

## Finance

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

### The Ultimate Freedom

Imagine that, the stock market had little to do with making money! No wonder I “didn’t mind” losing it. As long as the dream stayed alive.

But like my dream of having financial security so that I could become an artist, I became an artist anyway, even without financial security. Same thing with running wild on the lawn. I used money and the stock market to enhance my ability to run wild on the lawn. The stock market experience was a complete financial failure. Yet I learned to run wild on the lawn anyway. It happened almost in spite of the stock market. And I became an artist; the stock market was “merely” a diversion, but obviously a necessary diversion. There was a reason I had to lose most of my money in it. The market served a purpose, although I don’t yet know what purpose was. Perhaps to learn that the market, and even money itself, although needed, is not in itself necessary in order to run wild on the lawn. Perhaps money and the ultimate freedom of running wild on the lawn, have little or nothing to do with each other. Apples and oranges.

Hmmm, indeed.

If running wild on the lawn is my ultimate freedom, perhaps I don’t, and never did, need the stock market anyway. Perhaps playing the market was “besides the point.” Playing was important, the market was not. The substance was important, not the form. I mixed up the essence, running wild on the lawn, with the form, the stock market.

Learning to run wild on the lawn, and the trauma of the early repression of such a desire, indeed stunted my going public, “reality” growth. But perhaps I needed to

play such a game to work through my trauma and learn this basic distinction between my fundamental running-wild-on-the-lawn need, and its reflection in the various “public” games I played. The financial game was one of them with its most dangerous, financial form (for me), the stock market.

### Helpless Rage!

Helpless rage! Over the Israeli-Palestinian war. The suicide bombings. The American response. The Bush-Powell “even-handedness,” the pretty much giving up on the war on terrorism as it applies to the Mideast, Bush bowing to the Saudi’s. etc.

Also the stock market is descending into the pits. I’ve sold everything. I stand in amazement at my losses. Here I felt a helpless fear. Now that I’ve sold I feel partly disgusted angry at my losses, partly fearful, and partly relieved that I can start a new life. At least in the stock market, bad as it is, I can do something. I have done something: I have sold. All.

But for the world situation, the matzav, the situation in Israel, the rising anti-Semitism, the feelings of betrayal by the world, I feel a helpless rage.

I can’t change the world; I can’t change the world situation. Yet I am enraged by it. Helpless rage, indeed.

My stomach is churning. I didn’t sleep much or well last night. I’m leaving on a two-week tour to Spain this morning. The world is falling apart. The future looks bleak. Who will be touring in this terror-stricken world? That takes care of my main money-making business. How will I pay off my debts? A fearful question.

Thus the country, the stock market, Israel, anti-Semitism, killings, suicide bombing, the world is in a terrible state today.

I usually complain about myself, not the world. But I can’t deny that I’m part of the world.

Yet some of the old rules must hold. On the deepest of levels, nothing changes. It is still I who see this situation as so bleak. Killings, bombings, anti-Semitism, etc., are

nothing new. It's just I am not used to seeing them on this level. But there has always been violence and a descending miserable stock market and financial situation. After all, my parents grew up in the depression. I have just been protected from all that by fifty years of a good economy and safe, well-defended, unattacked America. Now the curtain has fallen. The dark side, which was always there, but hidden, has come forward, revealed itself. Instead of behind me, or to the side, now the face of evil stand right before me.

After all, there was once a World War II, Nazi death camps; there was also World War I, and many wars before that. Death, murder, torture, it's all horrible but nothing new. I have just never faced it before.

Yes, losing most of my money in the stock market signifies a new life; so does facing terror, war, suicide bombings, and evil.

The world situation has ruined my party. But it was a half party, a dream and "unrealistic" party to begin with. I never faced the possibility of losing all my money, suicide bombings, a world war, total destruction of the world, and more.

Perhaps now is the time to face it.

I can fight this horror, fight for the good, but it is also a forever thing. Evil never goes away. But neither does the good. The struggle between them is endless.

I am starting to face it.

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

### Standing In The Debris

I feel awful – and inadequate – not only about having lost most of my money, but also, having lost all hope of making money – in the stock market.

Losing most of my money feels like a temporary situation. But losing all hope feels permanent.

However, feelings are fickle and usually fool me. They are subject to instantaneous change. Thus, although I may not be able to see it today, in the future, I

could, once again, have both hope and money.

But, no question, I need a new foundation. The old structure, based, obviously, upon the unstable foundation of false hope for non-existent money made and lost through the market, has ended. I stand somewhat bewildered in its debris. I'm partly depressed, partly confused, partly shocked.

What can I do about this?

All I can do is reflect: How did this happen? What new foundation? Where can I find hope amidst the devastation? At the moment, I can't. I'm not mad enough yet. Somehow I don't have the energy to be angry. It feels stupid. Who can I be mad at? Only me. I put myself in this hole. I made all the stock market decisions. I had the dream of making money in the market. The dream ended. It cracked in the sea of realism. I hate realism. It feels so permanent, hard, and stiff. It is a wall I hate to face or accept.

I am a dreamer. I love my dreams. I am also proud of my dreams and my ability to follow them in spite of all the obstacles thrown in my path. It is the life of the brave, the heroic.

My hero just cracked. Dream smashed. Columbus is broke and destitute. Now what? Should I stop dreaming just because nothing worked out in the market? Should I change or redirect my dreams? If I give up the market, what about my dream of wealth?

Ha! Do I have a dream of wealth? Why? I don't know. I don't need wealth. I just need enough to get along and fulfill my dream of being an artist and following the artistic trail. But I am doing that now. I am fulfilling that dream.

How does wealth fit in?

