

Freshness of God

Saturday, November 3, 2001

Starting To Know

Sadness in success: I compartmentalize, search to find new goals that will push it away. Avoid the psychic whack, the push-down trauma, and its subsequent sadness.

Deny and push away the wide experience of joy, of joyful achievement; instead the push-down sadness of a successful Alhambra, affirmation, and therapy.

Sadness through suppressed tears lodge in my body and are expressed through sniffles, a cold, and a cough. Somatic expressions of stifled joy.

Look into this holocaust. Weep with joy that I can take it apart and start to know it.

I cover the experience of pain by jumping to find a goal.

This often explains my sniffles and cold: Tears in my nose, sadness dripping from my nostrils.

The trauma of being in the experience itself. Why? It is full of awe, wonder, and fun. The running wild lid descends pushing out the joy, covering it with a goal to "improve things."

Thinking of the audience also gets in the way of being in the experience. It is thus similar to compartmentalizing.

Sunday, November 4, 2001

Now What?

I'm at the "Okay, I'm a success. Now what?" stage.

Okay, I've succeeding in guitar playing. (I hate to even say such words. Nevertheless, I'd better face them and the emptiness they bring.) And I've succeeding in other things to, namely, implementation and fulfillment of my miracle schedule. I've even succeeded in eliminating my fears about money. I've succeeded in eliminating, through awareness and understanding, most of my lids.

So?

I've even succeeded in understanding and having an awareness of the emptiness and downs I experience when I have success. Okay, all this is true, and even in the past.

So?

Where did my more go? Did it disappear with success?

I read in the Bergen Record: "Promoting my own good health through strenuous effort." This both physical and mental. Yes, long ago, when I was a failure, I made strenuous effort to become a success. I half-liked the motivation though much of it was from the lids over trauma which I call "fear."

Now what?

Intellectually, I know it is impossible to "lose" the more. It is a forever thing, eternal, unstoppable, and infinite, too. But on a feeling level, I have, nevertheless, lost it.

Flaunting My Flaws, Too

Guitar playing: showing myself is the main part of my practice. Even with the flaws. Flaws are secondary. In fact, showing my flaws, when they come up, may well be and become part of my practice. It's not so bad to show them. They show that I am human, And isn't showing your humaneness, and "sharing" it with others, one of the warm, communicable, and friendly parts of performance?

I've got the flaws. When they come up, why not flaunt them, too?

The Soaring Border

Naturally, death is true and will happen to me and all my loved ones. But why am I thinking about it now? Is it the newest form of morning lid placed over my expansion, over my guilty thought's of happiness about my realization of freedom? It is so awesome, after all, to think I am free! That I stand on the border of great freedom, and that I might even like it. I feel whipsawed because one foot stand in the new land of liberty while the other is still being dragged out of the sand pits of slavery.

Happiness, freedom, soaring like a bird out of my room and across the earth: these are new and somewhat frightening concepts for me to actually experience. So I may be shielding myself with new thoughts of future death or even short-term imminent dying.

Sure it's frightening to die. But it is even more frightening to soar.

But what choice to I have? I am spreading my wings on the soaring border. That is where I am.

As I stand on the border of freedom, what do I think about? Losing my loved ones; they will die. Talk about fear of self-affirmation.

Who is the memorable basic loved one I will psychically lose if I am to affirm myself through freedom? Ma, of course.

That is why I feel this haunting emptiness as I march across the desert to freedom.

Sunday, November 11, 2001

Stimulation and Motivation

These (guitar – and all other) mistakes are will never leave. How sad. Hope they will go away is the home of my expectations. I am being squeezed out of my home; I am losing the source of my stimulation.

The mistakes will never go away. Only my attitude towards them can change.

Mistakes, and the hope for perfection they engender, have been the sources of my stimulation. But using them as a source also stifles my motivation. After all, why try if my expectation is that it will finally and in the end happen anyway.

Thus stimulation and motivation have almost been polar opposites.

