

Starting Over

No Stage Fright

Wednesday, September 26, 2001

Sing.

I'm crying for the beauty, resurrection, and all the wonderful things I have done, and all the wonderful songs I have sung but never dared face. I feared the part-imagined and part-real watchful and critical eyes of the audience. Thus stage fright followed me everywhere both on and off stage.

Now stage fright is over. The nervous energy of the fright has turned into positive growth energy.

Let the "mistakes" and "forgotten words" of Mauvais Reputation and J'ai Rendez Vous Avec Vous go by. Sing with the forgotten words, etc. letting go, just as in the Alhambra spasm.

It is part of jumping into the flow regardless.

I've taken my first tiny step on the new road of Starting Over.

I Am Now Free To Be My Best

Having no stage fright frees me to be my best. Notice I say "be" my best, not "become" my best. I am already my best. But, due to stage fright, it remained hidden. Now, free of stage fright, my best is also free to come to the fore, to come forward. In folk dancing, this is expressed: it frees me to push (drive, push, inspire) my students to become their best.

I used to hold back in my teaching, hold back on giving my students the challenging, beautiful, fast, difficult dances. I was hesitant to push them, afraid I'd be "too hard" on them, they couldn't take it, and/or, since they couldn't, they would give

up trying, abandon class, and leave me.

But no more. I have no more stage fright. Therefore, from a teaching point of view, it no longer matters whether they leave or not. Just as I now want the experience of performing, I now also want the experience of teaching – which is really another form of performing.

Thursday, September 27, 2001

Giving and Sales:

The Need to Give and the Need to Sell

Does the need to sell disguise a need to give?

Do I have a need to give?

I have been on the defensive so long, protecting myself from being overrun by others, that I may not recognize my need to give to them.

Is this what lies at the root of my resistance to sales?

Have I put a lid on it?

Is giving a form of self-expression? An artistic form?

I have seen sales as an imposition, as pushing a basically unwanted self upon others. Therefore the sales act is inherently unfriendly, boorish, not nice, etc.

But rather than an imposition, could it be a gift?

Starting Over At Its Best

My negativity towards sales comes from seeing the self I sell, in the form of my services, products, etc, as unworthy.

If I am unworthy, and the self I sell is unworthy, then naturally the act of selling is unworthy. I am “imposing” something unworthy upon others.

Thus my negative view towards sales boils down to a negative self-image.

But this negative view is now gone. It vanished along with stage fright.

Therefore, at this point, shouldn't sales go with being my best and giving my best? Indeed.

As there is a need to exhale and inhale, so is there a need to give and to receive.
Give and take is like exhale and inhale.
So I've answered my question. It is just obvious.

Friday, September 28, 2001

COURAGE AND BRAVERY AS PART OF STARTING OVER.

If I am starting over (and facing World Trade Center bankruptcy), how can I be brave?

Is having courage and being brave part of starting over?

What happened to my calm, confidence, staying-on-track, and going-the-distance in the face of adversity?

Courage and bravery have to be part of starting over.

Saturday, September 29, 2001

After years of playing with languages, except for French, which I learned as a young man, I still don't know any. I dabble in them all and really know none of them.

Now I am starting over. Should I start over with Italian? Should that be a language I really learn? That is, spend a year focusing on it, Italy, Michelangelo, Latin, etc. Or is this just an idle, passing thought?

Meditations On A Sniffle

I have had a cold for the past week. I can't seem to shake it. Why?

I seem to have given up or lost all my explanatory protections for disease.

What do I have in their place? A "feeling" Alhambra?

What is a "feeling" Alhambra? A calm, confident, beautiful (beauty-filled)

acceptance of my pace.

Perhaps also I am at the edge of looking into my diseases more directly.
Whatever that means.

Did my former explanations reach for higher levels, or were they more of less avoidances? If avoidances, avoidances of what? My own pace?

Milk the richness of disease.

Thursday, October 4, 2001

Sickness, Shock, Return, and Starting Over

I have been sick ever since we returned from Italy. It began when I “overdid” my running. That put me into a one-week cold, cough, and fever mode. Now, two weeks later, it still lingers. At this point, I ask: What is wrong and why?

Could my sickness be due to the shock of starting over?

