

On My Own

Gutsy Excitement

Wednesday, August 15, 2001

Four Words A Day

New language program: gutsy excitement in the concrete word.

Learn four words a day (a la write four pages a day). In one, two, or three languages. Hebrew. . .and Hungarian. Same words. Use the bible. Then Arabic. Either same words or others.

Four a day. Every day a new four.

Is it "frivolous" to make such a commitment? After all, it makes no money. It is "only" study with no useful or future purpose at all.

However, what else, and what better thing, do I have to do with my mind in its spare time? I could simply while away the time by letting vacant and distracting thoughts pass through it. Or I could "capture" it, train and lodge it, funnel and focus it on four words a day.

Thursday, August 16, 2001

My Mistake

My mistake in the stock market was to "go for broke." I margined myself up to the hilt. This left no room to buy the great bargains that are appearing now as the fine companies I own descend into the shit price range. All I can do is watch while these delicious bargains get greater and greater. I end up helpless.

Helpless is no way to be free.

"Going for broke," leaving nothing on the side for those special days when the market falls apart, is not a good way to go. It was an excess. Actually I bought them all in a minor panic, believing they would go even higher and I would be left out. Typical,

of course. But still no good.

I did not limit myself. Thus did I fall out of freedom into slavery.

That was my mistake.

What can I do to right it? Sell half my stocks? Perhaps. It's painful, but it may be the best way to learn how to limit myself.

Shouldn't I suffer the consequences of my mistake? The idea here is not to punish myself but rather to learn in the process.

Learn the importance and freedom of limits.

The "I Can Always Die" Philosophy

It Give Me Courage

Maybe my focus should be on staying calm.

Can I stay calm? Can I enter the witness state? Can I watch as my stocks and finances descend into shit? This would mean my choice for now is to do nothing.

It is the land between over-excitement and under-excitement.

What will give me the courage to do this, to stay calm and do nothing?

The "I can always die" philosophy.

The "I can always die" philosophy is (one of) my deepest sources of strength.

Four-Language Study?

On my 4-words-a-day routine: should I add Hungarian, Spanish, and Arabic? I mean first write the word in Hebrew, then translate it into Hungarian, Spanish, and Arabic.

Is that too much? Am I turning a "sideline" into a main event, a study in itself? Is it too great an expansion of my new language commitment? Is it the kind of expansion that may come later?

Or is it simply completely unrealistic, something born of intense enthusiasm but impractical, undoable, too time consuming?

Part of me would love to do it; but another part of me realizes (sadly) that I cannot commit the time. It is too unrealistic.

Unrealistic? Since when has that word stopped me? Such a four-language study is a brilliant and romantic adventure and commitment. The very fact that I "cannot do it" makes it even more enticing. Cannot do it? Who ever heard of such a thing? Impossible. I will rise to the challenge and, in so doing, conquer death itself!

Fuck all the no's. Squash and kill all the negatives. I absolutely hate them! Who are these "people" telling me I can't do it? Fuck 'em all! I'll do what I want.

The only question is: what do I want?

Belly As Center Of Universal Energy

Mind Located In The Belly

God, this is scary. My scales in Bulerias were perfect as I concentrated on my belly, belly button, stomach muscles, Even my index finger seems connected to them.

Could I be right? Could the belly (through the belly button) be the center of self and the universe? It is certainly an energy center. Is it the energy center even supplanting the head, brain, and mind? Is it the location of the mind itself?

Is the mind not in the brain but in the belly? Mind as energy center.

Who knows where the mind is?

Could I be right?

How frightening.

But perfect scales could be telling me the truth.

Actually, the most frightening thing is: I know I'm right.

Saturday, August 18, 2001

Playing Well

As a spiritual path the goal is, not necessarily to make money, but rather to learn the rules and play well. Of course the rules in this game are: playing well equals making money; it means going up, ascending the financial Jacob's ladder.

In this game there is a wrong and right, a win and lose. It is measured in numbers, in amounts. When the amounts go up you are a winner and thus playing well. When the amounts go down you are a loser and playing poorly. It is very easy to define, see, and measure.

Yesterday, after talking to Charles Lee Booth, a Fidelity broker in Salt Lake City, Utah, I charged to the library and took out six books on trading, options, and the stock market.

