quick riches schemes or ideas for me.

The stock market is a daily adventure. It is ever changing; moment to moment,

day to day, it is always different. Although I may develop a feel for it, I can never truly know it. A sudden fall or rise, a momentary panic or elation, like running a tour or giving a concert, the opposites on the emotional and outer-reality spectrum are ever possible and present. The element of the unknown is ever present.

My twin dangers and illusions are hubris and discouragement. When things are going well, I must watch out for hubris; when things are going badly, I must watch out for discouragement.

On Healing

In the long run, even the short run, does diving into pain, focusing on it, and using it as an energy packet, make the pain worse, better, or have no effect at all?

Some answers:

1. In the short run, it “seems to” make it better. (Is “seems to” real? If yes, or even no, doesn’t this raise the question of what is reality?)

Also “seems to” may be hesitant way of saying yes, a way of avoiding the power and strength of a yes!

But suppose it is a yes! That means I’m on the right track, I’m able to cure myself, to heal myself through my own energy packet imagery. This is indeed an amazing discovery, an amazing power and strength.

Maybe one of the reasons you have more pains as you get older is to make you aware of this energy source – your personal energy packets which are, in essence, personalized message centers from the higher power.

The apparent disparities of life move towards spiritual oneness. Spiritual evolution, maturity, and expansion means a growing awareness of this higher power residing, in its varied forms, within yourself.

Energy packets, often delivered in their disguised form of pain, or individualized

illusion, are really celestial messenger notes, personalized letters delivered by the Higher Power Delivery Service.

Friday, September 12, 2003

Learn Something

Somewhat down and out this morning. We're flying out of Montreal today and leaving Canada.

I'm also somewhat disgusted with the market. Don't understand what's happening with the currency and my stop losses. They seem to immediately turn into sells. What am I doing wrong? What's going on here? Yes, I'm totally disgusted this morning. Because of these market "mistakes" (whatever they are) I "accidentally" sold out of my positions and lost about a grand and a half.

That's probably the real reason I'm down this morning: total disgust. . . and I'm somewhat sick from my loss! (Of course, the market could have moved the other way and I would have been accidentally saved.) But basically, I just hate the loss of control and not knowing what I'm doing.

What can I do about it? Learn something. Find out what I was doing wrong.

Call Fidelity. Ask about currency in Canada, and how to put in a stop loss through the traditional Fidelity screen (not Active Trader Pro).

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Making the Adjustment

I feel this terrible down, sock in the stomach, depression upon re-entry. And this, even though I am in good, nay excellent mental shape and I can think of absolutely nothing I have to be depressed about.

Could one cause of this down be that I am, for the first time, in good mental shape? It would be a "typical" explanation for my downs: Why am I down? Because I

am up. Why am I depressed? Because I am elated. Why do I feel squeezed and pushed into a corner? Because I feel so free.

Positives are hitting me on the head, creating negativity; they are forcing me to kneel and eat dirt.

Well, part of me likes the taste of dirt. It feeds and nourishes the roots of my tree. But it's also part of an old illusion.

Yes, I have returned. Perhaps the first step is getting used to this newest of new neighborhoods. I have yet to make the adjustment. . . . But I'm working at it.

Trying to Accept, Learn About, Incorporate, and Adjust to Post-Transitional Life

Maybe I am down and feeling slightly "angry" because the old feelings: the old neighborhood, September-school-return, worries, fears, will-I-make-it, etc. feelings, are really gone. I have lost them. They have vanished, along with my pre-transitional self.

The so-called "anger" and slight headache I felt may well be because part of me "misses" this old self. At least I knew what it was, was "uncomfortably comfortable" living in and with it.

Now I have returned in post-transitional mode. Part of me, perhaps most of me, feels completely, or at least somewhat lost.

Who am I? How should and does this new me react to these familiar September-return situations?

New Freedom in Left Hand Guitar Fingerings

New freedom in left hand guitar fingerings: crossing of index (i finger) and middle (m finger) does not matter.

As seen and demonstrated in Matachin by the eighteenth century Spanish composer, Gaspar Sanz, edited by Emilio Pujol (my fingerings added) and in Six Lute

Pieces of the Renaissance transcribed from the Lute tablature by Oscar Chilesotti (1848-1916) and edited by Albert Valdes Blain (also my fingerings added).

This should all lead to a new freedom in my own performing.

Friday, September 19, 2003

The Future and the Stock Market

In world events, I feel it deeply: the tide is turning.

Which way will the stock market go? At the moment, I can only see it going up! Naturally, there will be dips of profit taking. But it's general direction is up. Where else can it go? Down has already been done.

But it will climb on a "wall of worry." That is good. As long as there is worry, there are buyers left.

My only question is: Is the worrying about to end? If it is, I'd better start selling short fast. But I don't think it has ended yet. Not even close. There is at least a year of worrying left.

How can I say such things? How can I be so "definite" in my views of the future? I don't know. I just "feel and sense" it.

On the Quality and Meaning of the Right Hand Guitar Fingers

What is the difference in quality and meaning of the right hand guitar fingers?

Should I use ring (a) or middle (m) finger on the note D of the second section, eighth measure of Andante, the first of the Six Lute Pieces of the Renaissance?

At the moment, I can't decide. I lean towards m because it has (can create) a sweeter tone; but I also like the nailly sharper quality of the a finger.

Does it matter?

Yes!

Knowing which finger to use will make me more definite, certain, and sure in my

playing. In other words, it will free me to play with more confidence!

A definite fingering is very important. I just can't decide yet which one to use. But eventually I must decide. Each note definitely belongs to a specific finger. There is a best choice. I just don't know what it is yet.

The Role of Pain

Pain is an important character in my life. She visited my body in various forms during the past two weeks.

I was right about the pains in my body. They are really mental constructs used to block my entrance into the post-transitional life. "Block" may not be quite the right word. Perhaps "ease" is better. They slowed me down, "eased" me past the gates and into the city. Even though the pain type of "ease" hurts, it is nevertheless, an easing. It forces you to enter slowly, thus perhaps preventing too much speed before you are ready and adjusted, and, in a sense, even "protecting" you from moving too fast before you are ready.

This view sees pain as a strangely self-protective device. You're not ready to move fast, to go fast. . . yet. Pain, the mental pain created and projected into your body, helps protect you by slowing you down.

The truth about pain is: it goes away. . . when you are ready.

Meditative Wisdom?

Maybe this so-called "sad deadness" I feel is really the meditative calm of wisdom. Indeed, it is a new feeling. It does not seem altogether bad. Only different.

I am very calm at my center. The world is swirling around me; all my old activities are, visibly and from the outside, swirling around me. But at my center, I am calm.

Am I at the doorway of meditative wisdom? Have I indeed, passed through that doorway?

Is that what the upcoming year, the New Leaf, new life, and the new direction (really a directionless direction) is all about?

An Hour a Day

An hour a day spent on anything is a lot. Especially if you do an hour a day for many day, months, and years. It adds up to a considerable skill.

Also, all I seem able to do is a hour a day. (And this not even on every day.) An hour a day is usually my limit (although some days there are more, some less, some none at all: the days of rest).

What I may be trying to say is that I can “fit in” some new studies and directions; indeed, I may be able to do, “fit in” lesson, practices, or both in computer, languages, gaida, and even accordion.

We’ll see where these thoughts lead.

And there’s always the idea that one skill helps, enhances, and feeds the other.

Wednesday, September 24, 2003

Cosmic Sadness and the Creative Call

The cosmic sadness is the creative call.

It tells me I am not paying attention.

In the world of creativity nothing ever “goes well.” Creativity is gutsy, heart-breaking, dynamic, wild, disorderly. It is full of storms and unruly passion. It is the call of the wild sounded from deep within the heart.

Give up ideas of order, calm, and even happiness. These pills of mildness can never quiet the inner cauldrons; they cannot stop the internal eruptions of volcanic creativity. Nor should they. Staying in touch with the demonic power of the unruly

mountain god, bursting through the “calm” crust of personal civilization, the soft-iron mask of habits, customs, schedules, and routines.

The steam-roller juggernaut marches out of the inner cauldron; wild fires and molten lava stream down from the mountain crater. There is no stopping the burst-through maniacal marching-mouth of Creativity.

The morning sadness I feel is the cry of Life bursting through my stagnant head. Thank God for the passion-reminding, life-giving, cosmic-enhancing sadness. Without it, I would be a dead-head, crushed-hearted, undulating corpse.

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Defeats Create Resolve!

Two Defeats in a Row

Defeats create resolve.

The down in the stock market could (should, would. . . nay, will!) strengthen my resolve to get better at it.

I should have put an early stop on AMD; but more important, because of my past month's successes, I was slowly forgetting how quickly I could lose.

Could forgetting my God connection with its subsequent cosmic depression be considered a defeat? Why not consider it to be?

If I do, then forgetting it would strengthen my resolve to remember. And remembering this, the Biggest Thing, would indeed be Good.