Is it the Starting Over sickness, the one that destroys foundations and memories of the former life before the new one can fully begin? Are mucous, snot, dribbling nose, coughing phlegm, feverish chills, and all the fluid miseries simply forms of cleansing and purification? Are they an unpleasant but necessary prelude to the new life, to starting over?

I’d like to think so. Such explanations give meaning and purpose to my misery. They could also be right.

Starting Over is really a big deal. I lost lots of real and fake people in the process. I also lost lots of moola. Lots of losses in Starting Over. Tossing out old papers, throwing out desks, cleaning out old garbage. Lots of sneezing, coughing, and chills.

What is sneezing and coughing but a form of cleaning house, expelling poisons, cleansing, purifying my old body. I am creating a new one to fit the new Starting-Over mind set I am developing. My inner World Trade Center has collapsed. I need to build new towers in their place. The throw-out, cleansing aspects of sickness may be a necessary prelude.

What is sickness but a rethinking of old mindsets expressed in physical form?

What are the symbolic meanings of sneezing, coughing, and feverish chills?

What are the metaphoric significances of nasal and chest congestion? Isn't it like a traffic jam at the Holland Tunnel? What creates congestion? Everyone is trying to get in or out at once. Couldn't this be happening in my mind as well? My mind gets pissed off. It turns these congested thoughts into snot. "Out you go, little buggers! I'm turning you into snot." And it sneezes and coughs them out.

Feverish chills comes from the stripped, heat-generated, cold emptiness that ensues.

Strange explanations. They may be right. But at least I am writing again.

Saturday, October 6, 2001

Confidence

Each little Alhambra mistake or near miss I make "proves" to me I'm no good, can't play; it "proves" to me that I have no confidence and that there is no reason to. I am always walking on the edge, precariously balanced on the cliff, ever preparing myself and waiting to fall into the abyss of "You're no good, etc." I'm ever waiting for the blow, the slap of the left hand across my face.

It's true in the stock market, too. I buy, thinking it is the right time. When the stock then goes down, this once again "proves" that I'm no good, can't pick the right stock, won't make any money; it "proves" there is no reason for me to have confidence in myself.

But this has changed. I am now in confidence mode. I'm now uncovering the foundation of my being and I'm finding it is rooted in confidence! My lack of confidence cover is only an act, a role, one I have been playing all my life. Deep down, I am very confident. Otherwise I wouldn't be able to do all the outlandish, daring, brave, and inherently confident things I do, and lead the adventurous life that I do. Deep

within, I am foundationally confident. It is only when I present myself in public that I shy away from expressing it directly. Part of my mind also shies away in private. That is my constant second guessing of decisions. I make the right one, then immediately ask, Did I? Or was I wrong? Deep down, I know I am right. If I didn't think so, I would reverse myself. But I rarely do. Usually I stay with my decisions (because I know they are right) but berate myself for making them. I must publically "prove" to myself that I have no confidence in my decisions even though privately I do. This has been my public self-effacing facade for most of my life.

But now I am Starting Over.

Back to the Alhambra, then. Try playing it as the real me; play it with confidence!

Sunday, October 7, 2001

Relaxing in the Public of my Mind

Confidence on Display

On the deepest of levels, there is no difference between public and private; they're the same.

On that plane, public is the space in my head, as is private, both are expressions of my imagination. The aspect of the public watching and judging me, both negatively (usually along with the blow) and positively, is a figment of my imagination, no doubt in part created by the childhood trauma of non-recognition.

In any case, it is in my mind. Thus Alhambra "relaxing in public" is still relaxing in my mind.

And this relaxing demonstrates a tremendous leap forward in confidence.

Monday, October 8, 2001

Original Me Was Confident And Overflowing With Life

Is it the belly button in the shoulder trauma? It is. Too much to take for now.

But that is the public center.

But that traumatized belly-button-shoulder-(Alhambra) center must somehow also be related to the center of confidence.

How? How does trauma center relate to my confidence center, my foundational confidence?

What a question!

Trauma and confidence related? How so? Does trauma cover confidence? Is it lidded with “modesty?” In other words, am I ashamed to admit I am confident, I have an irrepressible life force within me?

Why would I be afraid to admit such a thing?

Could it be mother’s non-recognition during my infant days? Why not? Makes sense.