Thus my creation of failure, mistakes, and the concomitant hope they engender that some day I will "get it," some day I will succeed, keep me going round in circles, circles of hope, hopeful self-stimulation. But I do not, nay never, move forward and conquer it for to do so would leave me empty, vacant, lonely, deserted, in the vacant quarter, etc. Thus do and did I live on expectation. It has and had been my life blood.

From expectation and its stimulation, I now move to no expectation, the so-called no hope or "hopelessness" state, the place of the present and flow. It is the state of motivation.

Some day I may be able to combine motivation and stimulation. Stimulate myself with the present power and flow of motivation. But so far that world is strange and alien.

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Ending Therapy

Ended therapy yesterday.

The headache I felt was the headache of victory. What an accomplishment and fulfilment: to complete therapy, to finish this leg of the journey.

Yet I also feel sad, empty, as if I've lost my best friend: the "Who will I talk to now?" feeling; the "Who will listen to me in such a deep and profound manner?" feeling.

The sadness and feelings of loss upon finishing the old; the nascent excitement of starting the new. Of Starting Over.

I feel as if Dr. Dave, has died. I want to memorialize him by internalizing him

and making him part of myself.

It's the deepest of hurts and losses within me. It is a loss at my core and of my core. And no one can eliminate it, not even Dave.

But it is an imaginary loss. After all, an apple cannot lose its core. Neither can I. Perhaps it has to do with seeing "the Dave" as part of my core.

Wednesday, November 14, 2001

Whiff of Rebirth

Unbelievable. I am starting to wake up.

It began last night when, furious at letting my body fall apart, I returned from a "hold-back" Tuesday night folk dance class, and did an hour of yoga including 150 push-ups using the new breathing technique of 6 push-ups per inhalation and exhalation (one in, five out). For the first time in days, (weeks, two months?) I felt the hope of feeling physically good again.

This morning, as I had coffee I read about the ancient Syrian desert city of Palmyra in Philip Hitti's History of the Arabs. Suddenly, had my first travel inspiration in months. Here's what I wrote by hand on the kitchen counter:

Goals

1. To stand in Palmyra (visit Syria, study Arabic)
2. Visit Iran (study Farsi)
3. Visit Jordan (Petra, home of the ancient Nabateans)
4. Morocco, of course (or even Norway in Sept. or Oct.)
5. Yemen?
6. May Folk Festival in Sardinia
7. Egypt oasis tour
8. Norway, etc.
9. Eastern Turkey

I am beginning the second leg, the post sixty-four leg of my travel journey.
Starting Over, indeed.

My first positive, post-therapy thoughts. The first whiff of rebirth and adventure
in my new life.

Win the war against terrorism and clear the political path for my new life.

Thursday, November 15, 2001

It's coming, it's coming, this awesome inner freedom. It's awesome, magnificent,
strange, beautiful, frightening, exciting, and very free. It is just so new. . . and strange. .
. .but in an old way.

Friday, November 16, 2001

Emptiness As Another Form Of Expectation

The "Some Day Things Will Get Better" Syndrome

The emptiness feeling has the same center: that some day things will get better,
the expectation that soon, eventually, some day, I will no longer feel empty. Thus there
is no motivation to fight against or change the emptiness feeling. I remain willingly
helpless before it. Why bother fighting or changing it? After all, my (false) expectation
tells me it will eventually disappear "by itself." Thus, once again, my expectation kills
my motivation to act.

I've got all this shit detail work to do on my desk, for example. I can't start
another project, I can't start to "live my life," until I finish. Thus again the expectation
that things will be better once I finish my desk work. Killing, of course, my motivation
to do it.

Saturday, November 17, 2001

Sad and Empty

Maybe I'm sad and empty because I can't figure out why I should be sad and empty.

Maybe I'm sad and empty because I miss my (old) sad and empty feelings, and the lids that went along with them.

Maybe I'm sad and empty because I miss my former life of expectation with its lid upon my motivation.

What will I do now that I'm there?

Get used to it, I suppose.

What will I do without these sad and empty feelings with their former motivation qualities hidden underneath their lids?