A New Computer Program Ease

The most amazing thing to me is the ease with which I am moving about these five new computer programs. All the computer and web design lessons I had last year must have developed within in me, a skill, an ease in finding my way on and the computer. And this after I gave it a rest during the long gestation period from March

to September.

It must be part of a general post-transformational ease.

Going Nowhere in Depth

I've reached the point where there are no more brand new paths for me. New paths, yes, but brand-new, no.

Maybe my new path will be to retrace old ones: reread old books, reexamine, replay, and redo the old ways, styles, methods, and schedules I have been following. Do them in depth.

Many years ago I reached this exploration in depth point in guitar playing. Then I started doing it on my miracle schedule. By adding business and the stock market—I call them “material miracles,” since they belong to the material world—I've completed the long first leg of my journey; I've traced out the path, delineated the boundaries of my road.

There is now nothing brand new under my sun.

But there will nevertheless be mucho new.

I'll find it in the old. I'll reread my bibles and find new truths. . . and perhaps deepen my views and understanding of old truths.

Where I am going? Since I am there already, where is there to go? The answer is: Nowhere.

This is, indeed, not a bad state to be in. Besides, whether I like it or not, that is where I am.

I'm playing all the old guitar pieces, singing all the old songs, teaching all the old folk dances. Now I'm getting ready to reread all the old books.

True, I'm learning brand new computer programs and brand new words in foreign languages. So indeed, there is a place for brand new in my life.

Yes, as I look for new paths on old roads, I also realize there will be a place for the brilliance of brand-new as well: uplifting and illuminating moments of eye opening awe and wonder.

I will be looking at the old roads with a new eye. Passion, calm, wisdom, new visions will all coalesce.

I'm getting ready to step into my next leaf, to take my next step on the road, to slip out of my post-transformational skin. It has served its purpose. But now it is used up, ready to fall away.

I'll call the New Leaf: Now What?

I'll call it the "Re Life."

I'll begin it with Rereading.

And I can begin the Rereading life by rereading and restudying the books on the stock market!

MAXIMUM CREATIVE EFFORT!

Sunday, September 28, 2003

The Gift of Maximum Effort

The gates of heaven open when you make the maximum effort. Energy flows through your being. Aches and pains, worries and frustrations dissolve as you surrender to the higher power.

This momentary but wonder-filled state of wisdom, peace, and composure is the gift of maximum effort.

Thus the way to handle aches, pains, frustrations, and worries is not to avoid, distance yourself, run away, or retreat from them. Rather it is to work harder! In the heat of battle you discover amazing strengths!

Slightly Hard

Thus I need things to do that are slightly hard, slightly above my head. Too hard and I'll get discouraged, too low and I'll get bored.

Slightly hard is just about right; it will push and inspire me to make my maximum effort.

Monday, September 29, 2003

Discouragement is one of my worst feelings. It totally wipes out my spirit, drives my soul into the ground, kills me. I want to end it all. This kind of deadly discouragement makes suicide a veritable option.

The killing off of spirit is a terrible self-crime. One of the worst. Perhaps the worst.

Do I want to continue life in a discouraged state? I doubt it. But simple awareness of the power of discouragement may help to dispel it. Look it straight in the eye. See it for what it is.

What is it? And why do I "want" it?

A better question might be "Why do I need it. . . now?"

What have I been doing right to push myself back into the hole so far?

One thing I was doing right was the stock market. I had a great two weeks in the beginning of September. . . even a great month. I made money and I seemed to be "getting the hang of it." All my year of trading study appeared to be paying off. Then I hit a bump in the road. The market went down; I lost what I gained. I'm back to where I started in the middle of August. Discouragement hit.

Based on my winning streak I made some unrealistic market plans: I "planned" to make a thousand a day (as I did for one week in September.) I also planned to make stock market trading my new "profession."

Both "plans" were killed by the stock market downturn and my subsequent

losses. I “did everything wrong” during the past week. I ended up confused and running scared. Then I got out of the market completely. . . for two days. The whole week was a total mess.

Maximum effort always chooses life.

Deep awareness of its killing power is the only way to handle the heavy, black, coffin lid of discouragement.

I must say a new dream has been born: It is to succeed in the stock market. Notice I did not say “make money.” I said “succeed.” (Toni Turner and Alexander Elder say: If you focus on trading well, money will come “as a sideline.”)

This is not an artistic dream. I have fulfilled that by finally accepting myself as an artist after about a thirty year struggle. But now artist is a done deal. No problem there. Onwards and upwards post-transitionally. I am ready for new dreams.

Whether it is the right dream or the wrong dream, I’ll never know. But I do know it is my dream.

Market “Instinct”

I was doing everything “right” in the market. I put all the right stops in, etc. I even “knew” the market was too high, that it would soon fold up for awhile. “Instinctively,” I knew. I even sold CTXS short because I thought it would go down. It did, too. But later. I was too early. But I was “right.”

What, if any, lesson is there in this? I was “right,” but I didn’t follow my instincts. I didn’t even fully believe in them. Me, have an instinct for the market? How could I, a rank amateur, even think I could be so smart as to have one, own one, and follow through on it?

But I did have it.

Dare I believe it? Is this hubris, mere guessing, trying to see something positive “after the fact” of the down market? Maybe. But maybe not. After all, in the long run, I was “right.” (How can you be “right” if you lose money? In the market, “right” is in quotations.

Nevertheless, if I am every to have self-trust and self-confidence in my decisions, I must look into the possibility that I am developing a “market instinct.”

Such an “instinct” would be based on knowledge and experience. Well, even though I consider myself a market beginner, I do have some market knowledge. . .and experience, too. Thus, why shouldn’t I also have “some” feel for the market, some market instinct?

Well, let’s face the possibility even the fact, that I do.

Where will this lead?

The Fool Factor

Up markets make me careless. Greed wins as prices climb slowly on a wall of worry.

Down markets make me cautious. Fear wins as prices tumble precipitously in an avalanche of fear.

Thus was I fooled again.

The Sneezing Collapse

It is amazing to me. No matter how hard I struggle I still cannot attain financial security or the inner peace it would bring me.

Why is money always such a problem? Why can’t I conquer the financial mountain?

This endless struggle is a phenomenon I cannot comprehend.

The sneezing and the cold I am starting to develop, am at the edge of getting, are being caused by the discouragement of the stock market down and the subsequent (temporary?) collapse of my financial dreams.

God Connection and Money

Can I ever find a God connection to money and the stock market? Somehow, I doubt it, even though intellectually, I know there is one.

Perhaps right there is the core of my money (and stock market) problem: Basically and fundamentally, I don't believe in them!

I believe in the arts. I believe in my God connection.

I believe in my God connection and its realization through the arts.

No matter how much I push and try, I cannot get myself to believe in the vital importance of money and its hand maiden, the stock market. I know I need it to survive. But who wants to "only" survive? I want to live beyond survival. I want to thrive, grow, and most important, glow!

Most of (if not all of) my relationship to money is based on fear. The rare good feelings I get from it come from the temporary lifting of the veil. The "elation" I feel when my stocks go up or when I get checks in the mail is really due to relief. For a few moments, I no longer have to be afraid, for a few moments I think I have financial security. Then the feeling slowly dribbles away and I move on to my next financial fear.

But even though I know I am afraid and have financial fears, even though I experience fear, I still do not believe in it. After all, there is no God connection.

This may be the root of my giant disconnect between the outside "real" world of money, finance, and material reality and my inner, private dream-world reality. Even though I must deal with money and the outside world, I fundamentally, do not believe in them. And this, even though they constantly hit me over the head with reminders of their existence.

Is this brave? Is this stupid? Is it both?

Or is this simply me?

If the above is all true—and I believe it is—how do I now deal with the outside world? How do I deal with my money and financial problems?

Could the answer be: I don't?

Perhaps the fact that I don't believe in it is "showing." That's why the finances never quite work beyond mere survival.

Should I just give up on the whole thing and put it in God's hands? Even though a part of me has been fighting against this idea "forever," that's where it has been all along.

Even though I try to love and be excited by it, perhaps I have a basic contempt and scorn for money. Certainly that has been part of my upbringing.

I believe in the arts. Money is a necessary foundation, the sidewalk upon which you walk towards your artistic goals.

No question I was put on earth to fulfill my artistic vision. How will I handle the money problem? I don't know.

Or maybe I should not handle it at all. Let it slide. Focus totally on my artistic vision. See what happens.

What an experiment that would be!

Maybe such a life style experiment it is the true post-transitional step.

If this is all true, why even bother with money? Why not adopt a simplified life style (inexpensive and cheap) and focus on fulfilling my artistic vision?

Totally following my artistic and creative vision; totally give up on money. Is

this an expression of total confidence. Total self-confidence. And total confidence in God. Fulfilling the purpose He gave me: To use my gifts and artistic talents to their fullest.