That means originally I had the life force. I was born with it. It is my foundational and deepest inheritance. Traumatized repression was “secondary,” it happened later. Original me, at- birth-and-post-birth me, was confident and overflowing with life force. But the lack of reception for my public entrance into the world was so painful I pushed it back into myself, covering it up with a protective trauma lid.

But the original me was confident and over-flowing with life.

Wednesday, October 10, 2001

Confidence and Beautiful Playing: A Whack on the Head

Whack, whack! I haven’t been so down in months. Suddenly, I fell. It started late yesterday morning. But I can’t figure out a reason for it. I’m looking at all the old ones—lack of money, debts, no bookings, etc., but none of them work. Even though they are all true, I don’t believe them anymore.

This morning I’m thinking, perhaps the whacking down is the other side of

confidence, a reversal, a sudden attempt to return to the old neighborhood. This could also relate to the guitar which I am now playing so well. After all, how can I stand playing so well and being so confident? Don't I have to habitually knock myself in order to "stand on my own two feet" and "remind myself of who I am" (or was.)

This feels right even though it is so weird.

Imagine, I feel bad because I feel good; I knock myself because I am elevated; I perceive a nightmare of lids because my dreams of beautiful guitar playing and inner confidence are being realized.

A strength beyond misery; a power beyond debts, no phone calls, no business, and local whacks. Confident and playing beautifully, rising above the whacks, a life beyond lids, a long-range trip into heaven. No stage fright. A desire to experience performance. How can I stand it? It is so totally "new neighborhood."

Perhaps an elementary trip to the cleaners, an old whack on the head is in order. Again, how else will I remember who I am and was?

Recognition Turns Me On

My original trauma is the trauma of non-recognition. Therefore, even today, in order to handle it, I must work towards being recognized. This both psychologically, individually, and by and for myself, but also by others.

Sales, or a check in the mail, is so wonderful because it is a concrete form of recognition! A quiet phone symbolizes non-recognition; a ringing one symbolizes the reverse.

Thus I need sales not so much for the money (although, of course, for that, too) but psychologically and primarily for recognition.

Recognition by others is a type of recognition of self. I need it.

Now through confidence, lack of stage fright, beautiful guitar playing etc. that I have removed the blocks to self-worth and self-recognition, my next step is to increase

recognition by having others recognize me. Sales is exactly this. Promoting, pushing, displaying myself: perfect for recognition.

I've recognized myself in the room of my imagination and even in my imagination's public chamber. Now it's outwards and upwards.

Recognition turns me on. It energizes me. That's why I want and need it.

Thursday, October 11, 2001

I Thrive On The Impossible Dream:

I Need A New One

Is the travel business more important than performing?

Does the recognition I crave come from the checks in the mail I receive for the travel business?

Large check equals large recognition. Travel checks are the largest.

There is the language study motivation factor.

This down/depression started when I looked at my debt, realized my tours were over, and that there was no way I could ever pay off my debt without success in the travel business. True, I've rarely had that success. But at least there was the hope and possibility of success. They were big motivational factors. They pushed me to call people, make personal appearances at folk dance events; become a permanent salesman with ever a service to sell. It made me feel vital and alive.

Long ago I once gave up the travel business: Too painful, financially draining, frustrating, and difficult. But after I gave it up I got so depressed I realized it was better to jump back into the arena of its challenges.

The World Trade Center tragedy has "forced" me to give up my travel business. At first I felt partially relieved. I could now concentrate on performing and club dates. Even school shows entered my mind. At least they all paid real money.

And they do. I am also ready to perform. And I should.

Nevertheless, I still need the travel business. Somehow it is important to me,

although I can't quite figure out why.

Giving it up makes me depressed. Giving up depresses me. When I give up, I die. Maybe it is better for me not to give up, never to give up. After all, I thrive on the impossible dream.

I need a new one.

Forward, Forward!

Does this all mean that a return to performing is not my route? I'd like the experience of performing: that is a new feeling. But to return? Who wants to return? Who wants to go back? Not I. Boring! I want to go forward!

Forward, forward, that's the way to start over. I want to go forward to performing. Forward to recognition, too. What exactly does that mean? Perhaps folk dancing is also part of this vision. I don't know yet. But something is cooking. The basic ingredient in this stew is the impossible dream.

Friday, October 12, 2001

The Security of Confidence

Alhambra: The sadness of confidence, the flatness of confidence, the slowness of confidence.