Well, they are gone. Such is life. I bemoan them even as I am glad to be rid of them.

What does an adventurous hero do at my stage and at my age? What is both heroic and adventurous for me?

I want a hero's goal, a hero's life; I want sparkling, worthy adventure.

I don't necessarily need an audience clapping (although it is always nice). But I do need applause. My internal cheering section needs something to cheer. What will I clap for? Daring deeds, noble goals; a heroic and adventurous life.

What form will it take now? What is its new shape?

Should I go more deeply into yoga? Seems right.

Should I go more deeply into running and calliyoga? Seems right.

Aren't yoga, calliyoga, and running all the same thing, a physical form of meditation?

A physical form of meditation using my physical body as the physical instrument. And pushing it beyond, beyond and transcendent. Don't I want to push myself and my body beyond transcendence? And that means pushing, trying, growing,

making a grand big effort to overcome. It's gripping the handle of motivation and flying with it (leaving, of course, the land of expectation far behind.)

It does mean changing my a.m. schedule. I may well have to devote the a.m.'s to: giving myself the gift. For now, enter the yogic and running body.

Monday, November 19, 2001

Success

The trauma must be still alive. This success is killing me. Part of the New Start is getting used to living with success. Success after success. With each one I face and reface the trauma. Yet I have no place else to go.

If I want a "problem" to handle in my post-therapy life, it is success – on every level, from political on down. All (or is it most? I doubt it. This morning I think it is all) of my political wishes are coming true.

Personal success, too, as measured by the thoughts in my brain. There is no way, I can no longer, I have given up, I have no hope of ever entering the old neighborhood again. Oh sure, pictures of it can flit by. But I can never enter it again, at least not for long. It is too known for me. Its influence has been dribbling for months and years. Now it is a mere shadow of its former self. And even that shadow is fading.

What is left in its place? Success. Success on all levels. It seems that every day since I left therapy I am squarely faced the trauma that precedes and follows success. But I am dealing with it, looking through it, pushing it aside, and stepping more and more strongly into the land of Success. Truly, I have no other choice. Nor do I want one.

Tuesday, November 20, 2001

Back to Fundamental Principles

I've lost touch with God. I've forgotten my God connection. Of course, I've also

slowed down to a crawl, practically stopped, and given up, my writing.

Wasn't writing always the center of my God connection? I'm trying to remember from my former life. Of course, deep down I do remember, and I do know. Writing is my central God connection since it touches deepest upon my creativity. Thus it creates a bond and puts me in deepest touch with my Creator.

Perhaps it is time to get back to writing. Even to my fundamental principle of four pages a day. I am almost ready. But the pain and emptiness are not yet great enough.

Writing for Posterity

Am I filling my four pages for my audience or for myself? On the deepest level, is there a difference?

What is the difference between this New Start self and my former self? Now I'll write my daily four pages for my posthumous self and posthumous audience. The posthumous route is a good way to go. So freeing. I like it.

Writing for posterity: Set it up to be published after I die. It certainly takes the pressure off.

Writing for posterity, posthumous writing, means I am facing and dealing with death every day. A very healthy, positive, freeing and good way to go.

Along with Posthumous Tours I might add Posthumous Publishers of posthumous writings.

This means leading my life as if I am already dead. How freeing! I like it. I can easily learn to love it!

Do whatever I want, think whatever I want, write whatever I want. If I am

already dead, what's the difference?

I've already done life. Been there, done that. But I haven't "done" death. Why not live life like a dead man. The ultimate in freedom. What a way to go!

Time for a new experiment, a new adventure.

Death may be my new approach to life. A new start. Starting Over.

When you start forgetting things, it means you need a new challenge.

Friday, November 23, 2001

The Joy-Drenched Answer: I Simply Forgot

Down Feelings Are Illusions: A Step Away From God

The Start Over phase continues.

Very lost, nauseous, and bottomed out.

I want to run to my therapist. But there is no therapist to run to. I can only run inwards, into my self. I discovered that in therapy. I know therein lies the flowing, joy-drenched answer.