Perhaps it is simply another dream clothed in money. It is a form of hope, a form of more. The money itself I do not need. But I do need the hope of more. The concept, desire, and dream of more, more, more drives me on. "Never enough! Never stop! Never leave the adventure trail!" Those are my mottos.

Money and its acquisition are simply another form of adventure and excitement. The stock market is one land of dreams in which I tried to fulfill it.

But as Tom Morse said, “You can’t make money in it.” (He also said he could afford to lose it.) I think, I hope, I have learned that lesson through the pain of losing so much money.

But I still want more money. Is there another way for me to “gamble” and get it?

From past experience, the only way I have ever made money is through my own work. My own efforts, even in the field of art, have brought me some-to-enough financial success. My dream of making oodles of money – like the dream of communism – is a failed dream. The communists went on for seventy years in the Soviet Union. I only went on for twenty-five. That’s progress.

The debris I stand in is the fallout from my failed dream. “Obviously,” any future hopes must now be based on my own work.

What work? What business can I personally build to make money? I am psychologically ready to move on.

On to what?

Promoting and pushing my own businesses.

What are my businesses? Which ones shall I push?

Can I make money in them? Of course. I have no choice but to give them my all.

(Now that the stock market is out.)

### Return to the Market?

Could the stock market have been, psychologically, an attempt to find my lost father? To reach him by “allowing” him to protect me? But I also hated his “protection.” Why should I even need it? I could handle things myself. His “protection” was such a denial and put down of my power. Therefore, even though part of me wanted it, another part rejected it. Paralysis at its best. Paralysis in the market, too. I could rarely act definitively. I was better when I traded my own Fidelity

account. Without “father” Joel. Speaking to him made me hesitate. I always thought he somehow “knew” more than I did. It made me unsure in my decisions. I’d always run my thoughts by him secretly wanting approval but also hating the fact that I wanted it.

Now I am free of that, of Joel and father, perhaps I could “practice the new me” by trading a small amount in my own Fidelity account.

Monday, May 20, 2002

### Taking Credit

We arrived in Galicia. I had a good night’s sleep in Lugo.

Tough tour. Great people.

Basically, I love it!

Today I want to do more!

More what?

I’m in an expansive mood: More tours, more push-ups, more, more, more.

This tour has gone so well on so many levels. Great people, great guide in Mayte, great me in going public. I even survived yesterday’s claustrophobic, pit-of-the-stomach panic (This tour never stops, I’ve had no time alone, etc.)

Can I take credit for having great people on tour, great Mayte guiding, and great going public, and great tour?

Well, why not? I am the leader. I do create the mood. I’ve had so much fun being my expansive, off-the-wall, running wild self. My personal victory is that I’ve done all this in public! The few times I’ve been “criticized,” I’ve checked my mind, realized its potential lid formation, conquered it through awareness, gone past it, and moved on. Many instances where I could have, would have in the past, simply shut up and shut down. But now, after checking out the possible formation of inner lids, I didn’t shut up or shut down. Instead, I kept going! I broke through these enclosed walls, smashed these plastic lids. Good for me! Going public. Gone public! This is the

coalescing result of psychoanalysis, birth of the New.

So let's take credit. This tour has been ultimately, my creation. Sure I've had help from Mayte, her father, Paco, agent Alejandro, and my fine tour members; sure I could not have done it without them. But the fact that I need them does not take credit away from me. This tour is still, ultimately, my creation. Just as a writer needs a pen as an instrument to create his writings, so I need Mayte, Paco, Alejandro, and my tour members to create this tour. They are instruments in my hands just as I am an instrument in God's hands. Through me, as means, God "expresses" Himself, make Himself manifest in the world. Through my tour members, Mayte (and Paco), I make myself, my world view and personality manifest in this world. I ex-press it. Thus working with and through others, this tour becomes my work in progress. It is a gone-public creation.

Yet something is mentally missing when I take credit for the tour. It feels egotistical; it does not recognize or express enough appreciation for Mayte and my tour members. Somehow, by saying the tour is my creation, I am giving myself too much credit; somehow I have "denied" the power and contribution of others, and appropriated it to myself. And this, even though I have verbally given them all credit.

Is this a "taking credit" problem? Am I being too humble, too self-effacing? Is it really a subtle form of put down, a lid in disguise?

I hear a voice saying "How egotistic of you to dare take credit. You know you couldn't have done this without them; more important, you know you couldn't have done this without me! "

Ma, do I hear you again? Are you secretly once again trying to diminish my power, demean my accomplishments?

Probably.

She keeps talking: "You cannot take credit for your creations. Especially public credit and gone-public credit. Stay in your room. Shut up! Play your violin. If in the privacy of your own chamber you want to, dare to take credit, that's okay – as long as I

don't know about it. But as far as public credit for your tour creation, forget about it. Your concerts and Texas concert tour are fine. . . but besides the point. It is better to rest. Are you tired, dear? That is the proper response to your public and private creations and accomplishments.

"You cannot take credit; you cannot run wild on your own gone-public lawn. If you try, I'll knock you on the head. Egotistical is the word I'll use as my club."

Thus Ma's voice still speaks through the old neighborhood megaphone. But my awareness of her voice (created by my own brain) will help me move past her and take credit for my creations and tour accomplishments.

"Look Ma, look what I've done! I've created a Texas concert tour; I've created a successful Spanish tour. I've gone public; I'm out in world creating public events!"

"That's fine, dear. But it's better to rest. Are you tired?"

Thus with one question did Ma diminish, through non-recognition, my creations and accomplishments.

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Music: Scottish bagpipes and accordion.

1. I didn't buy the gaita in Santiago de Compostela. I figured, if I'm to spend seven hundred dollars I might as well spend eight to one thousand on a Scottish bagpipe and take some lessons. I've graduated from Bulgarian gaida to Scottish bagpipe.