Pluses: the solidity of confidence, the firm foundation of slowness, the stable platform of flatness.

ALL-ENCOMPASSING FOLK DANCE SALES CAMPAIGN!

I'm pretty mad. So few showed up at my Bedford Folk Dance group. I'm so sick and tired of working for no money. I want recognition, and I want bucks!

What, if anything, does this have to do with confidence and confident power?

Well, perhaps it will mean I have to put in an effort to advertise and promote my folk dance groups!

Why? Both for the recognition and positive energy I get from teaching a large group, and for the money that flows into my coffers from it. Now people hesitate to travel or even to go far from home; they need a positive emotional release after the World Trade Center tragedy. This is the time to create the age of folk dancing.

I need the audience, their recognition, their vibrations and energy. I need a beyond-a-minyan number of attendees.

Naturally, promoting folk dancing as my base will increase attendance at weekends and eventually even tours. But folk dancing has to be promoted as a good-in-itself. I also need attendees for my own emotional well being. A good crowd turns me on. It is as simple as that.

Yes, even though I have renewed confidence in myself that alone will not increase folk dance attendance. Somehow I've got to get the word out that my classes exist; I've got to get folk to attend them. I have to promote them, not as a means to an end, namely attending my weekends or tours, but as a good in themselves.

Perhaps that should be this year's goal: Increase folk dance class attendance. . . everywhere!

This means a publicity, public relations, advertising, and promotional campaign. It may even mean calling people and "forcing" them to attend by:

1. Raising prices: this means charging \$15 (\$12?) at the door, but \$10 per class for "members," that is, those who have registered for a series of classes.

We'll see.

But I can't stand small classes anymore!

Perhaps I was not so much suffering from suffocation, panic, and terror as sheer rage at my small folk dance class attendance. That rage could be funneled into something useful: namely, an all-encompassing folk dance sales campaign!

Sunday, October 14, 2001

Could the purpose of the miracle schedule have been to bring me totally into the

land of non-stage fright and confidence?

Has my miracle schedule “served its purpose?” Is it time to drop the structure?
To move “beyond” it. . . whatever that may mean?

Beyond the miracle schedule. Imagine that. What could it mean?

Or am I merely “working at one pillar” for awhile, namely, guitar and music?

No, I like “giving up my miracle schedule,” and moving beyond it. Such an ending, and new beginning, has the flavor of Starting Over.

And this even though I don’t know quite what it means.

Monday, October 15, 2001

Back To God

Back to God.

This blanket of death, destruction, emptiness, flatness, listlessness, lack of fear.
Lack of awe, too. Naturally, with lack of awe comes lack of wonder.

And with lack of awe and wonder comes lack of God.

I have no higher force to turn to; I have no lower force to turn to. All has been empty, flat, purposeless, and meaningless within.

And it all happened after the perfect power of confidence descended upon me. .
.or grew from within.

What is the relationship between confidence, perfected and confident power, and the emptiness I feel? Of course, we know the psychological reasons. Yes, well it’s nice to know them but basically, who cares? Getting rid of them and moving on is the real problem and question.

Well, the first step to getting rid of them is total acceptance of them. Then next step may be a return to God.

What does that mean? Did I ever leave God? Or has confidence and starting over put me—and my understanding and relationship to Him—on another level? Isn’t it time to question, to look at that level again? Isn’t it time to re-experience God, to Start

Over with Him?

What else is left? At first it was nice to start over, to feel no stage fright, to want to experience performing, to enter the realm of Alhambra confidence and the power that confidence bestowed upon me. But, like the collapse of my tour business which felt somewhat good, a relief, in the beginning, now that I have accepted the confidence, I am facing the emptiness that follows it.

Partly, it is the old emptiness of success. I have arrived. No what? I have climbed the summit and stand at the top of the mountain. After the initial "Wahoo!" I ask: "Is this all? Have I reached the end? Is this really the summit of life?" After the initial celebration over the success my climbing exploits, I then sink into sadness, emptiness, flatness, depression, and inner deadness. My inner voice screams out its hope: "There must be more." My soul pleads for a return to the infinite search, and the eternal quest. It reaches out to attach itself to the impossible dream.