Evidently, I was not put on earth to make money but to fulfill my artistic talents and offer them to others. That is my gift and my giving.

If all this is what I've learned through the stock market, it has taught me a lot. It is probably even worth all the money I lost. Indeed, "higher" education is expensive.

Saturday, October 4, 2003

Time for a total shift and change.

I need to start and develop a new business or new businesses.

1. Stocks (This "business" is in its infant stage)
2. Web business
3. Other. . . or all.

Can (or should) these businesses be related in some way to my old businesses?

Can, are, or should they be expansions of my old businesses? I'd like that.

Or are they "completely new?" I like that, too.

Bodily Knowledge, Reflexivity, and the Market

I wonder if the past week's tremendous whack of discouragement wasn't, in some subtle and unknown way, a whack of knowledge, self-understanding, and revelation, the banging open and knocking down of a brand new door opening a new passageway into myself. When I entered this new arena, the discouragement came

because I only saw the darkness and not the light beyond.

Maybe the trauma of discouragement hit me over the head because my market instincts were right! In fact, they were right (as the down market proved) only I figured them out and acted on them too late.

Is this “acted on them too late” an excuse? No, it is an explanation of my action? Truth is, I had the knowledge. But I lacked the experience. With more experience I might have timed it better. But I am simply, market-wise, not used to being right. I’m not used to thinking I could even be right, ever be right, or that I could even have a market instinct, reflected in my body pains pointing out a market direction. All these ideas are so new to me.

Me, right? In and about the market? It is such a radically different view of myself. I’m just not used to it.

But maybe I’ll start to.

What about my left shoulder pain? I’ve never had that before. It started sometime last week. . .or maybe a little before when my mind (and body?) Were totally involved in the market and my “new ability” to do things well in it. Then the destructive trauma of the down market hit me. Could my left shoulder reflect or be a reflection of the “new market pain?”

Must I suffer physically to learn and reflect the market? Perhaps I must.

Evidently, George Soros does, too. He “reads” the market “through his body.”

But on one level this is totally reasonable. Why shouldn’t my body reflect both changes in my inner world as well as the outer public world? Both are connected – and “intimately,” too.

My body is a barometer for the outside world.

The world enters it through pain and pleasure.

The stock market, and my business, deal most directly with trends, ups and

downs, in the outside world. According to my attitude, these create pleasure or pain in my body.

My Nature

I'll also have to admit that the stock market, being in the stock market, being in and part of the action, is vitaly important to me!

I don't quite know why.

It is similar to my involvement with tours. When I gave them up, along with all the troubles and mental pains they caused me, I got depressed. I had thrown out the baby with the bath water.

The stock market, with all its up and downs, troubles and pains, haunts me. It is, like tours, and even business, a constant source of wonder and misery.

What is my fascination? Why am I in it? I don't quite know. It may be that, like a moth drawn to light, I am attracted to wonder and misery.

Filling the Emptiness, Finding the Excitement,

Loving the Study!

Perhaps I do the stock market with such terrific and hope-filled intensity in order to fill my emptiness. I need, always, some excitement. And I love to study something.

Perhaps the stock market and its excitement have little to do with money. (Although "winning," getting some money out of it, would be nice.)

But perhaps it is fundamentally all about emptiness, excitement, and the excitement of study! We Jews love to study.

Without something new and exciting to pursue, life gets very bland and empty. Soon much of the meaning goes out of it. True, we study about God and His Laws; but everything is in God. Thus, almost any study will do.

The stock market filled my study passion for over a year. It filled my emptiness,

gave me excitement, goals, and love. Making money in it would be nice: It shows that you've "won."

But ultimately, it is the game of learning, and the joy of study, that I pursue.

My Business is the Only Way Out

My November "graduation" in stock trading is coming. Wouldn't it be ironic if it means I am giving the whole thing up!

I'm disgusted and discouraged. I'm on the edge, almost over the edge. November is graduation day. But I'm preparing now.

If I look over my whole stock market "career" I see only losses. Sure, I see lots of hopes for gains as well. And I've had some. But most (if not all) of my victories drew me further into the market, which resulted in even greater losses.

I gave myself one year to "experiment," to see if I could succeed. Well, although I've learned a lot, I still have only lost more money. I'm in college, and I expect to pay tuition; still, suppose my greatest college lesson is: I don't belong in the market!

I hate to think that's true, hate to admit it, but all history points in this direction. Not only do I lose money, I waste (or spend) a great deal of mental (and physical) time thinking, worrying, studying, wondering about it and fiddling at the computer screen.

Would all this be better spent pursuing my business?

Would I, in the long run, make more money? And would I have a mentally more peaceful, more productive life?

Yes, I want hopes and thrills. But maybe I can't (and shouldn't) try to find them in the market. No question, it is full of hope and thrill, lots of ups and (even more) downs. And ultimately, I end up in more debt. In fact, all my debts are really due to the market. . . or rather to my hopes of making money in it.

So I sit here and contemplate giving it up.

Let us assume I do. Next question is: How will I make money? How will I pay

off my debts? Is it possible through my business?

But I have no other choice. If I give up hope of the market (and realistically, it is only a hope), then what do I have left but my business?

It may take years, or the rest of my life; nevertheless, pushing my business seems to be the only way out aside from a miracle, which I can't count on it.

It is ironic I am contemplating such a decision one day after I began my Trading Journal. Treading Journal, yes. But a short life for TJ, indeed.

Relief

"Out" of the Market

I hate to admit it but its such a relief being both mentally and mostly physically "out" of the market. It's a feeling of control and, something I didn't even have when I was winning: inner peace! (I have hardly any money in the market. I plan, if at all, to take small to very small positions, 100-200 shares.)

I have been through a one-year stock market "passage."

Even though I have a lot less money through the market, and have given up the idea of making any future money in it, what a burden has been lifted off my head!

Perhaps I am poor, in debt. . . but unburdened! And this, for the first time. Free! Wild, indeed. I never would have expected these feelings of inner freedom. Is this what graduation, giving up hopes, and realism is all about? If yes, give me more of it!

The stock market is okay as a miniature sideline, play thing. . . very minor plaything. The less I put in it, the better I feel.

But the important thing to remember is: I felt enslaved, haunted, even obsessed by it whether I was making money or not.

Amazingly thus, the money was besides the point. When I was riding high in early September making 1G a day, I couldn't shake it; and when I was down in the dumps losing 1G a day, I couldn't shake it.

Only now, by giving up all my hopes, have I shaken it.

An entirely new, maximum-effort way of thinking for me. I would now be focusing on the crowd, focusing on the audience, focusing on the public, focusing on the "outside," on those around me.

But for a completely different reason.

Instead of worry about their judging me (trying to improve so they will judge me well, etc.), I am now focusing on them because I know that doing so will produce my most majestic maximum effort! I will be reaching for, and will reach, my highest potential by focusing on them.

This is a radical departure.

Seeing others as not only part of me, but as stimulants and motivators who will push me, nay, inspire me to reach for my highest potential puts the audience in a totally new light. Rather than the "enemy" they become my friend. And this in the true Hebrew sense of the word, ra, where enemy and friend mean the same thing!

It's an attitude to practice! In guitar practice, folk dance teaching, running tours, sales, and more. Better it is an attitude, philosophy, and approach I should think about in everything I do.

Losing Streak

For the past few weeks I have been on a losing streak. I have lost money (almost) every day. First mucho money, then less money, but always losses. I finally realized it

yesterday when the market still kept going up and my stocks went down. In fact, all the stocks on my list (which I hadn't bought) went up, and the three I owned went down.

In the beginning of September, everything I touched went up: a winning streak. Since the middle of September, everything I touch goes down: a losing streak.

I hate using the word "streak." It wrecks of luck. I would so love to believe that I have more control. But it is not true. Luck must have its power and place.

Perhaps I might like the word "fate" better than luck. But whatever I want to call it, I am on a classic losing streak.

Macho and Fast versus Luxuriation

Reflected in Day Trading and Guitar

I wonder if my (illusionary) belief that day trading is more macho because it is fast and faster, is related to my guitar (illusionary) belief that it is more macho to play fast and faster. (It may also be reflected in the run faster, do more ("faster") push-ups, etc.)

Would it be "better" to luxuriate in the stocks?

Is there a relationship between luxuriating in guitar tone and luxuriating in the "tone" of stocks?

Since I am an artist and my approach to life is an artistic one, could there be, could I invent a musical approach to stocks?

Could it be "based" on the tone, meditative quality, and luxuriation of guitar practice?

Think about expanding my trading time table from one day to six weeks (maximum). Luxuriating versus fast and macho.

Wednesday, October 8, 2003

My Business is the Only Way Out

My November “graduation” in stock trading is coming. Wouldn’t it be ironic if my graduation means I am giving the whole thing up!

Well, I’m not only disgusted and discouraged over the stock market: I’m at the point of giving it up!

I’m on the edge; I’m almost over the edge. November is graduation day. But I’m preparing now.