The first one I opened was called Trading For A Living by Dr. Alexander Elder. He was originally from the Soviet Union. He escaped by jumping ship in Africa, running to the U.S. embassy for asylum, and finally arriving in the United States with only summer clothes on and \$25 in his pocket. What a story!

But what he says is even better. After reading Engel's How To Buy Stocks and telling how the book changed his life, he says,

"I had known nothing about the stock market, and the idea of making money by thinking gripped me."

Beyond Excitement: Birth of a "New Personality"

The Guitar Playing and Trader Personality

Changing my personality means giving up my love, or at least my attachment to, excitement, and replacing it with love of calm, balanced rationality, and inner peace.

This is "expressed" by the steady focus on my stomach area, upper right back, and shoulders while playing Alhambra.

It may also-eventually – be "expressed" in my new attitude and approach to

trading.

Perhaps the nausea comes from the idea of giving up the thrills, and ups and downs of excitement in exchange for (and exchanging it) for calm.

It may be the same nausea (and incipient headache) I felt when doing the witness exercise on the big running hill at the farm.

Ugh, disgust and nausea!

I am being "pushed out" of my former self.

But this is not a forced push-out (as in the past, a lid), but a voluntary one. That is the key difference. Nevertheless, this nausea may be a nausea "holdover" from the past.

The nausea of loss. The nausea of giving up an old form and moving on.

There is no question this new, calm, focused, "beyond excitement" form works. It is also the place I am going. I just have to get used to it.

Thumb!

Alhambra: Is the focus on my thumb a form of entry into the calm of my stomach, back, and shoulder areas?

The old focus was my right index finger; then for a brief period it moved to my wrist (transitional period?). Finally, I am now focusing on my thumb. I know the Segovia-type "melody line" is in the thumb; the accompaniment is in the tremoloing fingers.

Is focus on my thumb a physical symbol of my entry into this new, post-nausea, post-trauma land of quiet? Is it the calm "beyond excitement," the focus on the "rational," witness state?

Is this where guitar player meets trader?

I know I am right about thumb being the center, calm, focus of the witness state.

I know I am making a transition, passing from the pre into the post-trauma state, one that is centered, focused, peaceful, one that is "beyond excitement."

Any hesitancy comes from doubting my strength.

Nevertheless, every new discovery does touch the trauma of expansion. . . only less.

Tuesday, August 21, 2001

Momentary Glimpse of Heaven

The perfect Alhambra playing: It's a beautiful feeling of focused, smooth, flowing relaxation.

Can I remember it? Can I stand it? Can I remember to stand it? Can I stand remembering it?

This is what lifting the trauma lid feels like.

A momentary glimpse of heaven.

This relaxed Alhambra perfection point is the highest place I can get to in this life.

Scary and beautiful.

The relaxation and beauty are scary because they are so intense. I can't stand to stay there very long.

But what could be better?

Probably nothing.

Could I train myself to stay there longer? Then I would "get more used to it."

I wonder if I could move this relaxation point into my calliyoga exercises as well.

Thursday, August 23, 2001

Return to the World

Latest Leaf: Calliyoga and Running as Self-Massage

First, the descent of the stock market; second, all the problems with my computer, printer, and internet connections: These have totally absorbed me, thrown me off, distracted me from my main mission—following my miracle schedule.

It is interesting to note that as soon as I “decided” to learn four words a day, to commit myself to such memorization, I stopped studying languages and reading the bible in Hebrew. I wonder again: when I make these big plans, schedules, and commitments, does it really mean that, instead of a fresh start, I am at an ending? That the “commitment” is really a form of trying to hold on to the old, fading energy cycle?

Probably.

If this is true, then I am ready to move on to the next cycle. The past week or so, with all its tzuras, destruction, and distraction, symbolizes the death of the old, the ending or death of my summer vacation.

Yes, my vacation is over. It is time to return to the world of work.

What does this mean? What does “work” mean?

First, it means returning to the world but with a new attitude. The new attitude is one I discovered in my summer of August vacation. This new attitude must be synthesized, enmeshed, correlated, incorporated in my new life, my new leaf, my entrance into the old world of new world.

The foundation of this new vision and attitude is gutsy excitement.

However, first let me list my gains, my insights discovered and achieved during my August vacation:

Actually, they were discovered during the first few days of this vacation. They were long term hits. I sat stunned and mesmerized in their presence.

1. Gutsy excitement in business. Thus business, even daily events, could enter as a new part of my miracle schedule. This is a major discovery and a major practice. Something to remember and work really hard at remembering.