Isn't God the impossible dream? Isn't He the masked form of infinity and the eternal? Don't I need to attach myself to his coattails? Without Him, I am a speck in space. With Him, I am a vibrant spark of life swirling forever through the universe.

I am not really that down from the destruction of my tour business. Oh sure, I love registrations, those beautiful checks in the mail. But, truth is, I could study language without my tours. Their magic remains unblemished whether I visit the country or not. (Although, of course, it is better to visit.)

But with the ascendance of confidence came a concomitant loss of the God feeling. Why? The emptiness of success feeling. That may have begun early in childhood. I am knowing it better and better through therapy. Its emptiness blocks off God.

God never left. My confident success blocked Him out. Results of an old trauma, no doubt.

Back to God. It is time to return. Start All Over.

Hard To Believe, But True, Nevertheless

It is hard to believe: I have figured out what has been wrong with me over the past few days (weeks, months?). Each one of my pains represents the dying of an old cell, the death of an old attitude and approach to life; each pleasure I feel represents the birth of a new cell, the birth of a new attitude and approach to life. And this process, rolling forward forever on the path of infinity, goes on forever.

It is a growth process, a slow Replacement Program created by God to push you, often with great difficulty, up Jacob's ladder and onto the next spiritual rung.

Thus daily, there is disintegration and dying, destruction and clutter, birth and rebirth. Slowly you replace the physical, mental, and spiritual cells of your body in order to handle their new attitudes and approaches, the birth of their new world views.

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

The Rivers Are Rolling Again

Strange, I do feel better today. Is it because I have recognized. . . and accepted my dependance on others?

Also, I see how important the tour business is for me. It is a personal and motivating factor both financially and in my studies. Thus, it represents two vital pillars of my miracle schedule: studies and finance (business). Business, as you see, is now also part of my miracle schedule.

My God, what did I say? There was nothing about business (in the past) that made it so. No miracles in it. Too concrete, too of-this-world, too material and worldly. But of course success in it through registrations and checks in the mail always made me feel great. But I never wanted to recognize or accept that great feeling, that warmth and love and happiness that flooded my being. It was too dependent on people, too dependent on others.

My happiness dependent on others? I couldn't accept that. Too risky. Fraught with danger and old-time hurts, too many lids falling in on my from the outside, too

many mothers suppressing my thoughts, paying no attention to my deepest wants, not recognizing or accepting the true me. Yes, the trauma of past lives, birth-two-four years old lives wrecked business as a home for my miracle schedule. Miracles only took place within, within the artistic chamber of my mind, within my little room cemented off, detached, and away from the mean, depressing, evil, hurtful, pain-wracked world at large filled with huge mothers whose smelly feet always stepped on infant me and my true self.

Somehow, through the explosions of therapy, these walls between the outside world and me, between the business world and my “true self,” have fallen away. I am open. . . and free. Free to recognize my dependence on that outside world, and my love and dependence on others. That has somehow freed me to include business in my miracle schedule. It has also collapsed the wall between inner and outer, between the artistic room of my imagination and the formerly cold, heartless, crack-down, mean, miserable outside world. The outside world now has both love and misery, fear and fire, dependence and independence. Moreover, I can now be part of it, see it within myself, join the forces out there, the armies crossing the plains, the wild jeeps and roaring airplanes crossing the Afghan deserts, attacking the caves of my mind, freeing their prisoners to enter the world as free men.

The rivers are rolling again. We'll see where all this leads.

Wednesday, October 17, 2001

Terrorism

How to fight terrorism every day? Start with daily fears, worries, and panics: Fight the terror in your own heart.

Personalize terrorism. Take it to the deepest recesses of your inner self. Look at it.

Fighting your own terror is a good way to practice strengthening your resolve! It is a good way to learn about panic. . . and your personal relationship to it.

Panic, like its opposite, elation, never lasts. Like all emotions, it is transient. Although this does not make it feel less real while you have it, nevertheless, in perspective, it has the reality of a cloud. And like all clouds, it passes.

The only thing that last forever is the Sun.

Saturday, October 20, 2001

Enthusiasm Is Adventure!

Adventure is the game this morning but I can't say a word about it. I'll add the adventure of finding customers.

Adventure is a search.

The search for it is in itself an adventure.

What about searching for your self? Does it go inward in concentric circles? Shouldn't one search outside for some thing or some one?