If I look over my whole stock market “career,” I only see losses. Sure, I see lots of hopes for victories. And I had some. But most (if not all) of my victories drew me further into the stock market, which resulted in even greater losses. Thus my victories led, in the long run (even short run) to greater losses.

I gave myself one year to “experiment,” to see if I could succeed in the market. Although I’ve learned a lot, I still have only lost more money. Sure, I’m in college, and I expect to pay tuition. Still, suppose my greatest college lesson is: I don’t belong in the market!

I hate to think it’s true, I hate to admit it, but all history points in this direction. Not only do I lose money in the market, but I waste (or spend) a great deal of mental (and physical) time thinking, worrying, studying, wondering about it; also mucho time at the computer screen.

Would all this time and effort be better spent pursuing my business?

Would I, in the long run, make more money? And would I have a mentally more peaceful, more productive life? Would I be utilizing my talents to the fullest?

Yes, I want hopes and thrills. But maybe I can’t and shouldn’t try to find them in the market. No question, it is full of hopes and thrills, lots of ups, but even more downs. And ultimately, I end up in more debt. In fact, all my debts are really due to the market. . . or rather my hopes of making money in it.

Anyway, I sit here contemplating giving it up.

Let us assume I do. Next question is: How will I make money? How will I pay off my massive debt? Is it possible through my business? But of course, I have no other choice. If I give up the hope of the market (and realistically, it is only a hope), then what do I have left but my business?

It may take years or the rest of my life, but nevertheless, pushing my business seems to be the only way out. (Of course, there is always the possibility of a miracle, but I won't count on it.)

It is ironic I am contemplating such a decision one day after I began my Trading Journal. A short life for TJ, indeed.

Macho and Fast versus Luxuriation

Reflected in Day Trading and Guitar

I wonder if my (illusionary) belief that day trading is more macho because it is fast and faster, is related to my guitar (illusionary) belief that it is more macho to play fast and faster. (It may also be reflected in the run faster, do more ("faster") push-ups, etc.)

Would it be "better" to luxuriate in the stocks?

Is there a relationship between luxuriating in guitar tone and luxuriating in the "tone" of stocks?

Since I am an artist and my approach to life is an artistic one, could there be, could I invent a musical approach to stocks?

Could it be "based" on the tone, meditative quality, and luxuriation of guitar practice?

So ends a New Leaf.

Maximum Creative Effort II

Greece

Cretan Quest

Thursday, October 23, 2003

I want to come back from Crete with more than language control and some dances. . . although that would be good.

Better, best, would be to return with a new attitude.

This morning I read a quote by Patrick Leigh Fermor in Yvonne Hunt's excellent book Traditional Dance in Greek Culture: "Nowhere in Greece (more than Crete) is the quality of levanteia so clearly manifest. This attribute embraces a range of characteristics: youth, health, verve, high spirit, humour, quickness of mind and action, skill with weapons, the knack of pleasing girls, love for singing and drinking, generosity, capacity to improvise mantinades. . . and flying like a bird in quick and violent dances. Levanteia often includes virtuosity on the lyra: it is the universal zest for life, the love of living dangerously and a readiness for anything."

At this moment in my life I am looking to rekindle the love of living dangerously. Obviously, it includes a readiness for anything.

Artist/Entrepreneur

I had the answer in Iceland. But in September and October I lost my direction. Those two months, and even over the whole year, the stock market filled my emptiness; it gave me hope.

But I lost that illusion during the down market. I now question not only my abilities in the market, but also whether my efforts in it are wasted.

Has my stock market interest gone as far as it can go? Perhaps it has filled its purpose; it may be time to incorporate it into my being and move on.

Move on to what? In what will I make money?

My business?

Tours and bookings?

Can they replace the lost hope and excitement of the stock market? Can they fill my financial and mental emptiness with growth and expansion? And what about my miracle schedule? Can I find new growth, excitement, and expansion in it?

The stock market excitement was a growth and expansion area. It concerns money.

Would this mean giving up the stock market? Or at least my hopes and efforts in it?

Is all the mental and physical time I put into studying it even good for me? So far I have been quite totally unsuccessful in it. Does this mean I have no talent or “feel” for the market? I hate to accept defeat. But would it be wise to do so? Would it be time saving. . . and even fun?

Is accepting the idea that I have no talent or feel for the market a defeat or a victory? Is such acceptance a form of self-mastery, an experiment that helped show me where my true direction and talents lie? Was it an experimental trip down a blind alley? Did I go down blind stock market alley in order to reveal my true path? The path of the artist/entrepreneur.

Just as Iceland revealed a path perhaps the purpose of September/October was to annihilate the blockage, the “distraction” of the stock market: traveling down the blind alley to reveal clearly that it is not a good or right path for me.

Fun and God

The idea of getting more people for my tours because it is fun leading more people is a new way of looking at tourism.

In the past, I wanted more people on my tours because I would make more

money. This is still true. Making more money is always fun.

But sheer number, leading more people, as a good-in-itself, as fun also brings a higher energy level.

God believes in fun. It's the wonder part of awe-and-wonder. One worships Him b'simcha, with joy.

Worship God with joy.

Fun is really joy with a different spelling.

Plus it will be fun making more money, too.

Fun in tourism, the joy of gathering and leading larger groups. More sparks, a greater fire, more energy packettes.

But first I must imagine it.

Aching to Grow

Am I aching to grow? I wonder if that is why I am so tired.

Building a new body in which I can comfortably fit.

First comes the breakdown of the old body along with its old ideas and attitudes. The pain of destruction, the aching knees, etc. Then comes the rebuilding. Thus do I ache to build a new container for my new ideas, to grow a new body to fit my new mind.

God and Business (continued)

Business is Fun!

If business. . . Business, in the personalized form of JGI, subsumes the miracle schedule, then doing business fills in all the empty spaces, connects all the dots.

Business with its the God attachment, Business with its big "B," completes my world.

Most amazing.

And I came to this amazing realization in Greece, home of our civilization,

Western values, and culture.

The All-Is-One completes when the dark and dirty worlds of capitalism and business, accompanied and guided by their artistic angel and entrepreneurial shepherd, rush into the light.

Added to this is the holy idea and attitude that Business is Fun!

Why holy? The bible (psalms of David, I believe) says we should worship God with joy, b'simcha. Fun is joy differently spelled.

Would this mean that when you have fun you are worshipping God? Probably.

But what about sadistic killers? They're having fun, too. Well, this is obviously a complicated question.

But since I am not a sadistic killer, we can move beyond this question for now.

For me, fun is deeply related to joy. Fun is joy "lite." Also, remembering that we are imperfect and thus worship imperfectly, I can even say that fun and joy are the same! Imperfectly the same. (This may "take care of" the sadistic killer question.)

In any case, much and most of the above is prattle. The bottom line is that I am onto a deep personal truth. My personal skills and talents: leadership, diplomacy, handling and dealing with others, easy manner, organizational abilities, drive to get it right, love of mitzvahs, etc. – all come together in the world of Business.

Tuesday, October 28, 2003

"Nothing Better To Do" . . . Shaking Hands with God

Woke up with a headache this morning. Has to do with Kjell's comment on "no activity" yesterday on Santorini.

But as I think over, what else would I do? I have "nothing better to do" than go on this morning's bus tour.

Nothing better to do! Imagine that. No writing, running, reading, studying. . . . I have nothing better to do than be with my guests, my customers, my clients.

I'm not even practicing my Greek. Most, if not all, of my mind, is on running this tour as well as I can, focusing on the needs and happiness, nay satisfaction, of my customers. All other areas have been cleared.

Is this an advance in my attitude and thinking?

Probably.

What else could it be?

Wouldn't I like to have and find a "higher" interest? But perhaps focusing on my customers, putting myself in the service of others, is a higher interest. It might even be the highest interest. And, as such, be part of the fun, the joy, the worship of God.

Serve God with joy.

Truly, it is mucho fun focusing on the attempt to satisfy the needs of others. Helping them is a mitzvah that brings me joy.

So what does "nothing better to do" mean? Perhaps, deep within the psychic nothingness, the Buddhist void, stands the Lord Himself.

This turns "nothing" into everything. Into Everything.

I serve myself best when I serve others.

Or, by serving others, I best serve myself. How? By surmounting my ego, bypassing the little self and moving straight into the customer-focus land of Big Self, Universal Me.

Thus, perhaps rather than lost, I am found! This new "found" feeling takes some getting used to.

Perhaps this morning's headache comes not from anger or annoyance (at Kjell's comments) but rather from a suppression of joy!

This makes sense. This has been an excellent and glorious tour. I have run it beautifully. With all my skills and instincts working full time, I moved straight on and straight ahead. Going to the Plaka with my group and staying with them despite my fatigue was a gut level and instinctual Yes! I did the right thing. . . again!

By going on this morning's city tour, accompanying and escorting my clients, being "at their side," I again did the right thing.