2. How about buying and learning to play accordion? And take some lessons.

That's two new instruments. Have I gone as far as I can go on the guitar? Am I expanding too much? Am I doing many things poorly?

But I do many languages poorly. Why not play many instruments poorly? On the other hand, I may end up playing them well! But really, it doesn't matter how well or badly I play them but only matters that I enjoy playing them, grow, expand, and



follow my more.

The only thing stopping me from trying, or even thinking about adding Scottish bagpipe and accordion lessons is the overwhelmed feeling. Plus the expense. But neither are that great.

So what is stopping me?

Basically, nothing.

Also, my right ring finger nail seems to be growing back. What does that mean symbolically and guitar-wise? More and better guitar practice? Will I then be playing and practicing three instruments?

Fundamentally, does it all symbolize a musical return?

#### Positive View of Headaches

Was it a breath through headache in disguise? I “needed it” to wipe away the dust of the past, the clean the slate so I could start fresh on my new musical path.

This is indeed a new and “positive” way of looking at my headaches. Seeing them as cleansers, purifiers. Headaches are the broom that sweeps the floor before the new furniture can be moved in.

It is hard for me to accept the miraculous nature of what I have just said. Did a Santiago de Compostela miracle really occur in my mind? Am I really changed from traveling the Camino? Is a return to music as described above really about to happen? I believe it is. All “feels” right. We’ll just have to see how it all unfolds after I return to America.

Wednesday, May 22, 2002

#### Analyzing A Headache

Big headache last night. Again. That’s two in a row. I’m missing something here.

(Thank God I've got a problem, a challenge, even a put down! Old neighborhood meets new neighborhood. But it may not be as simple as that.)

First of all, although I love this group and have had lots of fun, I am still and always will be, the leader. That means that, even though I love this group and am having fun, my responsibilities while on tour never end! This sets me apart from the group, always. Thus my love for the group and the fun I'm having is qualitatively different from everyone else.

On tour, I am always working. My responsibilities go on night and day and last the entire two weeks. I can never get away from them. Nor should I. Nor do I want to.

I like my responsibilities, Yes, they can be and at times they are: fun! But they are also a constant weights on my shoulders.

Aha, weight on my shoulders, on my neck. . . and head! That is what is causing my headache. We are approaching the end of this tour. By now I am getting tired. I've had enough. I need an escape, a rest, a vacation. I'm ready to go home. But I've still got a few days to go. So I'm feeling a bit angry, and mad at being trapped. But, until now, I was not aware of this feeling. Consequently, I have neither realized nor face it. Result: a splitting headache.

What can I do about this?

1. Be aware. Recognize my anger. Then, lying deep beneath my anger is its root cause: the claustrophobic panic of feeling trapped. That fear is what is physically "expressed" in my headache.

Panic? Did I say panic?

Claustrophobia? Did I say claustrophobia?

Trapped, stuck in the closet, dropped into a well, squeezed in a vise. Yes, these are some bottom-line feelings I often have at the end of a tour.

The only cure for panic, claustrophobia, stuck, and trapped is awareness. Awareness will cure me.

I'm not cured yet. But I've taken the first step.

Bottom line, it's not the anger but rather the fear that causes my headache. Stuck and feeling pushed down causes my claustrophobia and panic. What does this sound like? A lid, of course. My inner Ma pushing me down again, saying no to my running wild on the lawn, running wild on this tour. Thus I can say: Tour claustrophobia and panic are really forms of return to the old neighborhood. Escape from the past is not so easy. But once again, I have taken another first step.

After two week I can no longer hang on to my tour leadership strength. Thus I let myself slip back into the old neighborhood. Perhaps such a slip is really a search for a resting place, a kind of "vacation," miserable as my headache may be. Slipping backward is the only for I know. Or knew. But I'm recognizing it. Thus, as I become more aware of its presence and mechanics, I progress in the process of giving it up.

I'm moving on.

The headache analysis I have just done is utterly brilliant and amazing.

Friday, May 24, 2002

#### Baffled At The Beginning Of A New Life, A New Era

The selling of all my stocks must symbolize the end of an era, the closing of a twenty-five year life.

First came shock at its death; then came the mourning period which I did while on my tour of Spain. I returned to America. The sadness and shock have passed. I'm beginning a new life, a new place, a new era.

I'm somewhat baffled at how good I'm feeling.

Spain: shock and mourning at the death of my old life.

America: Baffled by good feelings at the beginning of a new.

That was part of my Spanish pilgrimage: dealing with the death of the old life and the beginning of the new.

Sunday, May 26, 2002

### The Difference

Let's face it: how much I love the feel of the guitar in my hands, the feel of tone and sound in my voice when I sing. I always have. But desire for improvement, accomplishment, and audience approval has clouded this most personal of visions.

When I say my post-Spain guitar, singing, and perhaps even writing and other efforts are different, this may be what I mean. Since I have "nowhere to go" anymore, I can focus on how much I love it, on the feel in the present rather than the accomplishment of the future.

### Visceral Need

This means going out of the house, doing business, seeing people, etc., the going-public life is not something I am forced to do against my will (because I have to make a living). It is not something unnatural that I have to warm-up for or prepare mentally and physically to do. Rather it is part of my hard-wired human makeup, a visceral need.

I actually need to give concerts.

Tuesday, May 28, 2002

As for my writings being "edited by Bernice, Paula, and Miki: watch out. I didn't have a castration dream for nothing. Don't let their fears and concerns edit the life out of not only my writings. Such lids will, if I am not careful, destroy even my desire to write.

It's nice to listen to what others say but it is important not to give it too much credence, not to pay too much attention to it.

After all, deep down, only I know what is best.