I am going in verbal circles.

What is the center of my being? Who am I? What is my essence?

My essence is adventure.

But first I must be resurrected, must lift the clamped lid over my coffin, my lifelong shroud over enthusiasm. For most of my life I have danced in my grave. Now I'd like to learn how to dance on it.

I can see that the essence of my childhood trauma was not as much non-recognition as the clamping down and shutting out of my own enthusiasm! Enthusiasm is my central nature. And why not? Enthusiasm comes from the Greek "in God," in "theos.") Enthusiasm got no recognition from Ma. "Calm down. Be quiet. Shut up. Go to your room to practice your violin." This shut down must have started around two years old, maybe earlier, even a few days after birth. They kept happening. Clamp after clamp, lid after lid. Over and over, again and again they appeared. Soon I learned to push down my own excited, jumping mind by creating my own internal lids; I clamped down on public enthusiasm, shooed it into the closet of my imagination.

There I kept it safe and warm and away from the noxious, evil, put-down, unappreciative, unrecognizing world around me.

My trauma was, then, nonrecognition of the essential me. But it went a step further. I have to ask, Nonrecognition of what? Who was the essential me?

It existed in that spark of enthusiasm.

How was it expressed as a life force? Through adventure. My life was meant to be an adventure! Period. Its miseries are part of that adventure; so are its debts, mistakes, vicissitudes, horrors, and wonders. Awful and beautiful, fine and disgusting, all these, often grown to incredible heights through our own near-sightedness and personal involvement, are nevertheless only "surface feelings." Beneath them lies the essence, enthusiasm expressed as adventure.

How to turn every moment of my life into an adventure? That is my quest and endless open challenge.

The way to begin is to discover, analyze, and destroy the lids that form over enthusiasm. Indeed, they are everywhere. A descending stock market, a collapsed World Trade Center, an anthrax attack, fears of disease, pestilence, and biological warfare, the frown forming on someone's face when you squeal with joy, the doubting killjoys that surround you at every step.

Yes, there are plenty of people and phantoms, both inner and outer, who will work to discourage and turn you away from your enthusiasm. Not to give in to their dire warnings and fear-filled alarms is your daily act of heroism. Watch out for those wet mops who hiss or cry: "Watch out, he's enjoying something! That guy is dangerous! Hurry, hurry! Sit on that enthusiasm. Otherwise it may spread."

The warnings come not only from outsiders but often from within. Walls are everywhere. Tear them down. Go for the courageous. Become your own hero. Take charge.

Why Am I Like That?

Why do I have all these money problems? They never end, they never go away. I'm trapped in their web, caught in their net. No matter what I do or how hard I try, I can't seem to escape.

Why is God doing this to me? What is He trying to teach me? Debt, money, and all the financial worries and headaches they engender: How I deal them must be my life challenge.

What a mystery is this money thing. An ever-present annoyance, a fly or mosquito buzzing around my head and stinging me. Never life-threatening, it is nevertheless annoying.

Why am I unable to deal with it? I usually see it as a "temporary bother," rarely give it my full attention, don't even take it "seriously." And yet it is always there, jabbing me in the ribs.

My attention goes to art. Yet money is the constant pebble in my shoe. I wonder why I don't pay enough attention to it, give it its due?

What a puzzle. Why am I like that?

Her nudge tips my enthusiasm into the garbage can. Then it gets trampled to bits of squashhood.

But it is I who decide to let it slide in the first place.

The Long-Term View

I'd better give up on death.

Better go for rebirth and reincarnation, the universal, eternal, and infinite view of life. The long-term view. Otherwise, how will I ever get anything done?

The "Overwhelmed" Barrier:

Stepping Away from Enthusiasm and Focus

I am creating the barrier as I speak. I am creating the “overwhelmed barrier.” My mind is racing; I have so many things to do, I can’t get started on or involved on any of them. Consequently, I can’t focus. And without focus, there can be no enthusiasm. And without enthusiasm, I am stepping away from my true self.

My mind is jumping, racing, out of control. No one is doing this to me but me. It is my form of internal lid. I am creating it. No doubt to escape from enthusiasm and from myself.

But why do I do this? I truly do not know. Is it a habit? Is it “simply” a bad habit?