Yes, doing that brings me joy! In this worshiping process, I shake hands with God.

Indeed, it is a joy headache.

Get used to the feeling.

Denying joy – my own joy – is a denial of the higher forces.

Face the light: Learn to love it!

Sacrifice your ego on the altar of others.

Why do I say "sacrifice?" Because it hurts to give up my ego.

What are the rewards for this pain?

Joy through self-transcendence.

Is that what business is all about? Yes.

Is this true for marriage as well? Yes.

Taking care of others, trying to figure out how to make their tour better, can be put on the level of fun!

It's fun to care for others.

Impatience has long been a problem. I want it now!

What would life be like if I gave up impatience and took the long term view? Months, years, even centuries. What would such a long term view do to my perspective and actions?

The opposite of impatience is not patience. Patience implies waiting for something to happen, for some future result.

Thus the opposite of impatience is taking the long term view. . . really long term.

Advantages of Thumb Focus: A Powerful Technical Truth!

Guitar arpeggios and tremolo: Focusing on the thumb, the bass, helps – and makes – the other fingers relax.

In fact, one way (the way) of making them relax is by focusing on the thumb.

What a powerful technical truth!

Ahead is Behind and All Around

What do people my age do? Give up everything (mentally)? Maybe.

Where does the post-transformational self go?

The next “challenge” is to wander unattached and “aimless.” The fourth stage is “without challenge.” Comfortable and wandering in the emptiness, drifting through myriad forms, attached to none and bathed by all.

The challengeless challenge.

I am the spark. Why try to sparkle with I am already sparkling.

Nothing creates the spark for one who lives in it.

There is no place to go. I am there; I am here. First, recognize it; then get used to it. Finally, there is the “Now what?” Its answer is: “Nothing.” Nothingness and the grand Empty.

Ever-Dissatisfied: Today's Right Thumb Connection

I will forever look for the golden light, the paradise spot at the end of the rainbow. It is part of my nature.

Today is right thumb, third string, wrist-relaxation spot day. Touch-this-spot. Today it is the key to all my (guitar) troubles, heart aches, Alhambra, arpeggio, searching and lost years. Today is the (possible and potential) answer to all my problems and questions. But no doubt tomorrow will bring a new spot, another

possible and potential direction to paradise.

I am destined to be ever dissatisfied. I will ever search out the golden land. That is my nature.

What can or should I do about it? Probably nothing. Just focus on today's paradise spot.

It may work. . . for awhile.

That is why I ever create new problems, new searches, new challenges: to keep me dissatisfied.

Presently, other potential paradise spots are: more money, learning to make CD's, organizing all my folk dances and international folk song, and getting the Florida Folk Dance Camp "right."

Thursday, November 13, 2003

Bass, Bass, Bass: Living the Bass

Bass, bass, bass:

Living the bass.

I have arrived at the Alhambra. Flowing, flowing.

I feel like dying.

Isn't this the trauma of arrival?

The older practice was "measured." I stopped at the doorway. Now the trap door has opened. I am falling through.

Bass, bass, bass. There is no choice but to live it.

If there is nothing new under the sun, how do I get my awe and wonder, union with God experience?

How can I find amazement, thrills, and miracles, if they are "nothing new?"

How do I see things afresh, if they have all happened before?

Maybe, rather than “there is nothing new under the sun”, it ought to be: “Everything, every day is new under the sun.” That it seems to have happened before is an illusion.

Is such vision a philosophical choice or a basic reality? And then, what is the difference between these two?

I personally, would much rather see every day as new, fresh, different, and amazing. This kind of vision brings sparks, fire, and life to each moment.

Rest Stroke and Free Stroke

Guitar: Should I drop, give up, most of the rest stroke? In scales, etc.? What a question.

True, the rest stroke “binds” me to the adjacent string. Is it a form of slavery? Doesn't one need some form of slavery or “support” in this guitar-playing life? Probably. But it may be a question of degree. Perhaps I don't need as much rest stroke as before.

A (the) difference now is I have discovered that fast is easier than slow. Does this, will this, effect my view and application of the rest and free strokes? Good questions.

The “answer” to rest or free stroke is: some. The more tools the carpenter has, the better. The appropriate use of rest or free stroke, depending on where. Mix it up is, no doubt, best. It depends, depending, use both.

Maybe life is about more than money and business. Maybe my folk dance teaching is about more than that. But if it is, can I afford to spend so much time and effort following and supporting such a life?

If my answer to the above questions is yes, then I'll have to accept a life of poverty. A subsistence life. I'll never be rich; I'll never complete my dream of making mucho money (in the stock market, on tours, or whatever.)

True, I believe in my ability to get along, to survive. But to take the economic anxiety out of life, I've always hoped for wealth. Somehow someone or something will come along, support my artistic and love habits, the desire to continue doing what I love, and, in their kind manner, throw money at me "for free."

But it has not happened.

If I accept the above life, I must accept that it probably, definitely, will not happen. Well, it could happen. . . but only through some kind of miracle. But one cannot "expect" miracles. The Lord will do what He wants; I have no power over Him. As for little ego, personal me, I'll simply have to accept "my place."

What is my place? Is it really the life of a poor artist? One who can survive and get along, but will always remain poor?

Is this my place?

Perhaps it would be better for me to accept poverty. (This means financial mental poverty and the anxiety it always brings.)

Poverty may not be so bad. Some even think it is a laudable, desired state, especially for religious people or ascetics.

Maybe my calling is one of artistic riches but financial poverty.

Maybe instead of wealth I should think poverty. (I've certainly succeeded in it so far.)

If I think poverty, then certainly teaching folk dancing for almost no money is right in line. So are most of my other artistic endeavors. This way of thinking might even cause me to give up the miseries of the stock market.

Perhaps my new goal should be to accept and try to live in poverty. This way of thinking might even give me more peace of mind.

Monday, November 17, 2003

Moving Forward by Going Backward

Revealing and Remembering my Miracle Foundations

I am waking up with strange, old-time, cosmic depressions. This has not happened for months, years. It has not happened since I discovered and followed my miracle schedule.

But for the past few weeks, I have not followed it; I have been abandoning it in favor of much and many “detail” work projects: Preparing for Florida Folk Dance Camp is the main one – and this entails, of course, learning several new music recording and CD creating computer programs. Added to this, on the side, is my new Address Organization, Quark, Dreamweaver and Photoshop (in the distance) programs.

But mainly, it is the Music Match (and Pyro Cakewalk) CD creating programs that consume me.

This along with reorganizing all of my folk dance tapes, CDs, and records, and all of my international songs.

Thus there is a tremendous reorganization going on coupled with a tremendous computer learning process. I have been feeling overwhelmed by it all and have “given up” my daily writing. Thus, depression.

What to do?

Obviously, the best thing is to return to morning writing, as I am doing now. Even as I touch my morning fingers to the keyboard, I start to feel better; as the words pour out, the fog and veil slowly lift. It always feels like a miracle. And it is!

No question I need morning miracles to light my day. . . and my life. Submerging their light, fire, and spark beneath the burden of future progress only serves to shove me in a hole, smother my jumping joy, snuff out the light, remove me from God’s graces. Yet when this happens, as it has been happening during the past

two weeks, what can one do? Probably follow its misery until the bugger has run its course.

Well, the course is almost run. It is a new week. We'll see where all this leads.

No question, I must return to my miracle schedule. It has always worked in the past; it is working now; and, I'm sure, it will work in the future. It has always been my path to growth, satisfaction, inner revelation, and self-understanding. There is no reason why this should be any different today.

Indeed, I am moving forward by going backward.

Fear of Death

Whenever fear of death comes along, with its concomitant meaninglessness of life and purposelessness of striving for the more, think of reincarnation, and the eternal union and unity of God's Spirit.

Does reincarnation exist? Does it really take place? I cannot prove it. And I must admit, I really do not know. But I do know that the beautiful concept and stellar idea of reincarnation give purpose, meaning, and unity to my life. Thus I know I need it.

Does needing it make it true? Probably.

Thursday, November 20, 2003

On Long Term Goals, Patience, and Disappointment.

Long term goals take patience. Having a long term goal also helps one avoid disappointment.

Long term goals that last a life time help avoid mucho disappointment. Having them certainly helps foster perspective and develop patience.

Do I have any long term goals? In the stock market? In other areas? Indeed, I could probably use some.

If, upon reflection I discover that I have them, then what are they?

Good questions to ponder today.

I am still stunned, shocked, vibrating, and whip-sawed by my entrance into my (the) post-transitional period. Thus it is hard to say where I am going, and even what my short or long term goals are. But I am at the doorway of a new beginning; I am getting ready to ask the question.

Who Am I?

Who am I?

As a start, I am a man who can play the Alhambra.

Why did Bellow's teaching traumatize me for almost forty years?

Did I want and "need" such a trauma? Did I take it, accept it, because it fit my psyche? Did I have a basic psychological craving to hold myself down, to keep myself in place? Probably.