2. Thumb, relaxation, stomach-back-shoulder guitar playing. The core and center of Alhambra. The no-question-I-can-do-it way of playing. A new form. (I've been through this one before. . . touch of doubt, here.) Vital to remember this one, and to practice the thumb-back-stomach method of relaxation and focus.

Anything else? I've got the list on my bulletin board. It includes the two-hour calliyoga-running routine, the four-words-a-day language commitment. Then it lists the fundamentals of this change philosophy:

- a. The pain-and-suffering-brings-focus way of life.
- b. Do or think something new each day like turn over a New Leaf.

When I say I am returning to work, it means putting all of the above into practice.

Well, today is a new day. I'll work backwards. What new thing will I think today? What new action will I take today? What variations or new elements can I add or put into the elements of my miracle schedule? What additions can I make today?

First, in the calliyoga-running routine: See it all as a type of massage. Yes, while running I am massaging my feet, knees, and legs. . . even my shoulders and neck. Same in calliyoga. . . a massage. Ah, how I love massage. I love it when someone else does it to me. But I have no one to do it to me. Thus and therefore, I have to do it myself. I have to massage myself. Calliyoga and running are my self-massage methods. Relaxed and focused.

Anything else this morning?

I'm adding singing to my practice. It is my way of "entering the world." What this means I am not yet ready to discover or know.

Hope and Courage

Found at the Bottom

Dark clouds have gathered.

Hope is the tip, courage the spear that can pierce them.

But where do the flowers of hope and courage come from?

You gather them at the bottom.

They grow in the dark, dank, moist undersoil; they are found in the basement of your mind, at the nadir of your heart's abyss.

Saturday, August 25, 2001

The stock market popped.

I feel like it hit bottom, then turned around.

I also hit bottom, then turned around. Evidently, my feelings are intimately connected to the movement of the stock market.

My new direction has been confirmed; I have been redeemed.

This was preceded by a terrible week. Everything I bought went down; then I bought more, and that went down, too. The prices of stocks were getting ridiculously low, so I bought some more. Still, they went down. Soon I was totally margined and had no more money to buy. Still the stocks went down. Now I could buy no more. I thought I would get a margin call. Finally, on Thursday, depressed and discouraged, I decided to give up on the whole stock market venture. I had taken out seven books on trading from the library; I brought them all back in disgust. I decided I would have to make money the "traditional" way, that is, by promoting my business. At least, I thought, it is something I am good in. The stock market stinks; I was wrong; I'll never be able to succeed, to make money in it. Give up, go back to work.

Fear, bordering on panic, visited me on Wednesday and certainly Thursday. I saw myself once again losing all my money, ending up, if I was lucky, penniless, broke, sleeping on the sidewalk as a Bowery bum.

And then, suddenly, just as I had totally given up, the stock market turned around! And I, stunned, turned around with it.

What am I to make of this? I don't know. But I do feel glorious! And it is all because of an external event, the stock market upward move.

It this true? Is it “only” because of an external event? Probably not. My internal hopes were riding on it. I wanted, needed, confirmation of my direction. I’ve always loved the market. I don’t like getting kicked in the teeth by my love. But that’s exactly what the market did. It was my angry lover kicking me in the teeth. And then, for some reason, she lost her rage and turned in my favor.

Is she just an outside force? Or is she in me? Obviously, she is in me; she is a part of me. The market is me, and I am the market. What is this intimate connection?

It connects me to my deepest feelings of fear, greed, and this morning, even contentment. Today I am confirmed; today I am right. It may only be for today, but it sure feels good. I’m going to ride this good feeling. However, even as I ride it, I know it won’t last. That is the difference.

We’ll see how long I remember this.

I ally and compare my fight to make money in the stock market with Garibaldi’s struggles to unite Italy – the vicissitudes, the ups and downs of the stock market struggle with the vicissitudes, the ups and downs, of Garibaldi’s life.

For now, this (Garibaldi) is my connection to Italy.

Jealousy

I am sad because my playing (of Alhambra and even Alard) is so good.

If I were a financial success my sadness would (might) be even worse. It might be a real let down if I paid off all my debts (weights, lids).

The sadness of success is so deep, so profound. I’m out on a limb, losing everything. No love at all. Empty and alone. Devastating.

Success isolates me. No wonder I’m afraid of it; it frightens me.