Joy-drenched, indeed. Only I am far from it this morning. Why? I suppose it is because I simply forgot.

Indeed that is one thing the Psalmist says: Serve (worship) God with joy!
B'simcha. I like that. Give it a whirl.

Although it's not one of the Ten Commandments, it is nevertheless, the only Jewish commandment I want to follow.

I believe it, too. If I do, it must mean that all my sad, lost, miserable feelings, although they seem powerful and true in a temporal sense, are, in Reality, an illusion. Why? Because down feelings are a step away from God.

If the essence of serving or worshiping God is joyfulness — b'simcha — then let

me look, not only at my miracle schedule, but also at my business in this light.

My miracle schedule events are indeed joy filled. That is what makes them a miracle.

My business: folk dancing, guitar concerts, singing, music, even the travel adventure, are all, in essence joy-filled. Yes, often the path there is clouded over by attendant miseries, but the final God-drenched destination is joy-filled.

This must mean that my life is basically joy filled and that everything else in it, the negatives, downs, and miseries, like passing clouds, are illusions. Transient clouds float before the sun blocking out its light. Often I forget the sun as darkness falls upon me. But just because I forget it, does not mean it does not continue to exist. Its light is there forever even if I do not see, visualize, or even think about it.

Clouds are about transience; sun is about Permanence.

Clouds are about illusions; sun is about Reality.

Behind the cloudy illusion, the hot light of joy suffuses all. How to remember this? That is the question.

Saturday, November 24, 2001

The Transience of Feelings

There is also the utter transience of the worst – and best – of feelings.

The most intense pains and pleasures pass, over time, into the dust. Some may take a few moments, others months, even years. But eventually all flow away and disappear, metamorphosing into something else, namely, other intense feelings of pain and pleasure.

Sunday, November 25, 2001

The room of my imagination is my source of power, energy, confidence, hope, and everything.

It is the source of my yoga, running, music, and all elements of my miracle

schedule. It lights my study. It is beyond a treasure. It is life itself. Step away from this esoteric knowledge and I die.

It is the source.

How did I discover or rather rediscover these vital in-room truths? Through writing, of course. Thus the vital importance of writing. It is my life line to remembrance.

Where does God exist? Where do I meet Him?

In the room of my imagination.

Confused and Lost in the Free Fall of Freedom

An incredible sadness and purposelessness has invaded my being.

Question: Is this something new? Or is it an old lid in a new form?

Answer in question form: How could it be something new? Why should it be something new? Could I have changed so much in the last few weeks or even months?

I am taking a new look at death, at the eternal aspects of life after death, life during death, and life before death. This is all good. Nevertheless, could I be using this search as lid? I'd like to think I am in a new phase, that I am looking freshly at the world. And indeed, I am.

Yet it never hurts to look death squarely in the face and say: "Who the fuck are you? Do I even want to acknowledge your existence? If I accept you into my family, will you be a plus or minus?"

What about meaning and purpose?

Am I really sad? Or, am I happy but hesitant even afraid to admit it? After all, my state is one of freedom. Isn't that something to be happy about? Yes. . . and no. First, one has to get used to freedom, to learn how to live in it. I am used to being chained, submerged, held back, tied down by old and new lids. Now "suddenly," I have none. I have been unleashed. I am free. Part of me is frightened by the free

flowing quality of this freedom. I am falling into the chasm. I see former cliff paintings of purpose and meaning fly by as I hurtle past them, falling headlong into the abyss. I have nothing and no one to hang onto. I descend into nothingness. I am "free."

How can I live without purpose and meaning? My meaning was defined by limits. That made it safe. But now I am falling into the limitless, endless, infinity itself. Chains and boundaries have fallen away. I float in an ether of nothingness; I hover and hurtle through the universe of freedom.

It is not pleasant; but it is not unpleasant either. I simply don't know what to make of it. I'm confused by this new state, this new place.

I woke up with a headache this morning. I'm angry at the loss of my old boundaries. True, chains tied me down. But they also gave me security. I was safe in prison.