Wednesday, May 29, 2002

### Left Side Split Off Returns?

I wonder if my body is falling apart for the same psychological reasons it always does: anger, resistance, and etc. to something that I have to or am doing.

In other words, once again, my physical pains are reflections of my psychological state.

I both wonder and hope this is true. I wonder philosophically; I hope because then I can mentally cure myself. New thoughts and attitudes would be my medicine.

If, once again, I am creating my own pains for psychological reasons this is getting almost "boring." A pattern. I always do it. Why write about it again?

But, of course, why not? I write to cure myself. And evidently, I must cure myself anew every day. Just because it is "boring" doesn't mean it does not have to be done. After all, the sun also rises every day. Is that boring? Most people think not. They are, in fact, happy the sun rises anew each day.

Should I be happy that new pains arise each day? Well, it shows I'm still alive. New challenges. That's positive.

We'll see where this daily old road with its new dressing leads.

Let's simply catalogue the pains to look at: left elbow, left knee, left foot top. Hmm, it's all on the left side. My French, Aix-en-Provence, post-Claudia split off was on the left side. Isn't that my dark, angry side? I haven't been angry for awhile. Is my left side telling me something? Is there an unexpressed or unrecognized pain, hurt, sadness, anger, or even a rage growing? I am not aware of it. But the left side is telling me something. What is it?

Thursday, May 30, 2002

### Strange Indeed

Indeed, complain, complain. Can't get with the program whatever the program is. Gazing into the Spanish mist. Lost, lonely, down, forecast, downcast, imbibed, and

forgotten are my goals, whatever they were or are.

Where am I, after all? I truly do not know this morning. Sixty-five annularis with its twirling ring fingers has turned into a disaster beyond wheels.

So much to do but I can't do a thing. Strange, indeed. Stuck and lonely. Of course, I am never lonely. So why did I write the word? I don't know. It's part of the I don't know where, who, or why I am problem. This post-northern Spain morning lost problem is a strange duck, indeed.

The only word that keeps coming up is "indeed." I wonder what that means, if anything. Does it have something to do with "deeds" or lack of them?

I'd love to feel a tinge of disgust or misery to prod me into getting started. But I can't turn it on.

The bells are tolling but I can't even hear them. Strange, indeed.

Where am I this morning? Nowhere.

I keep looking for a sign of progress. That means I must want one. Progress is important to me.

Am I stepping away from the audience and, as expressed in slow or "conscious" playing, progressing towards (into) my own guitar-playing self?

Do my aches and pains express a physical breakdown of a mental attitude? Am I stepping into a new form?

Will the aches and pains disappear when the new self is formed?

That would fulfill my wish, my desire for progress.

Maybe some of my former, downwards, old-neighborhood patterns are revisiting me; maybe they are being warded off through my aches and pains; maybe my aches and pains are "defending" me.

By studying Spanish, nay "committing" myself to it, I am holding on to my tour.

Thus, I am impeding my progress. I don't know what future I am progressing towards. But I am definitely holding on to the past.

I'm in mourning for my tour, holding on to it tightly. I don't want to let it go.

Time to let go. And move on.

Where to? Who knows? But I can begin by clearing the path.

I don't know where I'm going in the future. But at least the path must be wide open.

Giving up the Spanish bullion walls of protection, the holding future Spanish language study. Terror and sinking. I am falling into the abyss. Will new fears never end? Probably not. They'll just be "different." Every new challenge begins with terror, panic, fear, falling into the abyss, facing the wide range of nothingness, the infinity of empty.

Back to terror. I thought I had conquered it. Ha!

Into the abyss I go!

Terror minimizes my aches and pains. (Maybe I have them in order to avoid it. Who wants to fall into the abyss, anyway? But what choice is there?)

There is no protection from the terror (awe) of life. But nevertheless, I try to forget about it.

Holding on to the past is one form of false protection.

Emotional yoga. Focus on the terror sections of my body.

Let's face it: deep down my aches and pains fill me with terror. The What if? syndrome. Foot pains: what if I can't walk, can't teach dancing, can't support myself,

am helpless?

On a "higher" level, terror can be erotic. It's the "more fun" level.

Great energy goes into terror. . . and into avoiding it.

Maybe that is what some of the post-tour fatigue I felt. Suddenly, no tour, no structure: The terror, anxiety, of post-tour emptiness.

Monday, June 3, 2002

Giving Myself The Gift Of Morning (Writing)

Can I really give myself the incredible gift of writing for two hours after breakfast? The mornings were my best sales times; plus after 9:00 a.m. I always felt that "work begins," which means money making work begins. But to give myself the gift of the morning, the gift of mornings, to be free and confident enough to allow myself to write during that precious morning time, well, this is indeed a change, metamorphosis, transformation: an event!

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

The Ecstasy Of Hard Work

Taught folk dancing last night and could hardly walk. Both foot insteps are out. I awoke this morning with a slight headache. Mad. But at what? Resentment. At what? Why do my feet hurt?

Mad? Feet hurt? Resentment? Could this be a psychological reaction to the heavy folk dance teaching schedule I had over the past few months? The Thursday night group in Ardsely put me over the top. Part of me says, I can't stand teaching anymore; another part says, "Wheuy, I made it!"; another part asks, "Can I teach so much? Will I be hurt if I work so hard? (The doubting, questioning voice of inner Ma.)

Look at the upcoming summer, mainly August. I've got mucho folk dance



teaching. Don't I need a month off? If teachers (like my inner parents) don't have it, will they be burned out?

Lots of fears, angers, and self-doubts here. They have nothing to do with self-confidence (anymore). I am now totally confident in my teaching, performing, and going public abilities. Not even a question. But evidently, I am not so sure about the actual physical fulfillment of my work load. Am I strong enough to do it all? Will my body hold up?