Could be “realistic” too. Don’t be too good, don’t be your best It will make others jealous. Then they will attack and possibly try to destroy you. Two years old, and on. . . Miki will be jealous, too.

I'm afraid of Miki's jealousy. My mother pushes it, too. "Don't hurt Miki. Don't make her feel bad. You must take care of your sister. I love you both (equally)."

Thus, suppress your true self, suppress your good, and the best in you. Don't try too hard. You'll make your sister jealous. You'll hurt her. You'll hurt others. Why bother?

Is this the home of my "Why bother?" attitude? You're too old, anyway. That is today's form of the "Why bother?"

There is room at the top. But it is lonely. Plus, people get jealous. They may hurt you. Many "real" threats lurk at the top, too. Thus good rationales to hide your true self from the public. . . and even from your self.

No wonder I'm sad when I succeed. And frightened, too. I'm facing a real trauma, both past and present. If I'm too good, I may be smashed. This is not just idle fantasy. Just as Miki's and possibly my mother's (and father's) jealously pushed me back into myself in the past, in order to protect my true self, my core, so today I may well fear the present possible jealousies of others.

I am jealous of their success. I sometimes feel like I'd like to destroy them, kill them. If I feel that way about them, why wouldn't they feel the same way about me? And if they do, they could indeed be a real threat. Therefore, I am "realistic" to fear my own success, especially when it is made public. I am taking a chance whenever I dare expose. . .and expand myself.

This is both a psychological and realistic truth.

Monday, August 27, 2001

Children's Vision

The children's audience vision is growing. I don't know if I'll ever do anything concrete about it. Will I ever pursue actual children's performances, do children's

shows, pursue assembly programs again?

I wonder if this periodic “Why bother? I’m almost sixty-five. I’ll die soon” is a form of put-down, and “modern” August lid, new way of pushing back my expansions.

It probably is.

Maybe the children’s audience vision is a picture of my next world being born. The open faces of children fill my audience. Fresh, young, new, enthusiastic, they love everything I do; they live in every note I play. In this vision, most of my ego has dropped away. I too love what I do; I agree with the children. I luxuriate in their vision. I am their vision. The child in me stands in front of me, loves, watches, and appreciates me. No judgements at all. Only love and open-eyed wonder.

Where is the awe? Where is the fear? There is none.

Holding On To My Hat

It was a great day yesterday. But throw it out. It’s gone. A sudden bout of sadness this morning, today, right now. Why? I don’t know.

The first thing to do is to throw out yesterday’s dead pattern. I must start anew. Today fresh. The sadness is the tearing away of yesterday’s fine clothing. A fine and lovely day. Good guitar playing, fast running, great reading. I was making “progress.”

Progress means expansion. But just because I expand doesn’t mean sadness, pain, and suffering will end. Sadness with its attendant pain and suffering, or pain and suffering with its attendant sadness, will never end except with death. And even death will only halt it temporarily. My pain and suffering will reincarnate, reappearing in the next life.

Pain and suffering are forever. So is sadness. So are their opposites: pleasure, joy, and happiness. Opposites never disappear. But they do work together.

It is unrealistic to hope that, some day, with enough growth, expansion, and psychoanalysis under my belt, I will somehow free myself from pain, suffering, and the concomitant sadness that is really a mourning for the continual and constant losing and loss of my old self.

This process will never end. It is the essence and juice of life. Of course, remembering God, knowing and meditating upon Him, the One behind all vicissitudes, may help. But, since I am trapped in a human body with a human mind attached – with some soul or spirit thrown in, I cannot expect long-term, permanent help. Only ups and downs: momentary ups in a down market, momentary downs in an up market. Ups and downs rule the day; they rule the cycles of my life.

They may rule the cycles but they don't necessarily have to rule me. Awareness of the One behind all cycles will help me hold onto my hat.

Voice of the Wind

Sailing into the unknown may not be exactly what I want to do either, that is, if the unknown means the limitless and undefined. It is too spacy for me, too wide open a field. There is no focus, and lack of focus leads to darkness, disease, desperation, and depression.

I like limits. I like focus. Then I can look through the field glasses of that frame and peer into the limitless.

My miracle schedule helps me chose my limits. It provides the focus through which I can peer into infinity.

Nevertheless, there is something unknown about today. I don't know what it is yet. Nor do I know my direction. . . yet.