Now I am free. Where will I go? What will I do? How can I live in such an open and empty state?

I can't go back to slavery.

How does one learn to live in freedom?

Rebellion!

More Conversations With Ma

Larry Bentworth knew the time had come. Death stalked his very soul and this in his back yard. The vast swirl of peremptory sky wandered overhead. Mother was talking, and it wasn't sweet talk either.

"Get on the high road!" she squawked. Her wide-mouth banter lit up the purple sky, dampening the Holland Tunnel as she went. "Yes, this high road, Larry, my son." She bent her finger to the wind. "You cannot squiggle and drippulate nor wander in this seepid morass of self-squandry. Am I making myself clear? A firm voice is needed here, and it is mine. Left on your own you simply dribble into dintworthship. Daily

slipping and sliding into the grave is no way to live. It is simply not a good attitude. And indeed, I see you slipping. You have forgotten most of what I have taught you. Run wild on the lawn? Ha. Why do you think you did it in the first place? To get away from me? Well, partly. But also to impress me. And sure, I told you to shut up, ship out, and quiet down. What's a good mother to do? Simply to let you shit in your pants all day is no highward task for a pruning, healthy, reaping, prulullating, and Bentworth mother. Why do you think we're called the Bentworths anyway? It is because we a bent worth, our bends are worthy, we strike a blend of upmanship in this often downward moving world. And I will make you worthy whether you like it or not! That is my task. And that is why you both cannot and must run wild on the lawn. Who, after all, do you think is composing this Wild Whirlwind anyway? You? Ha. Only your fingers are moving. But crawling in your mind, deep behind your eyes and even often close to the surface is your good old mother. I will never leave you. Nor can you ever get away. Nor should you. But always you will and must push, push, push. Push what and against whom? Why, me, of course. I am the wall against which you test your pushing strength. I am your growth wall. Did you think you could lose me through mere therapy? Who created your miracle schedule after all? It was I. And after that it was me, me, me.

"I am important to you for many reasons. Nay, not only important, but vital! You cannot live without me. I am so deeply embedded in your brain that only a total lobotomy can remove me. In fact, upon further reflection, even that is not enough. Only a trip to the guillotine could do it. Total removal of the head is the only way to go. Sure, death follows. But without me, you are dead anyway. The only difference is that you would still be walking around. But whether you join the living dead, the walking dead, or the lying dead, dead is dead. It is not the place for my son, to me. My son will never die! I simply won't allow it. No, no, no! You will live forever, and that is that!"

"But Ma," said Larry as he sat in his underwear, the New York Times beneath his feet. "Why did I spend all that time and money in therapy if I can't and, as you say,

shouldn't get rid of you? What about cure? What is 'cure'? What does it mean, anyway?"

"Cure, my son, is discovering your rebellious side. You are supposed to, among other things, rebel against me. And this, despite what all those fucking Buddhists say about love and compassion for your fellow man. Fuck that shit. Now you might say this is no way for a mother to talk, but I am no ordinary mother. I am your mother!

"How are you going to rise above the ordinary? Through the energy of rebellion. How and why should you follow and fulfill the dictates of that miracle schedule you invented? To rise above the ordinary, of course. And what is the ordinary but the level, depressing, status quo of mundane life. The desert of this existence is no place for an artist. And you, my son, are an artist! That is your essence and nature. I didn't daily push your head in the toilet just so you could be like everyone else. I wanted you to know shit, and know it well, so that others would never be able to call you a shithead.

"But they all did, Ma."

"Of course they did. But they were the outsiders, the wandering shadows walking past that beautiful imagination chamber of your mind, the artistic room in which you lived your daily, vital, wild fantasy, brilliant imaginings, death-defying, whirlwind life. Symbolized by ecstatic violin flights, this room, believe it not, was created for you by me!"

"You? I created it to get away from you."