Hiding In The Corner With My Golden Nuggets

The reason I stop. . . at the Alhambra high, or other. . . is to take the nugget and run. A squirrel eating, savoring the nut in the corner, hiding away from the repressing eye, away from the enthusiasm’s clamp-down lid.

Hold the nugget, the golden nugget; hold it to the light. Savor and love it. I won’t go away. I won’t lose it even if I hold it up in public light. And I can savor it even as I move on to the next. I won’t lose it. So I don’t have to take it into a hiding corner anymore.

Sales as the Missing Link to Motivation

The ice is breaking, breaking, breaking.

Could it be? I need a new relationship to all and everyone, one based on sales? If I have something to sell someone, if I want to “sell them,” it pushes me to call them, contact them, stay in touch with them. Without the sales motivation, they remain friends but truth is, I hardly ever call them. This even includes my family and closest friends. They stay in the background as a support system. But since they are not connected to power, money, sales, customers, they are, sadly, not as “vitally important” to me in the present.

The sales fibers are so strong as motivating factors that without them I, at best, postpone calling them, and at worse, even descend to the “Why bother?” mode.

Selling then must give a vital meaning to my life.

This is a catastrophic realization. Shocking, stunning, upsetting, and, down the road, inspirational. It is a totally new look at and understanding of, on a superficial level, sales, and on the deepest of level, me.

Once again it raises the question: Who am I?

Lots of vital juices in sales which I have, up to now, denied. They may well be the missing link in daily motivation.

Too stunning to go on. A “Wow!” in wolf’s clothing.

Even lovers must sell others (their lovers) on themselves.

Affirmations: Self-Confidence and Therapy

Why do I need therapy? To affirm what I already know?!

But if I know it, why do I need it? To convince myself that I know it.

But if I know I need it to convince myself that I know it, and I need it to affirm what I already know, and to convince myself that I know it, why indeed do I need it?

Good question.

I know what I know; I know my convictions. I can even affirm them. For example, I know reincarnation exists; I know there is rebirth after death. So why should I read books about it or discuss it in therapy? It must be to bolster my self-confidence.

Wednesday, October 24, 2001

I Am Sick Of Giving Up!

I’m getting disgusted – and absolutely furious – by all the negative shit that’s going on around me. Anthrax, terrorism, canceled Egyptian tour, low-to-no tourism, miserable stock market, etc.

What can I do about it?

Well, there is nothing I can do about the outside events. The only thing I have control over is my attitude.

So therefore, I may not so much be sick of the negative outside events as I am of my reaction. I am sick of how I respond, not only to these outside events, but to my inside events as well.

I am sick of my body aching; I am sick of my feet hurting; I am sick of the phone not ringing – which means I am sick of not pushing, trying, selling, marketing. I am sick of giving up: I am sick of myself and my give up attitude!

I have been operating under a heavy cloud since September 11th. Well, who hasn't? But that alone is not enough of an answer. Although there is a cloud around me and I have internalized it, I still don't have to accept it. I can still believe in freedom, optimism, pushing, trying.

Why not? Fuck these shit-and-sewer attitudes that I have been living under.

The Rage Cure: Focusing Mad Energy

Pain (foot, knee, back pain, etc) as an energy cluster. Focusing mad anger, furious and raging rays on it can break it up and release the energy.

Thursday, October 25, 2001

Preparing for the New "Post WTC" World

Flu shot. Is this the first step towards "realism?"

Also, I know exactly what is in my low check book.

Also new license with photo. And new passport. Getting ready for the new post WTC world. The war and the changes will last much longer than you think. Years, even.

Maybe I should put tours way on the back burner; maybe I should cancel or at least postpone Spain until 2003. Is it worth all the work and preparation? Or just do it

as a sideline, for “fun.”

Maybe.

And push Klezmer, bookings, guitar lessons, weekends, etc. Tours would then be a “sideline,” and “for fun.”

A life style adjustment.

On the Soothing and Restful Effects of Depression

An interesting thing about depression: if you don't fight it, give in to it, it is very restful.

Brings me back to the two-year-old sleeping state. How can an adult accept this? Well, when one does, when one accepts the push-down effects of depression and goes with it, it becomes quite soothing.

Try it.

Friday, October 26, 2001

Adding Sales To My Miracle Schedule

I Am Ready

I hate to admit it, but, since I know I am right: There are positives in sales.