Tuesday, August 28, 2001

Art Expresses the Sacred

An excellent and revolutionary book by Regine Pernoud, Those Terrible Middle

Ages!:

“Throughout the medieval period, in fact, art was never cut off from its origins. We mean that it expressed the Sacred. And this link between art and the sacred expressed the very fibers of man in all civilizations. . . .”

The Romantics artists were medieval people in disguise.

Doesn't Beethoven look like a Gothic church? His spires inspire one to great heights. Doesn't he sound like a Gothic church, too?

Thursday, August 30, 2001

Naturally

Naturally, I am down after all these accomplishments. I am finished, ended, and thus, after resting and beating myself proudly on the chest for awhile, I then sink back into sleeping- potential mode, asking the question: What now? What do I do? Where do I go? I am only happy when I am on the road to fulfilling my potential, when I am traveling on the paradoxical search for infinity towards fulfilment of the impossible dream. Since it is, luckily, impossible, it can never be fulfilled; since it is a dream, it can never be realized. Because if and once it is, it is no longer impossible and no longer a dream. Upon fulfillment, it becomes a dull, inert, and listless “reality,” in other words, dead. The best such a “fulfillment” can offer is a moment of rest and peaceful satisfaction, a shot of “Wow!” But the Wow! quickly dies, and is back to the road again. Step on the trail, ride the dragon,; that is true dynamism and happiness!

Well, I don't have that now. I have “succeeded,” arrived, reached the end-of-August final destination. No wonder I am now drifting down into the canyon of nothingness, slowly descending into the abyss of the Ugh!

I stand at the September doorway of gutsy business, new guitar playing, and calliyoga/running routine. The philosophical base of pain-and-suffering-create-focus and do-something-new-every-day are givens and “taken for granted.” (And perhaps

someday I'll get back to language.)

Meanwhile, it is September, and this means putting my gains into action. But this action has to start within. It can't just be an empty "outer" business realm. If that happened (and it can't) there would be no "gutsy"; it would be merely the shell of business. That will never work. The word "gutsy" itself implies "internal." Gutsy business is the dual term. Neither can stand alone.

Gutsy and God-See

I suppose part of my leap forward in combining internal and external is the realization that, on the deepest level, there is no internal and external. All is One. I will never free myself from the probing eyes of the audience, because I carry the (an) audience within me at all times.

Is there a difference between these audiences? Probably not. And if there is, it is minimal. It is a total illusion to think I can "escape into myself." It is like turning my back on the audience while I am performing on stage. They are still there, only I refuse to see them.

The audience is always with me. Internal and external are one, the same. I am the audience, the audience is me. Realizing this is going public at its best. It is a realization of the deepest truth that, on the deepest level, public is private, private is public, All is One.

This is the essence of the September vision. It combines all the visionary pieces of August into a gutsy going public, a gutsy One.

Hard to say A gusty One. Somehow I have always seen the One as ethereal, existing as a spirit either high in the sky or high in the sky of my mind. Rarely if ever do I see it as "down to earth." Yet "gutsy" bring the spirit down to earth. It puts it in the earth, in matter, in daily events, in the audience, in public. Gutsy could be Godsy or even God-See. Thus God sees. He sees me; I see Him. We are One.

Sounds good.

Friday, August 31, 2001

Singing and Performing are Fun!

I haven't felt this bad for awhile. Tight, down, stiff, frozen, rigid, somewhat paralyzed, this is not my usual state. But it has been for the past few days, and certainly since yesterday.

It has little to do with the fact the stock market has collapsed, although obviously, that doesn't make me feel good.

I even had a headache last night. It started after my lesson with Al, and after I recorded the Woody Guthrie children's song "Went For A Ride" for him.

Part of me recognized that my singing was stiff and rigid. I need to practice, warm up my voice, keep it in shape. But another part of me noticed that, in spite of the fact I haven't practiced, my singing was very good, and all of the old performing reflexes came back. But the most important part of it was the hidden feeling that I enjoyed it. I liked the feeling of singing and performing!

Then, of course, the rest of the day went downhill and I ended up with a headache.

Why do I say "of course?" Because the low feelings I have been experiencing are nothing new. They usually (almost always) come from resisting expansion, and the suppression of joy.

What expansion and joy did I suppress? Singing and performing.