And am I dropping it because I no longer need it? Probably.

Did I need to hold myself down, keep myself back, prevent myself from flying, soaring, fast and furious on the guitar? Yes. Has this psychology also been manifest in my handling of money? No question most of my handling, dealings, and fears with money has held me back.

But now, as a post-transitional soul, I am free.

Shouldn't this new, post-transitional, inner freedom affect my guitar playing. . . and my money?

Bills as Payments. . . to Myself!

Hiring Myra, and paying her \$200 a month (to sell and promote tours, etc.), is really a form of paying myself to think harder.

I wonder if paying bills, any kind of bill, is really a form of paying myself.

Paying electricity, heat, etc. bills is (as) a form of paying myself for the ability to work in light, with heat, etc.

What an excellent way of seeing bills. . . as forms of payment to myself!

Paying others is a form of paying yourself!

And, of course, if myself is the world in its form of All-Is-One, then this kind of thinking is absolutely right!

Why do I pay others? What do these “payments to myself” really mean?

They are bills for the college of life. They pay for learning, personal growth, and expansion.

This kind of philosophy certainly cuts down on bill resentment. It might even help me appreciate what I’m paying for. Someday I might even learn to “enjoy” paying my bills!

What a victory that would be!

Guitar: Should I start the life and death extreme focus with the very first warm-up, the very first legato? No warm up, or rather, in the warm up itself. In other words, right away.

Well, why not?

A new and immediate approach to guitar. . . and everything else.

In a sense, this means “no warm up.”

Body and mind are inseparable.

The life and death extreme focus thought is the warm up.

Clamping Down on Joy

Does Cramp Equal Clamp?

Does a leg cramp, gastrocnemius cramp, other kind of cramp symbolize a clamping down on joy, a physical holding back of a mental process, a clamping down on the happy endorphins that flow through the body?

Twenty-Six Years: What a Blow to my Ego!

I have been just plain wrong about the bass. The melody, focus, and concentration is in the bass. Period. The trebles are decoration, tickling background, and rambling background poppycock.

What a blow to my ego! Twenty-six years of approaching and playing it wrong.

Twenty-six years to grind down my ego.

But at least I'm on the right bass track now.

Ego crumbles before the bass juggernaut.

What steps in to take the place of ego? Extreme focus!

Saturday, November 29, 2003

Thinking Long Range

It's taken twenty-five years to "solve" my Alhambra and arpeggio problem.

I've been working on my financial problems for over thirty-five years and I still haven't solved them.

I've been in the stock market (mostly with Joel) for a little over twenty years and that turned out to be a disaster.

I've been learning how to trade stocks for a year. I'm still a beginner there, but so far at least, short-term, that has led to more losses. (However, although I am now thinking of more long term trading, the jury is still out on this one.)

I've been trying to make money in my tour business for twenty years, and,

although I've had a few good years, and many hopes, over all it too has, at least financially, led nowhere.

How long does it take to succeed in something? Of the above, the only success I can only point to is in my guitar playing. And that has taken over twenty-five years.

Perhaps "some day" I will succeed in the tour business and stock market. But will I have to wait many more years? Will whatever success I find be achieved after death? How long must I wait? Will it ever happen, even posthumously?

All the above points to the importance of patience. Plus mucho work. Working with patience. Thinking long range. Achieving perspective.

Although so many times I stand at the border of giving up, I never do. Giving up means defeat. To me, giving up something I love is a form of death. When I keep fighting, and never give up, even though I may lose, viscerally, I still consider this as a form of victory.

Combining maximum creative effort with patience could eventually lead to victory. Although at times things seem hopeless, in reality, hope is never dead.

Perhaps some day I will be successful in all of the above endeavors. Only it may take longer, much longer, than I think.

Sea of Doing

Miracle Schedule: From Pentatonic to Hexatonic

I am losing my way in a Sea of Doing. And I'm waking up depressed.

I'm not used to being depressed, to having the depressed feeling. And I know it is because I've drifted away from writing. I've drifted away because I'm getting lost in a sea of doing.

Doing what?

Well, mostly recording, computing, opening up and learning many new fields.

Not only have I, in the process, drifted away from writing, but I've left much of my miracle schedule behind as well. All this is a perfect recipe for depression.

How to undepress myself? Simple: Get back to writing and the miracle schedule.

But I'm doing so many things. How will I have time. . .and focus? Well, in order not to get depressed, and, in the process, keep my up juices flowing, I somehow I have to figure out a way to synthesize my old miracle schedule activities with my new computer/recording/etc. ones. And to these I must add tour and booking sales. And maybe a touch of violin.

How do I do all this?

I need to organize and reorganize my days and my life. I cannot give up any other these important and vitalizing activities. There has to be a place for all of them. This means organizing a time and place for each one.

Wednesday, December 3, 2003

Looking for New Directions: Consolidating Gains

I'm sick of being afraid, of ever living under the cloud of financial terror.

But just because I'm sick of it, does that mean I can give it up? I'd certainly like to.

Can I accept the "fact" that I'll never solve or resolve my financial problems?

That, if by some miracle, I ever do, I'll find other problems to worry about.

Stand Naked Before the Passion!

"Consolidation" is such a boring word. Isn't there more going on?

First, I must reclaim my guitar body and my wrenched back. There must be a cosmic reason for these pains. Why was I whacked on the head. . . or, in this case, my back and twisted left shoulder? I was so high on Sunday after my run. Physically, I hadn't felt so good in weeks.

Is that why I was whacked? What about my left shoulder pain? Is it “payment” for guitar success?

I even achieved computer success.

Are these successes killing my body and poisoning my mind as well?

Is it the success-whackdown pattern?

Could my left shoulder be a new, different reaction to my Alhambra and Leyenda success? After all, I’ve never had this guitar success before. . . and I never had such a left shoulder pain.

Since the mind creates all pain, isn’t my mind creating this one?

I’ll start this analysis with guitar. What a strange, interesting idea: that I am creating pain in my left shoulder to prevent me from playing the guitar and thus avoid the burning trauma of falling into the fires of success.

The passion in success is just too hot. Parts of my mind can’t stand it. Therefore, it pulls back. Of course, it does so indirectly and irrationally, by placing its pain in my body, specifically in my left shoulder.

These days it is difficult for my mind to place fears in my back and knees. I’m more aware of these buggers; I’m onto their tricks. But the left shoulder is a “new area.” It is mostly unexplored by my wandering mind. Left shoulder could well be a fresh field in which to plant Alhambra and Leyenda success fears.

Am I really doing this to myself? Am I really creating such pains in order to avoid the trauma of successful Alhambra and Leyenda guitar playing? These thoughts on pain are so unbelievable in concept. . . . But they could be right!

On top of this is the idea of computer success. David said I have an aptitude for computer. Me? Have an aptitude for computers? This is an entirely new self concept.

But I must admit that after a year of torturous computer study of Dreamweaver, Adobe Photoshop, Quark, Address Organizer, and Music Match I am finally I am able to understand.

Finally, I can see some light at the end of the computer tunnel. . . .Whack!

Finally, I understand the bass line and can play Alhambra and Leyenda. . . .Pow!

Success upon success. . . .Result: my body is now bunched up in a great aching, hurting, arthritic protective ball, a defensive fire wall; a great paddle of self-whacking descends upon me.

What is the cure?

If I let the fire of passion through these self-created arthritic walls, won't they burn away my pain?

Again I ask: Am I really crippling myself with arthritic pains in order to avoid the trauma of success? It seems so amazing that my mind can and would do this to me. And yet, I sense it would. Indeed, it is! It works in memory of the old neighborhood; it is employed by the Old Neighborhood Protection Service.

Thursday, December 4, 2003

Screaming Guitar!

I hate the pain in my left shoulder. But it does bring out a whole new level of playing. Leyenda with a pain passion. Angry bees buzzing in my shoulder. Faster, and mad, mad! A storm of Leyenda fire released in and through my shoulder.

Could I be onto something here? Is the "purpose" of this shoulder pain to release a flood of "get-it-over-with" passion into my Leyenda. . . and all my other guitar pieces?

I'd like to think my shoulder pain (and all my suffering, for that matter) has a purpose. But just because I would like it to have a purpose, does it really? Or is my desire coloring "reality?"

Well, my "spiritual intuition" tells me that because I want something to have a purpose, then it does! I, working together with the cosmos, create the purpose.

Therefore, my shoulder pain does have a purpose. That purpose is to release a

flood of screaming passion into my guitar playing! And not only Leyenda, but all my pieces. After all, my shoulder hurts for all my pieces when I play guitar. Therefore, a flood of passion should be, will be, released in all my pieces.

This is the purpose of my shoulder pain. Now I scream when I play guitar. And my goal would be to release screams of passion through the guitar!

Suppose this pain in my shoulder is due to a muscle spasm. And, like a back spasm, even though it causes excruciating pain, actually does not physically damage to the body.