Sales have their own thrills. (I can't believe I'm saying this, but I am. Not only that, I believe it! Amazing. Right there is the first miracle.)

Sales are good for me. They call up my fighting energy. Now that their lids have been lifted I can see that they make me feel alive.

Sales wake up my energy by connecting in fighting immediacy to the outside world and its vast energy source. It is like plugging into an external generator.

Sales energize me; there is energy in them. That is their miracle!

To think “sales” is good for me. Application: while playing guitar I can think of the audience, of selling them—winning them to my guitar playing.

Pain and the Body

Now that I am no longer afraid, a deadness has overcome me. Psychological put down lids have been lifted but perhaps (and why not?) I am still afraid of physical pain. Or perhaps – even better – I am (mentally) creating this physical pain in my body in order to motivate me, to give me a challenge, something to creatively work against and conquer on a daily basis. For without the “pain stimulus” I feel tired, listless, purposeless. It doesn’t feel good either. Call it an anti-pain pain. Hollow, empty, aimless, it is, in its own way, a special hell.

The bodily pain I feel in my feet, quads, heel, and even shoulders, etc., is a pro-life pain.

Both are pains. No matter what I do, I cannot escape them. I can only “choose” one over the other. Even in that part of me feels I have no “choice,” in the long run I choose life over death. So I’ll choose the pro-life pain.

But even this pain dichotomy is an illusion. There is no escape: suffering is simply part of life. But it can be used to elevate oneself.

Let me list my new challenges:

1. Foot instep. 2.Thighs. 3. Shoulders. 4. Stomach. 5. Lung-chest congestion. 6. Etc. 7. Even guitar deadness beyond Alhambra.

These pain may shift, change, return in new forms, but the will never go away. They are my creations, and as such are my creative forms of stimulants in the creative process.

I create the stimulants!

So be it.

The opposite of pain is not pleasure, but death.

Monday, October 29, 2001

Adventures in Pain

If my bodily pains are so full of pro-life forces perhaps instead of avoiding them I should just dive right into them. See where they will lead me—on the good ship Arthritikos.

Tuesday, October 30, 2001

Back To (Forward To) The Passion Of The Mad Shoe Wild Self

I have no goals because I don't want any goals. Or at least I don't for this period of transition.

I ache all over. Everything hurts. I'm afraid to move, afraid I'll get injured. Part of me is retreating into myself, shying away from trying, stepping back even from passion.

But, ah, you say: I thought in Starting Over mode you were no longer afraid, that you were confident and strong. Isn't that what this journal leaf is about? Well, certainly I have dissolved my lids, seen through and conquered them. But somehow this feels different, yet, even as I say it does, I know it really isn't; it is part of the same psychic phenomenon that has run my engine for most of my life.

I am afraid to move, to feel passion, to give (mostly physical things like folk dancing, yoga, and running) my all because I fear to hurt myself. Here is where memories of Ma come in. What would she say to me now? What would she say to a son filled with confidence, strength, who is ready to charge into the outside world and conquer all forces? She'd say: Careful, Jimmy boy. Don't give it your all. You'll get sick; you'll get hurt; you'll get injured. Stay home, take it easy. Forget about passion and giving your all. It will only result in frustration and unhappiness. I don't want my son to be unhappy. That would be the absolute worst thing. If you are unhappy then I will be unhappy. I cannot stand such pain and frustration. So stay home, relax, go to your room, play the violin, and shut up."

Part of me has internalized this voice. The confidence, strength, and self-affirmation I now feel is countered by my fears of hurting my body. These are the

dying remnants of my mother's voice fading from my body. Self-awareness is slowly helping her voice drift out. But the old presence of her voice is why I have been not only aching since I returned from Italy, but it is probably also why I was sick with a cold for so long.

Yes, starting this Starting Over leaf wanting the experience of performing. Through this period I have consolidated my confidence, strength, and self-affirmation. I am there! But concomitantly I have also felt the dying embers of past "You'll get sick" voice in my body. "Hey Jimmy boy, you're out there in the world with only you strength, confidence, and self-affirmation. You are (I am) all alone. Who will take care of you?"

I know the above is true even though it is weird. But weird is the normal section of my self-affirming self. I like weird! It is part of crazy passion of the mad shoe wild self.

So ends a new leaf.