Well, why not? It always has in the past. Why suddenly now, this year when I am giving folk dance teaching my all, and standing on my own two feet without stock market, therapeutic, or any other kind of support, do I start questioning my physical abilities? Is it the inner Ma revisiting me?

Probably.

It seems she never leaves completely. Only pieces of her drop off here and there. Once my mental confidence is restored — and it is, she returns to attack my physical body with self-doubts and questions.

In any case, she always returns in some form or other. She is, no doubt, here to stay. I've got to deal with her.

Now she's popping up in foot (top) form. Doubts and fears about my feet, expressed through my foot tops, knees, and who knows what else will soon show up. Part of her is even in my left elbow although that is, not yet, a threat to me.

Chameleon-like, ever taking new forms, she is the shadow that never leaves. I overcome one psychological pain through awareness and understanding; then she changes, pops up as another. I overcome my headaches, she returns as a back ache; ease my back ache, she is reborn as foot pain; resolve my foot pain, she metamorphoses in the knee.

Long ago, when I started teaching folk dancing in Teaneck, I developed "folk dance ankle," a mysterious malady that appeared whenever I got nervous. I dispensed that one when I understood its fear-filled mental origin. Now I'm onto a new malady.

“You’ll get tired. Take a rest. Relax. Don’t work too hard. You’ll hurt yourself.”  
Those are the words I hear from inner Ma.

I’m hearing them again. Sadly, I’m listening to them. Part of me does not want to lose her, want to “stay in touch” by following orders. Thus my mind convinces me to hurt myself.

Now understanding is dawning. Do I still have to stay in touch? Or will awareness free me? Can I teach folk dancing, work hard, and, in fact, give myself over to the ecstasy of hard work?

Stay tuned to find out.

Christ on the cross suffered. His feet hurt, too. But he turned his pain into the ecstasy of resurrection.

Can I resurrect myself? Can I turn my foot top pain (and other pains) into the ecstasy of hard work?

Transforming pain into pleasure, agony into ecstasy?

### Self-Doubt And Confidence Are Partners In The Quest

One question I must ask is: do I have the confidence to believe in what I’ve just said? Or am I just saying it because I want to believe it is true?

Can I really be so smart? Or am I just fooling myself?

Well, it’s a question only I can answer. No one else will know.

Maybe self-doubt is simply part of the growth process. Since the future path is always unknown, I can’t help but doubt myself along the way. As I travel into the land of the unknown, Am I going in the right direction? is a constant question.

Yet what is courage without self-doubt? How can you develop it without facing, confronting, conquering obstacles along the path. Often you must walk through fire in order to feel the heat.

The ecstasy of hard work is a totally new concept, a totally new attitude towards the outside world and going public. It is a total positive!

The road of courage is strewn with doubts.

Ecstasy has nothing to do with social concerns or what other people think.

Somehow you have to mentally turn your pains into ecstasy.

However, watch out for formulas.

No formula can ever capture ecstasy.

Ecstasy only comes as a surprise.

A serendipity.

This is a hard concept to "get" because in order to "get it" you have to give it up.

### Touring

One way to keep tourists from complaining on tour is to keep them so busy that they have no time to complain.

Think about this: practice it on the Croatian tour.

The hard work ecstasy practice mode.

Thursday, June 6, 2002

True study of Torah gives you the ability to turn pain into pleasure, suffering into joy, and agony into ecstasy.

True study of "anything": yoga, guitar, writing, arts, running, whatever, does the same. That's because true study is true. And Truth, which is union with the divine, is found in ecstasy.

A very big change (I hope). The priorities have shifted. Since I gave myself the 65<sup>th</sup> birthday present of writing two hours a day, which really means, giving myself permission to dedicate my mornings to writing, my guitar playing is now “not so important.” It is taking second place. Thus, along with this shift, is my desire, nay need, to play perfectly, or rather, to perfect my Alhambra and tremolo pieces. Thus the base in these pieces is coming out in full force. . . and “to hell” with the treble.

Will it also, somehow, effect my singing? How about my desire to sing?

### “Going Private”

Concerts mean classical guitar and singing. I no longer have to practice classical guitar or even singing. But I never practice singing, anyway.

My singing is so public identified that I’ve lost any joy or desire to even do it. Could this joy ever be regained through “going private?”

Going private: I like it. The irony of it. Definitely, do it in classical guitar and singing.

Public guitar concerts, professional performances of classical guitar and song have killed my joy in public classical playing (I never had it anyway) and in singing (which I once had in my room).

Could this joy ever be regained my going private?

We’ll see.

Did I ever have a joy in tourism? Probably not. My standards were too high.

Are too high standards part of being Jewish, part of a cultural heritage of putting ones self in second place?

The desire to please my customers partly killed my joy.

But that is diminishing.

How?

By focusing on the job, not on the customers.

Customers are second. Doing the best job I can, putting in the highest and best possible effort, comes first.

If I focus on the job, pleasing (most of) the customers will come “by itself,” as a footnote.

Monday, June 10, 2002

### Passionate Love in Folk Dancing

Remember the passionate love or running-wild-on-the-lawn in folk dancing is often expressed through fast dances. But these are the ones that hurt my foot tops last night. Does this in some way show the trauma of allowing myself to feel passionate love in folk dancing? When I try, the result is pain.

On one level, this explanation appears so simple. Am I rationalizing the “normal” pains of a body growing older? Or am I onto something, a radically new realization about myself? I’d like to think the latter was true.

How can I know if it is? Only I can answer that question.

Well, deep down, I believe it is. I believe I can cure most of my pains through psychological means. Instep pain is just another new roadblock. Actually, it only began this year. Why this year? What happened this year to make it so? Good question.