Can my shoulder pain be “thought through,” or viewed similar to a back pain? See is through psychological causes. Plus, look at it, view it, but do so as you “pay no attention to it.” View it as a passing muscle spasm storm that may hurt like hell but can and will do no real damage.

Ever since I got married I wanted to “prove I was a man.” How? What do “real men do?” They support a family. How? By making money.

That’s what I saw. And that’s what I did. For ten years I worked to make money. And I succeeded. I supported the family, got manly and made money.

Then a historic shift took place. Two huge life-changing forces rolled in around age forty. First, I wanted to get good at the guitar. . . I wanted freedom and self-realization as an artist. Second, I wanted to be rid of financial fears. . .so that I could accomplish the former, number one, my main goal. My vehicle for the latter was the study of money. . . and the stock market.

Over a period of twenty-five years I accomplished the former. And, over the same period, I utterly failed at the latter.

That is my last twenty-five years story: one success, one failure.

Well, now what?

It seems I am at the post-transitional cataclysmic point of giving up the market. . .

and putting my energies into selling my art. . . in all its forms.

Can I pay off my debts and make money in this way? I don't know. But it may be (is) my best shot. Besides, it may be what God wanted me to do on earth.

Money, Art, Play and Transcendence

Could it also be that, deep down, I really don't take money "seriously"? Art is serious, money isn't.

Sure, handling, and dealing with, money creates fear and greed. But life is more than fear and greed. It is play and transcendence. That's what is really important. And art has and is about play and transcendence.

I tried to make my pursuit of money similar to my pursuit of art: I tried using it as an instrument of play and transcendence. It didn't work.

I should stay out of money; I should stick to transcendence.

Can I make money with transcendence? Maybe.

But play and transcendence must, will, and do always come first. That (sadly, for dealing with money) is my nature.

So ends a New Leaf.

Artistic Masculinity and New Field

Investing in my Body

The body is the temple foundation for the soul of my work.

Maybe I can take the time I used for the stock market and invest it in developing and improving my body. No question, my yoga, 50s, and running program has taken a back seat. My body aches in every place.

Perhaps it would be better to "invest in my body" so it will be able to folk dance, play guitar, etc. and do all the work (to make the "small increments") it has to.

Big Killing

Taking The Small Increment Road

Big killing versus small increments:

I have been following the “big killing” road for a long time. . . almost twenty-five years. I followed it in both tours and the market. It has not worked. . . ever. Period.

As a post-transformational person, I recognize the experiment may be over. I’ve “done” the big killing routine. No question it was muchly based on Hope Road, a route based largely on lack of confidence, power, and strength.

The Small Increment Road is certainly slower. But it is more certain. The very idea of taking it must reflect a new, qualitatively different, dynamic, artistic masculinity/new field confidence. I can see the building blocks right in front of me.

It is time for a change. Isn’t the Small Increment Road the right road for the post-transformational me? Probably.

Friday, December 12, 2003

Chasing Away Old Man Pain

“Suddenly and Miraculously” Pain Free

Why did ninety per cent of the pains in my shoulders “suddenly” and “miraculously” go away? Posture correction? Doing a one-and-a-half hour total yoga session? Both? Other? Could that have been “all” I needed? Are, or were, other psychological factors involved, such as the overwhelming computer learning I had to accomplish during the month of November? It’s true that, during this time, I gave up total focus on all my miracle schedule, heavenly exercise programs—yoga, running, and the 50s. I hardly even stretched after folk dance. Nor did I warm-up before dancing. It was all part of an “experiment” to see how little I can do, how much I can get away with before such physical neglect created the inevitable slow “death” of my body.

I’m not sure about the answers to these questions. But it sure is nice to be ninety-

eight percent pain free for awhile.

Notice how, after most of the pain drained out of my shoulders, I awoke with sudden new (minor) pains in my right elbow. So-called “mouse and computer” pains. Why now? I haven’t had those pains for weeks to months. Perhaps old man pain has jumped ship. The light of awareness chased his darkness from my shoulders. He had no place to go; so he’s hiding, once again, in my right elbow.

I just chased old man pain into a corner.

But he never gives up. Still, if I can keep him on the run by constantly focusing the light of awareness on his miserable behind, I’ll stay ahead in the battle.

Ramblings on Perfection and Imperfection

One Alhambra played with the cold perfection of relaxation; the cold perfection of perfect right hand finger tip touching and feeling of the strings. Perfection. . . .Cold perfection.

What is beyond perfection? Especially what is beyond cold perfection?

Warm emotion.

Warm emotional playing is the next step beyond “cold” perfection.

This means perfection is not the goal of playing. Rather it is a step, a stairway, a rung on Jacob’s upward ladder. Where does perfection lead? To imperfection. Where is this “higher level” of imperfection found? In emotional playing of the guitar!

Emotional playing brings in the human element.

The human element is ever imperfect.

Perfection is the first step on the road to imperfection.

You have to be perfect before you can be imperfect.

Peaceful, Relaxed, and Centered

Finding The True Tremolo!

On the right-hand five-finger and four-finger tremolo, the six-finger and four-finger arpeggio "finger tip feel": it is too fast to think individual fingers. Rather feel all finger tips along with their nails, flying and floating together.

This is a different level of tremolo, very hard to do. But it certainly feels good when I get it! Very peaceful, relaxed, and centered.

Is this the truest tremolo? Like the mystical, medieval, crusader search to find the True Cross, I am on the path to finding, nay, I am now actually touching, the relaxed and centered source of the True Tremolo!

I am vacillating between the morally right and centered leadership self, expressed in the eternal true tremolo versus thinking and focusing on the audience, expressed in right hand tension, uneven playing, and the ephemeral false tremolo.

Thus, in the deepest of ways, true tremolo and true leadership go together; they belong to the centered true self.

Thursday, December 18, 2003

Great Physicists and Digital Electronics

I have just started reading two books, one on the Great Physicists, the other on Digital Electronics. And this all to understand the basis of computers.

Fascinating, indeed. I wonder if I am starting, am at the edge of, a new existence, a new road.

The past twenty-five or more years have been spent trying to convince myself, to prove to myself that I was an artist. In the process, I also wanted to learn how to support myself so I studied business as well. Indeed, it was my artist/entrepreneurial phase.

Now I wonder if I am not at the border of a new phase: call it the scientific phase.

I also wonder if I am not returning to the past. . . only differently. After all, I started college as a physics major. I loved the wonder of the universe. Also, I figured that once I learned and understood all about the wonders of the physical universe, I could then get back to the wonders of music which was the emotional, artistic, and spiritual center of my universe.

The common element in both arts and sciences was wonder.

Well, now I have the confidence in myself as an artist. . . and even as an entrepreneur. Although my financial life is a mess and I have yet to solve the money problem, nevertheless, in spite of these monetary failures, I still have full confidence in my artistic and entrepreneurial abilities. So, in a sense, that life question and “problem” has been solved.

Now what?

Perhaps I am now ready to move on to the next phase.

What would that be?

Last year was my stock day-trading year. I spent most of my mental time and energy studying and playing the stock market. That phase has ended.

This year (starting in November) is my computer year. I am studying all kinds of computer programs. With this, I want to understand the foundations of computers, how and why they work. This leads me to the books on Digital Electronics and the Great Physicists.

Artistic masculinity has been solved. I have taken my first steps into the New Field.

Sunday, December 21, 2003

I have to get away from the world in order (later) to reenter it again.

Progress in nuance is slow and difficult. The last one percent is the hardest.

Nuances are subtle; improvements seem so small. My guitar progress can only be measured in millimeters and micro-seconds.

But, of course, where else is there to go?

Mental Toughness Equals Confidence Equals Relaxation

Among other things, mental toughness means having the confidence to relax (and stay calm in situations) right away: in guitar playing, running, yoga, folk dancing, performing, and even with the other problems of life.

Why do I want or need others to agree with me in the first place? Because I want them to confirm my views. With confirmation comes self-affirmation.

But do I really need others to confirm me? What, after all, do they even know about me? The answer is: mostly nothing. Therefore, it is an illusion to even seek their confirmation.

Self-affirmation can only be found by looking within.

Wednesday, December 24, 2003

Be Kind to Myself

Congratulations for Facing and Standing up to the Trauma

The mother trauma:

The trauma of standing up for my way of doing things. First, she will get enraged in a terrible storm of hysterical yelling; then, when that doesn't work, she will threaten to die. Ultimately, the result of these tactics is to make the whole problem my fault. Then I will feel guilty, change my ways, and go over, submit to her point of view.

Truth is, I won't submit to her point of view. . . and this, even though I may try. . . for awhile. But I always "sink back" to doing it my way, to being who I am.

Therefore, trying to change me from the outside is utterly and ultimately hopeless. A will of the wisp. An illusion.

Yet I fear the trauma, anyway. Even though intellectually, I know I will survive it, nevertheless, I fear the upcoming storm. Perhaps I just need more time to picture it in my mind, to think about. After all, handling trauma on its deepest emotional level, takes much patience and many years.