"Precisely. That's why I bugged, pestered, rode, and haunted you; that's why I beat your public brain into a pulp. So you could retreat into the private world of your imagination and create great art. Whoever heard of an artist living in public? If you live in public you become a lawyer or politician, or maybe, on a higher level, even a teacher. But no matter what you do in public, without the existence of your steadfast pillar, the creative chamber of your imagination, you can never amount to anything. Public life is a mere reflection of that. First the world is created and imagined in your mind. Then it is shit out, through mouth and anus, and becomes public property; it

fertilizes the fair grounds beyond your room. Public service? Ha! That's okay. But without the creations of your private laboratory, the miracles constructed in the violin room of your imagination, the public works you dump in the grounds beyond your chamber would truly be mere shit."

Larry pondered long and deep. "You mean I have to credit you for pushing me back into my room?"

"Damn right."

"Spoken like a true mother. I'll have to think about all this."

"So you are calling for me to return to the room of my imagination."

"Indeed. Of course. But, you shithead, you never left it. You had the illusion that therapy would somehow "cure" you. Cure you, of what? Why, of living in the room of your imagination, of course. Somehow part of you thought that was a bad place, that only the sick live there, that a real man wouldn't need such a hide out, that a true warrior and hero would take on the outside world, deal with it, impose his vision upon it, make money and function in it. What shit!

"The world is not a good place for you, my son. Oh sure, it exists and you can't get rid of it. But rather than a pleasant place it is more like a cancer. Learn to endure it, get by it, get through it. But don't take it "seriously." Give up any believe that it is important. True, it is functional and your body and even parts of your mind cannot survive without it. But it is in the beautiful inner chamber of your imagination that your vibrant spirit lives and thrives. Without that you will surely die."

Just Do What You're Told!

A slight drainage problem this morning. Except with God's commandment being one of joy.

Mary asked Hector: "What did God tell you?"

Hector answered in pensive tone. "He said 'Shut the fuck up, you slut!' Then

gave His ultimate commandment: Serve me with joy. . . or else!"

"You're quite a theologian, Hector. Can you expound upon this loving doctrine a bit more?"

"Ain't much love on the surface here. It's way in the background. Lots of push, though, lots of pressure to en-joy yourself. Without joy, you ain't really worshipping."

"You mean it's a order? I gotta enjoy myself?"

"Damn right."

"Shit! What a downer."

"Shut up. Follow your orders. Joy is tough. But it's a commandment. Like I said, just do what you're told. There's got to be magnificence and glory, awe and wonder. Otherwise, forget it."

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Could new direction be found in reading and editing my work, and the enjoyment that comes from it. Like reading and editing Wild Whirlwind and seeing there's hope for it, that it's not so bad after all?

I'm afraid to think about new directions. I've been through so many. But I sure could use one now.

This almost feels like a writing crisis. As if I've lost my purpose for creativity. Almost as if I don't believe my creativity is important anymore.

Could it be because Ma is no longer watching over it, that I no longer create in order to please her? I've lost my audience, and the purpose, importance, and desire to please that audience. Yes, I'm very inward. Who is left to please but me? Sure I have to please myself. But is it enough to drive me on, to motivate me, and give my work a sense of purpose and importance?

Yes, I expect nothing from the outside world and hope for even less. On one side, this is a sign of inner strength. But I feel it more as a loss of purpose. With

expectations at zero, why bother?

Could this be part of the trauma of being on my own? Is this the final trauma, the end result of being On My Own? Probably.

I'm lost in the new world of Starting Over.

Holding Back

Part of it may be I feel I won't be appreciated or loved if I stand on my own. That is the old trauma. In my new state, I now know I will be appreciated and loved if I stand on my own. However, in my new state, deep within, I feel, even though this is true, it doesn't matter. My central core has been ripped away. I still feel empty and without purpose. Being appreciated and loved by the outside world, along with having no expectations, is okay. In fact, on the old level, it is what I always wanted. I am appreciated, loved, respected for being who I am. I accept this.

But I still feel empty and without purpose.

Could it be I am afraid to appreciate my new and successful state? This would "make sense;" I would indeed be following an old familiar pattern: putting the lid over enthusiasm for my success.