Thursday, June 13, 2002

### I Feel Blessed

On Tuesday night I danced like crazy. Mucho fast dances. Wednesday morning my insteps were killing me. I could hardly walk as I taught my Wednesday morning folk dance on the borders of extreme pain.

What is happening to my body? This instep pain has me depressed and frightened. Then Wednesday afternoon I noticed my right foot was swollen in the same manner as after I sit on a plane for hours during an international flight. This is

something “new.” Is it due to my instep pains, a circulation problem, incipient heart attack, other? What is wrong with me? When Jonny called me about Alison’s party, I asked him. He had several questions and no real answers. This foot pain and fear has inspired me to call Dr. Stone to make an appointment for a physical examination.

Amazing. Just two days ago I was on top of the world; now I’m down in the dumps, worried about my foot pains and whether it will end my dancing career.

Yes, I sit here real worried, frightened, and afraid. I’m hoping that, by talking about these fears and pains, by letting them roll out across my computer pages, I’ll somehow find an answer and means to cure them.

I always go back to my usual explanations: Are my pains due to psychological causes? Repressed anger and fears? And I always return to the hope that they are. Round and round with the same questions and answers yet each day they seem brand new.

Last night I had a beautiful experience: I sat in the living room playing my guitar, then singing. I loved it! I cried in ecstasy as I sang. I had rediscovered and reignited my breakdown passionate love of music. Since I had “given up public performance” over the Weekend, for the first time in memory I played guitar totally free of observation, critical judgement, and hopes-to-someday-please-them, of my internal audience. Playing in and with such internal freedom allowed me to play and sing with total release and uninhibited emotions; joy, suffering, sorrow, and ecstasy all poured forth in ecstatic moments and I re-experienced the guitar and singing bliss of my early learning days. Finally, I was free of audience and the constant need and desire to perform.

Yesterday, as I wrote my journal, I discovered and talked about passionate love. I was searching, and wanted to find it again in my guitar and singing. Yesterday evening, in a bout of total inner freedom, I did.

I also spoke of the passionate love I have not only for folk dancing, but for my customers, the audience, as well. In fact, passionate love is the center of my being. It’s

repression has been my biggest trauma. I also asked: Could this trauma be related to my foot pains?

Yes, I have achieved a certain freedom in guitar and singing. But I am certainly not free of folk dancing. I feel I must teach it. It is my financial center; also the structure of much of my existence.

No freedom in folk dancing. Do I resent this slavery? Does it not repress my passionate love? I'm not sure.

In any case, if it does, I'm hoping it may be reflected or "expressed" in my foot top pains. In other words, I would be finding another psychological explanation. Why do I want psychological explanations? Because they give me a feeling of control over the problem.

A physical explanation—I have arthritis, structural injury, incipient heart attack, etc.—has a certain determinism to it. I somehow feel I can do nothing about it. I can do nothing, about physical injury. It is just there. Psychological injures, however, since they are mental in origin, I do have control over since I have control over my mind.

This kind of thinking definitely shows the mind-body split of Western rational thought. The body and physical nature are fixed, determined entities; no fluidity at all. Mind, however, can go in all directions; it is free, undetermined, subject to vicissitudes and can be pushed around. It is open to change.

Is this true? Does such a mind-body separation really exist? Or is it simply my return to a more primitive mode of thought where internal Mama would say, "You are sick. Rest." etc. With this comes the return of all my push-down fears.

Is the instep pain thus related to old push-down fears? I don't know. But I hope they are. Why? Because they I can mentally do something about it. I can change my attitude from depressing physical determinism to a taken-control, positive mental attitude.

What would I do if I could? I'd say: "Fuck this pain; fuck this my-dance-career-is-ending attitude; fuck the pull-back, shut-down, rest-yourself attitude! I want to roar

and move full steam ahead. Nothing will stop me! Ever! No measly physical pain will stop me! Ever!

Pain passes just like pleasure. Fuck my pain! Fuck the vicissitudes! Onwards and upward! I'm moving on in spite of obstacles! A few days ago I had it all. I expressed it in the I Feel Blessed vision. What the fuck happened to me? Where did my mind go? What happened to this beautiful attitude? Down the drain, indeed. Sure I'm mad. Totally pissed off. How could I lose, or worse, give up, such a vision? And "merely" because of foot pain. And "merely" because the foot pain scared me shitless.

So I have physical pain, and I have the fear of the physical pain. I'd love to be rid of both.

Is it possible? By realizing they are mere vicissitudes can I just give them up? How do you release yourself from attachment? How do you give up something?

Drop it! Period. Snap! Cut the string. It falls to the floor. Period. Lost, over, gone.

Can I simply drop my pain and my fear? Snap! Cut the string. It falls to the floor. Lost, over, gone.

Passionate love is my life line.

My biggest fear is that I will be pushed down and somehow lose this passionate love. Ultimately, it is a fear of death. If I lose my passionate life line love, I will die.

Thus is my ankle top pain a reflection of the death fear? That's a big one, indeed. Terror.

How does terror compare to foot top pain? Give me foot pain any day.

But suppose foot pain is terror. . . in disguise? Hmm...and wow.

Friday, June 14, 2002

Strange Indeed Is This New Land



Perhaps I feel so down, lost, and free-floating because I've lost – given up – my performance lid. Guitar and singing lids fell off.

Now I'm a working man, just like everyone else.

Does that mean my lids made me "special?" I was part of the chosen, suffering few. Even better, I was the special, unique, suffering bearer of the burden, chosen to "wear the lid."

My inner Mama liked me to suffer, or rather, she loved me if I suffered: it gave her something to do, gave her a purpose.