Perhaps I could be kind to myself by realizing this,
I might also add congratulations for constantly facing, dealing with, and standing up to it.

So: If I stand up for myself, for my way of doing things, I will be annihilated!

Is this a realistic fear? Maybe.

Should I face it nevertheless? Absolutely. Death never goes away. But the fear of it can be confronted. One must look it straight in the face, deal with the destructive forces head on and with full consciousness. It is a necessary survival technique, and it heightens the intensity of daily life.

Or is the trauma a fear of death or a fear of abandonment? Is abandonment a type of death? Does it feel worse than death? Maybe. But once abandoned in this life, one recovers. . . and moves on. Once dead, recovery comes only through reincarnation.

Choosing Trauma as a Form of Mental Relaxation

This fear of abandonment is a temporary return to a place I haven't been to for awhile.

Why am I returning there now? Why am I even bothering? Could it be a subtle denial of my present computer, guitar, and even loose-singing successes? It wouldn't be the first time.

Truly, I have accomplished much in the past month to six weeks. I am now “finished.”

What does “finished” mean? That I can glow for awhile, realize I have “gained on it,” and that, after a short and glowing respite, am ready to move on to the next level.

Perhaps “putting myself down” by returning to old traumas is my subtle way of “resting,” taking a mental vacation. Who knows, I may be choosing this kind of misery and depression because it relaxes me.

I’m leading folk dancing and singing at Congregation Sons of Israel in Leonia tonight. It’s only 3:30 in the afternoon but I can’t stop thinking about it. What to do?

I might as well enjoy the mounting intensity of this pre-performance excitement.

What did I just say?

Enjoy! Enjoy the heightened intensity of the pre-performance excitement. Will this be my new way of looking at performances? I hope so.

Friday, December 26, 2003

Gliding Past my Brain

It is a amazing how so many of the principles of physics: magnetism, inverse proportions, amperes, volts, (but strangely, not ohms: resistance or conductivity, a notion which I somehow completely understand) that contain ideas, glide right past my brain.

This is probably because I do not yet see the poetry in them.

Even though I have a practical organizational sense, I am basically a dreamer, poet, and romantic. I understand poetry; beyond that not much makes sense.

Thus my “job” is to see the poetry in physics, the romance in electronics, the dream behind and beyond the digital.

As I break down crying over the beautiful five-finger tremolo I just playing, I really feel like a lost soul in this world. I just can't figure things out. It means handing myself over to God completely. What I know is so limited. I don't understand the tremolo or why it has taken me so long to get it. I don't understand its personal and deepest meaning. Why, why, why? My ultimate answer is: Who knows?

Such an attitude brings me mucho humility. Arrogance (whatever I have of it) just doesn't seem to work anymore.

As I go deep within I forget more and more about the external world.

Part of the beauty of this guitar playing is the growing ability to focus deep within, and forget the internal audience that once judged me as they listening.

This internal audience, one very similar to my external audience, is slowly withering away. Thank God!

Monday, December 29, 2003

The Right to Dignity

Trauma problem rising again: No matter what I do or how good I am, she will find something wrong and yell at me.

According to her, I will never be blame free. There will always be something wrong or bad that is my fault.

If there is no question she is thinking this, then the real problem becomes: why does part of me agree.

Well, on one level, I have messed up.

I have no problem agreeing with that.

But, and here is the key, I have right to do something wrong. True, I want to fix it. But I also have the right not be constantly badgered and yelled at because I have done something poorly or wrong.

Who is giving me these rights? Only my inner dignified self. That self gives me the right to fix it in my way.

Is that asking or expecting too much? I don't know.

But I can't ask or demand these rights from others. They are free to act the way they like. If yelling is their style, so be it.

Start Immediately: Jump Right In

Something has changed; something is different; things don't seem to work in the same way anymore.

Even my miracle schedule somehow doesn't work in the same way.

What is going on here?

Do I not need the old forms? Is it similar to "warming up immediately on guitar?" Is it I don't need the miracle schedule "warm-ups" the same way because I am there now, have arrived at the place where my skill is such that, through immediate focus and concentration, I can unknot and unlock myself within a few minutes?

Does that explain the down, sadness, and vague feelings of being lost? The rationale for my old forms has vanished, no longer needed. (Or, at best, I may need only a fraction, a shadow, of its former self.)

This would mean I hardly need my warm-up singing exercises anymore; I can jump right into singing. This applies to my yoga, running, my 50s, and even my folk dancing.

Warm-up exercises create heat and focus. Many years of practice, study, and the accumulation of practical knowledge have diminished my need for warm-up exercises.

Through intense focus I can create heat, practically jump right in, and this without injury.

My first revelation came when I discovered micro-running: Immediate, slow warm-ups performed while running.

The micro approach to guitar playing, singing, and folk dancing is now available. Start immediately. Jump right in. Isn't that what the 2004 left shoulder pain, unknotting, and unlocking is all about?

Further Applications: A Radical New Approach

"Point of Transformation"

Here's a radical new approach: Maybe instead of doing each exercise by the number I should do it to the point of transformation. In other words, over and over again without counting, focusing on the feeling the exercise creates in my body and watching my body and mind being transformed by the constant repetition of focus on the exercise.

Counting the numbers is very earthbound.

Focusing on Soft Power flowing into your body parts (forgetting counting and numbers) catapults you into the mental/spiritual, high-voltage world of magnetic force and electromotive energy.

It moves you immediately from quantitative to qualitative.

On Performing Silence

On performing Six Lute Piece Of The Renaissance:

Silence between pieces is part of the concert presentation and music itself. Plan, it, count it, program it.

The technique and power of performing silence: Use it playing guitar in public, teaching folk dancing, and more.

The technique, use, and power of silence at beginnings and endings of

performance.

Silence, when used correctly, is extremely commanding.

Also think about meter and rhythm when performing: It's much more fun!

Mother's Voice Returns

I've been waking up with the cosmic downs during the past few days. Also, I keep thinking, "I've done it all."

What is this "new deadness" in me?

Am I no longer willing to take a chance, to jump? Am I afraid of hurting myself. . . again? Hurting myself by running too hard, pushing too hard, doing yoga too hard, stretching too much, overdoing it? Am I so afraid of overuse and overdone injuries that I am pulling back from great and breakthrough efforts?

I am stuck in "Middle Land," taking the safe, known routes. No thrills in that. No growth, either.

Indeed, the computer fields I am exploring are totally new. There are thrills in that. Along with visits to electronics, physics, chemistry, mathematics, etc.

But what about the "old" fields? I used to like, even thrill, with them. Now I am treading water, bouncing the ball in the same place, just keeping them up, maintaining them. I am working on a maintenance level. Well, although there are no thrills in that, it's still okay "for awhile," especially since I am thrilling in my New Computer Studies.

But the morning cosmic downs are bringing the "for awhile" into question.

What is going on here?

I am definitely afraid to "push beyond." And this, mostly in my physical pursuits: Running, yoga, 50's, even some dance. I am, or have (temporarily) become afraid of hurting my body. . . again. The excuse or "explanation" is that my body is

becoming old and I must be more “careful” with it. Because of its advanced and advancing age it is more prone to injury. Well, although this is and may always have been true, as an attitude, it is total bull shit. It is, really, once again, my mother speaking to me from the old neighborhood, telling me to take it easy, don’t work hard, lie down, relax, take it easy; if you don’t, you’ll get sick.

How did this fear of injury seep back into my soul? How did my mother’s voice return so subtly? I don’t know. But, in any case, it did. And today, I am on the verge of recognizing it. Nay, not on the verge, rather, I am there.

Mother’s voice returns. What shall I do with it?

The question may also emerge: Why does it return now?

Hint: I gave a great Monday night folk dance class! I just about gave it my all. . . with many new Ciga and Jaap dances. At the end of the class, I bend sideways and hurt my back in a somewhat different and new way. I had no remembered ever hurting my back in that particular spot, and in that particular way.

Hurting backs are always a signal. What was wrong? What was bothering me? Well, I had just given the class my all. Mother’s voice returned: “Stop making that all-out effort. You’ll hurt yourself.” Well, to fulfill her self-fulfilling prophecy, I did.

Perhaps I am getting ready to fight Mama’s voice again, to struggle against her noxious, fearful, but partially internalized warnings. Perhaps this is another and next aspect of the post-transitional state. (That “post-transitional” word is getting boring, but I don’t know what else to use. . . yet. Even “post-transitional” is metamorphosizing into something else, another term or word, something new.)

Folk dancing, running, yoga, the 50's: all to be looked at again and fresh, reconsidered in the eyes, under the gaze, and through the recalcitrant voice of inner restraint, the fear-filled voice of Mama.

Not that restraint is bad. Only it has gone to far.

When restraint has turned into a straight jacket, it becomes a noxious wardrobe:
it is the wrong clothing for me.

So ends a New Leaf