All my loss of attachments to forms of the old life can be viewed as a gigantic psychological success. I believe that. I can see it no other way. The only difference is that I feel so down from it. Empty and purposeless. Sadness, even depression fill my being. And why? Because I have been and am successful. Psychologically successful. This is the deepest, best, and most important kind of success. I believe that, too.

But again, it makes me sad, depressed, empty, and purposeless.

The trauma was: if I am successful I will be ostracized. No love will come in. But I no longer believe that. Nevertheless, I am acting, nay feeling, in the old way. I'm clamping the down lid over me; I'm afraid to appreciate, enjoy, and love my new state of success.

Seems historically right. What else could it be?

I'm pushing back, holding back, afraid to enjoy the non-attachment success of my new state. To revel in, luxuriate, and love it.

Thursday, November 29, 2001

Thoughts On The After Life

I'm Starting Over. And in doing so, I'm starting by looking into Jewish Views of the After Life by Simcha Paull Raphael.

I hope this will be my next direction of study. I use the word "hope" because I would so love to return to a study of something. It would help give me a direction and purpose in this, my after life. Indeed, part of me does feel it is in the after life, the Starting-Over After Life.

Some questions arise: Is there really such big different between this life (on earth) and the after life? Or is it simply one long, endless eternal continuum, a journey of infinite direction for the soul?

Well, why not? Sure life must be somewhat different without a body. It might even be easier. No worries or cares about your "health." But I live in my mind, anyway. And my mind, although not my soul, is closely related to it. So the difference between life on earth and the after life in a more rarefied atmosphere might not be that great after all.

If this is true, why worry so much about death? Although it is indeed a drastic change, it is still "nothing permanent." I've been through lots of traumatic, drastic, earth-shattering changes before. Although losing my body would certainly be a new one, would it really be so different? Why wouldn't it be "just another trauma" to deal with?

If the fear of death makes me think "Why bother with goals if they all end with death anyway?", and the soul does not disappear with the demise of the body, and is never-ending, then why let mere death keep me from forming new, positive, directions and goals? After all, if I don't finish my work in this life, I'll just finish it in the next. Or

the next. There is no end. In the long run, all directions and purposes are infinite. In the big picture, the whole idea of endings is an illusion, anyway. Why not live with the big picture in mind?

Tuesday, December 4, 2001

More To Come

Where will I go after I die? According to early biblical Jewish tradition, I will return to my people, to my ancestors. I'll join Mom and Dad, my uncles and aunts, all the beloved (and unbeloved) people from my childhood and past.

A sad but happy view. Nothing is lost. I'll go home again. Very soothing. Actually, it is something to look forward to. According to the Jewish view, there is more to come even in the afterlife.

After I die, I will go home to my parents. And they will take care of me just as they did during my childhood.

This afterlife idea is so restful, soothing, pleasant, and happy. There is nothing to fear. Death itself is just another family visit.

"Dropping" Classical Guitar

After the great success of the LOV (Land of the Vikings) Weekend Saturday night sing-along ("concert" or performance). I can see how totally unnecessary it is for me to play the classical guitar.

What purpose is there for me to "practice" now? I'll have to find a new one—if I can. The old purpose is certainly dead.

Or, is it time to "drop it?" Gulp.

(It is truly unnecessary for me to play.)

I have always "known" that playing classical guitar was for me to work out

something personal psychologically, namely my teenage inferiority complex in classical music. Well, I've worked it out.

Now what?

Does classical guitar fit in anywhere in this new world? Isn't it now merely a sideline in an evening of music, of folk songs, ad libs, readings, group songs, etc? I could get by and easily get along totally without it. There is no need for it at all. Sure, it's a nice thing to throw into a program. But if I don't throw it in, that's fine too.

Classical guitar has totally lost its significance and importance to me. Indeed, I hate to say it, but after all these years of work, the hours of Alhambra etc practice, I am ready to totally drop it!

It exists as a mere sideline, simply another one of my talents.

What a downer, lose, and entry into a new freedom. Hard to believe I am here. What to do with all this?

Why should I even bother practicing anymore?

I don't know.