Without my lids I do not suffer; I run wild on the lawn. But I also have no Mama, no one to "give me direction," push me into What To Do land, mold my life into a narrow, joyless purpose.

I am now running wild on the Alhambra guitar; a new form is being and has been born. Also with singing: I have recognized my passionate love.

Passionate loves somehow equals running wild on the lawn. It also has tears: tears of joy!

Although finally free, free at last, this freedom is partly a scary thing. I also feel somewhat lost in its different structure-less structure. Free-floating is the word.

### My Business

I want to stuff myself with a schedule so full I can't breathe.

I can't believe I'm saying that.

But I am.

Is working really so good for me?

Probably.

This means pushing all my business to the hilt! This includes writing and bookings (guitar, songs, etc,) and exercises. Tours, too.

This is where my stock market energy is (will be) going.

The going public to going private, and going public to going private to going public again, expansion has been completed. It started during the Weekend. Then it only took a few days. But they were filled with sparkle, awe, and wonder.

Now I am Alhambra ready.

It is no longer the struggle to go public.

It is no longer the struggle to go private.

It is now the struggle to go private-in-public and public-in-private. The fluid Alhambra tremolo has welded them all together into an energy-filled, dynamic, supercharged, post-stock market one.

My life is my business. It is filled with my businesses which are an expression of my business. I'm pushing my life with all its businesses to the hilt!

Saturday, June 15, 2002

### Looseness and Softness

Talk about vicissitudes! What a emotional roller coaster week this has been. Read my journal to find out where my mind has been: From the heights of feeling blessed to the hell hole of no hope. . . and all in one week!

Last night's no-show people at Darien capped the bottom. And, of course, selling out all of my Fidelity account. Add to that my aching feet and the my-folk-dance/athletic-career-is-over fear. Yet I keep returning to positive thoughts. It's something about the writing that does this: the process of writing it out somehow turns me positive.

What positive things can possibly come out of this misery? Why should Christ feel good after he has been crucified?

I wonder if the looseness and softness in my classical guitar playing (Sor "Number 12," etc) can also be experienced, felt, in my body while folk dancing. The key here is looseness and softness. Can I focus on these while I exercise as well? Why not? Give it a shot. If my life is moving that way in guitar playing, why shouldn't this

concept spread into other things I do?

Sunday, June 16, 2002

Passionate Love Of Business

(Means Passionate Love Of People)

What could I love about business? It is so worldly, so foreign, so concrete and people-oriented. People of the past have symbolized lids, human lids on my creativity. Perhaps that concept has collapsed. Perhaps by giving myself permission to non-perform along with the morning two-hour gifts of writing and exercise I have lifted the people lid so prevalent in the outside world which, of course, is the outside world of business. My outside world, business lids have been lifted. I am free. Perhaps that is why I have just opened the door to not only love of business but a possible passionate love of business.

Passionate? Indeed, that is a radical new concept of business. It goes beyond love; it is passionate love. Why would I have a passionate love of business? It has to do with a passionate love of people. Do I have such a thing? I do. Me? Yes, me. I have a (hidden) passionate love of people. Or should I say formerly hidden? It is coming out in the open now. Why? Because I lifted my inner lids. They are no longer pushing me back into the performing corner; I no longer see a critical inner audience. My imagination has destroyed them, disintegrated these old symbols. In their place walks a new freedom.

Could all my aching have been the process of destroying my old body to create a new one, a new place to house these new freedoms?

Possibly.

Stay tuned to find out.

I don't need to visit a doctor to find out what's wrong with me. I just found out.

Monday, June 17, 2002

I am bursting with energy this morning. But energy to do what?

First let me state the reasons I personally think I'm full of energy this morning:

1. I did a hour-and-a-half run yesterday. Then I rested mucho. These rests included falling fast asleep on a bench in Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park, coming home and falling fast asleep at eight p.m. in the bedroom, and then getting seven and a half hour's sleep during the night. Indeed, I woke up rested. But more than that, the combination of mucho running and mucho sleep has done something to the enzymes in my brain. Even my feet feel better.

That's one.

2. Somehow the I'm-feeling-blessed state, combined with my new commitment to miracle's schedule two-hours/day routine, has coalesced. I've got big plans to fill these beauties this morning. In this schedule and my mind, I've also managed to put business and art together. Thus this morning's routine includes lots of calls to travel agents, a visit to the library to look up writer's agents, and just a meditation on business/art/self in general.

That's two.

3. The sky is clear and blue; the sun is shining: it's a beautiful day.

That's three.

Tuesday, June 18, 2002

### The Importance Of Others

### The All Inclusive I-Feel-Blessed State.

Maybe my call is: I have to be involved in the world.

Since yesterday I have been haunted by a strange down, a "new" kind of depression. It has something to do with the I-Feel-Blessed" state. True, that state is one of victory. I usually feel down after a victory. But somehow there is more to this than simply a push-down after a success.

Part of the "I-Feel-Blessed" was giving up public performances. I blessed myself by granting myself permission to spend the entire morning on my miracle schedule, devoting myself to guitar, writing, and exercise. Two hours on writing, two hours on exercise, one hour (or more) on guitar; I even threw in a short study period to precede it all as a first-thing-in-the-morning coffee warm-up.

Finally had liberated myself; the audience was out of my mind. I could follow my bliss and live in the blessed state.

Yet I felt down. Why? What was missing?

Could it be that, bottom line, I was meant to serve? Put on earth to serve others? That my talents were given to me, not just to please me, but for others, too? That they exist to serve and develop myself is a given. But was there a purpose beyond my narrow self, beyond simply practicing in my room, beyond the so-called freedom of the I-Feel-Blessed state? Were they there to fulfill a higher purpose? Was that purpose to serve others? Without "others," the second part of that equation, I felt left out, down, depressed. Indeed, something was missing. What was it? Others.