Saturday, December 8, 2001

Playing Guitar For My Own Health, Exploration, and Adventure

This could lead to a whole new way of playing, totally for myself and my own self cure, promoting my own self-salvation, health, inner peace, security, exploration, and adventure. It has absolutely nothing to do with the audience and the outside world. It is only mine and for me. Since it absolutely doesn't matter at all whether I play classic guitar for an audience or not, affects my concerts not one iota.

It is totally a Starting Over concept.

I can play as slowly, deeply, and powerfully as I want, because it absolutely doesn't matter. Fast, too.

Perhaps this Starting Over attitude – which I like very much – will spread to other activities, too.

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

Three Times

Beginning: slow, feeling fingers. (Do it, play it three times)

Intermediate: medium feeling fingers, slightly faster. Standing at the doorway. (Three times)

Almost over the top: crossing the trauma. Passing mother. Trying to step into the room (palace, chamber) of strength. (Three times)

End: Touching it. Briefly, gingerly, delicately. (Three times)

Past the land of trauma, through the doorway of strength, stepping into the realm of the fast, strong, mountain strength fastness, and light playing Light.

“Immoral” To Enter the Land

I’m right at the physical, moral, psychological, and emotional edge.

Moral edge? What does that mean? Perhaps it is “immoral” to play at this level. Immoral means wrong. Part of my being says it is wrong to play at this level, wrong to run wild on the lawn. This would explain my nausea for “breaking the rules” and even trying to practice at this new level and in this new land.

But God says do it. He commands: “Get used to it!” I’d better do it, too. What will He say on Judgement Day if I don’t? Easy. He’ll say: “You have sinned. You didn’t try your best.”

Perhaps that is also related to my nausea. I have sinned. I have not tried my best, given it my best shot. Wow. Here is the best reason to become the best you can be. If not, you’ll get zapped on Judgement Day.

Ma said running wild on the lawn was wrong. But that was to my four-year-old self.

God says running wild on the lawn is right. He is speaking to my mature, adult self.

I'm ready to follow His advice. Actually, it is his command: Get used to it!

The Motivational Power of Immorality and Fear

God's Final Judgement

I've finally found an immorality I can believe in?

It is immoral not to give it your best shot!

And I'm often on the edge of not trying, not giving it my best effort. Thus I am often on edge of being immoral. And, in the end of days, God will judge me for it.

Thus, the tension of often being on the edge, the "fear, dread" of slipping into immorality and the deathly, torturous negative ring of God's final judgement becomes a powerful motivating force in my life. In this sense, I have again "found" fear and its incredible motivating power!

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Beginning – Starting Over – On Guitar Level

I am at an ending now. It is the "death experience as sacred event." I like that phrase. Sacred event, eh? Not bad. In any case, on one level, I am there now. Today is Thursday. I am finished. I have "nothing to do."

I am Starting Over on my new guitar level. Perhaps on other levels as well although I don't as yet know what they are. But for guitar, I know. I am definitely there.

Perhaps I should begin on that level and see where it leads.

Friday, December 14, 2001

Next Level

Lost and purposeless this morning. Last night, too. Is this due to success? And not writing? And will this up-down feeling pursue me all my life?

My successes are guitar. . . and even running and yoga. I'm afraid to admit success in the guitar. Have I finally arrived? But, of course, I say the same thing so often. I arrive, then get lost again. Is it true, or just a cycle of illusions? Does one never arrive? Probably.

Yet I am at a new guitar level. In that sense, I have arrived. I have arrived at a new level. Can I admit and accept that? Yes.

Thus it is a type of success. In the past, success has always removed my purpose, pushed me back into the land of lost. "Is that all there is?" is the question I ask. "Where is my more? Without my more in sight, why bother going on?" Thus purpose and direction disappear. These are old explanations, but although old, they are still right for the present down.

Thus, build on my guitar success, push to the next level.

Now the question becomes: What is the next level?

This is always a good question to ask when emptiness, meaninglessness, purposeless, directionless, and lost hit.

So ends a New Leaf.