Who are others? Well, in performance, others they are called the audience; in business, they are customers; in social matters they are friends or acquaintances. But whatever they are called, they are, evidently, a fundamental part of me. Without them I become a half-person; without others acknowledged as an integral part of my mind and being, I remain off-balance, precariously standing on one leg, exiled, lonely, down, and depressed.

Thus "others," audience, customers, are an integral part of the me I am getting to know. They are the element I neglected to include in the I-Feel-Blessed state. By denying their importance, by bypassing their existence, I pushed myself into the down corner.

This corner has nothing to do with getting out of the stock market. It has to do with getting out of the people market.

Thus, if not connected to others, my talents, skills, and even my miracle schedule

in which these talents and skills are developed, remain half-empty.

Writing is for customers. Ultimately, it must reach them who, in this case, are called readers.

Guitar (and songs) and Alhambra are for customers. Ultimately, it must reach them who, in this case, are called audience.

Tours, weekends, and folk dance classes, and bookings are for customers. Ultimately, it must reach them who, in these cases, are called tour participants, weekend registrants, dancers, and audience.

I push towards others. My existence is an expression of self for the appreciation of others. Without others, I cannot fully appreciate myself. This is a radical new way of looking at my self. It is a self which includes others, a self which remains lost, lonely, apart, and incomplete without the consideration of others.

I discovered the I-Feel-Blessed state after running the folk dance weekend at Land of the Vikings. But customers, audience, and etc., were left out of it. Now I have given myself permission to open the I-Feel-Blessed door, it is time to “add” others; it is time to include this missing element, namely, the “them,” in the formula.

I went from going public to going private. Both states are necessary as a preliminary to coalescing and combining private and public.

### Running Away From Myself

Have I been running away from my talent. . .for years? My performing talent. . . for years?

What a frightening thought.

Why do I think this? What brought on such a “discovery?”

I once gave up tourism because it was too painful and difficult. But I also loved tourism. I soon got so depressed because I had given up my love that I ended up returning to tourism. . . with a vengeance. I hadn't realized how important it was to me until I gave it up. Then I realized I had given up a substantial aspect of my life force.

Just because it engendered fear, pain, and panic, just because it was so difficult, was no reason to stop it. Within those pains was the life force, so vital to my existence.

Same with performing. My depression on “giving it up” was similar to the one I experienced after I “gave up” running tours.

I cannot give up my loves, my passions, simply because pursuing them is difficult. It has nothing to do with bravery or heroism. It has to do with giving up my life force and vitality. Without these I am dead. Love feeds my life force and vitality. It is found in, among other places, performing and running tours (tourism.)

Just as Moses continually ran away from the larger purpose and meaning that God gave him, so I have been running away from His personal, fulfill-your-talent-while-on-earth, serve-others-with-your-talent commandments.

There really is no choice for me. The route of escape, avoidance, and running away from my talents and their public performance is simply too depressing. Fear, even terror is better than sinking slowly into the grave.

Saturday, June 22, 2002

On the farm. Do Greece in October.

There is always more but for some reason I think (my attitude is) I’ve reached the end.

Just because I’m sixty-five does not mean I’ve reached the end. I’ve reached a new beginning. But the question is: beginning of what?

### Turning Dreams Into Flesh

I am trembling with the return of this vision. Awesome, incredible. How the mind works. I had totally given up on this idea. Now it is returning full force. Evidently, the time wasn’t right. I still had to go through my personal hells, my cleansings, my learnings, before these airy dreams, these sublime visions, could be turned into flesh.

### Standing in the Explosion

Now I'm jumping out the other end of my skin. So excited; too excited! Joy exploding. I almost can't stand it.

Modulate this. Try to hold onto it as I modulate myself.

A new post-sixty-five approach to over-excitement: Keep it, but hold onto myself. Stand in the explosion and on firm ground simultaneously.

Thursday, June 27, 2002

What is the relationship and effect of the dive-right-in philosophy on Tomi, Paul Laifer Tours, and Slovenia/Croatia?

My bill is coming in about \$3000 higher than I expected. Tomi says its because I didn't reach twenty people. But that certainly wasn't clear in his original "contract" letter. At best, this higher charge is a misunderstanding between us.

What to do?

A 10% commission on the entire gross charges for the tour would fix the problem completely in my eyes. It is fair and right. . . according to past practices.

However, just because it is fair and right does not mean Tomi will agree.

Again, what to do?

First, I'll consult with Paul. He is the boss, and no doubt, has the final say. I have my long-time relationship with him, too. I don't want to "go over Tomi's head" but I can simply say, "I know the decision on commissions is not your department. Let me talk to Paul about it." This might be a good, "sensitive" way to handle the problem.

At best, I should get a full commission (why not?), which comes to about three thousand dollars. If not, and there is a question, we should at least split the commission based on the misunderstanding over the "contract" letter. This would come to about \$1500.

How does all this relate to the dive-right-in philosophy? At the moment, I don't know. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that I will not rest until this



problem is solved. It is “totally concentrated in my mind” and thus manifests a dive-right-in attitude.

Both!

The Czech extension problems are due to Tomi’s negligence. At best, we had a misunderstanding. But I think it is his negligence. Added to that, this is a first tour to Croatia and my first time working with him.

Nevertheless, especially in tourism, unforeseen problems always come up. You just have to be on your toes, expect “something to happen,” and deal with it as it comes up.

It makes you tougher. . . but what a pain in the ass!

Mostly, the pain is that it diverts me from my miracle schedule activities. However, the dive-right-in approach says I must do both: handle the immediate problems and continue my miracle schedule studies. Using the dive-right-in method.

This is my challenge: Both.