Now that is a shocker. Could it be that, bottom line, I like singing and performing? Could it be that, bottom line, I love them! Could it be that the old trauma of piling lid upon lid, mountain upon mountain, Ossa upon Pelion, on each other merely to cover up and hide my joy existed as a bottom-line feeling for singing and performance?

Could be. In fact, I know it is. It is simply so amazing to realize this, to know that I have been, bottom-line, trying for years to "escape" from this performing and singing joy.

That is why I was down.

Bottom line, it could also be that I love my work. That is why part of me always resists it. I can't stand the joy. Lids return, traumas revisit.

Beyond the lids, beyond the traumas, singing and performing are fun!

Such realizations cut through the traumas. They open the door to self-awareness, expansion, and joy.

I wonder if playing the guitar could be fun, too. Could playing the Alhambra be fun? I have been using the tremolo as a battering ram to push myself and my classical guitar playing into the gutter, to smash me, and drop my pants into second place. Putting me in second place has (almost) been the "purpose" of practicing the Alhambra, and all tremolos for that matter.

I discovered, or rediscovered, fun on my Budapest tour in April. It flooded most of my work. Now perhaps it is ready to flood my singing and performing, perhaps even my guitar playing. Even and folk dance teaching has been restrained by my lids and trauma. Perhaps I am ready to look at that, too in the fun light.

Always, Never, Forever

Am I escaping into hopelessness? Into "there's no way out?" Sartre's "No Exit"?

If I am, why? Is this an old place? A refuge of retreat and frustration that I took long ago in my room? Am I revisiting the old haunts? Is my re-entrance into the world "too much?" Has it thrown me back straight into my room, straight into my straight jacket, straight into the past?

Nothing is forever except Jacob's ladder. And that is the ladder of infinite potential.

Infinite potential is forever. Nothing else.

Even my straight jacket and cloud of trauma are illusions. If they are, why have I

suddenly “accepted” them?

Trauma of Restriction:

I Slipped Back

The above is totally about the “trauma of restriction” of going back to work.

“Work,” in this sense, is “restriction.” Because I “have to do it.”

But truth is, I don’t have to do it. I have decided to do it. I decided this in the total freedom of my mind. (Of course, my mind is also filled with its own traumatic restrictions which I impose on the outside world. I project these restrictions into the outside world by saying the outside world is doing it to me.)

Even though nothing is simple, this is as simple as nothing to understand. By facing the trauma of re-entry, I have simply slipped back.

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mommy Returns

How sad, how sad. What an ending. The ending of hope. Hopes for the more and the More. Down, down, down. Even Compaq Computer has gone down.

Who will clean my coffee pot?

My guts have fallen on the floor. I lie on my bed bawling. The final bottom has finally fallen out. How can I accept it? I’m not sure.

What have I lost?

Hope for love, and the more.

Is love the more? Is Love the More? Is more the love? Is More the Love?

I love more. Is more love?

Have I really lost it? Or have I only lost the hope of love, the hope of more?

Isn’t hope itself the more?

What relationship to hope, love, and more have to each other? Are they really different forms of the same thing?

Probably love, hope, and the more are different forms of the same thing.

But is it really possible to lose them? Or is there only the illusion of losing them?

Life goes along with hope, love, and the more. As long as one is alive then there is hope, love, and the more. But they do change forms. Perhaps I am going through a change of form.

Perhaps hope, love, and the more will re-emerge, will emerge once again, but in a new form.

This must be so. What else could be? I may be just too close to the situation to see it.

Let's say it does emerge. Let's say it will emerge. If it will, is it possible I never lost it in the first place?

Is love, hope, and the more a constant? Is it like the river, ever flowing but ever changing?

What else could it be?

Sad, sad, panic, and down.

I'm down on my knees begging you, Mommy, "Please love me, please love me, please love me!"

It's back to four-years old for me. . . and playing with the ants. Blissfully I squish them with my fingers. But better yet, I have a sense of peace, mastery, and inner quiet. No one is watching me either from within or from without. And even if they were, it would not matter. I am, if briefly, my own person. And this at four years, squishing ants!

Actually, the squishing is besides the point. It is merely a point of reference. But somehow at this four-year-old moment I am content, peaceful, harmonious. The storms of life may swirl around me but I am untouched by them.

I don't know what this four-year-old vision is, the pre-squishing of ants, means. But I like it.

It may be a starting point for the new September me that is being born in this

thicket of tears, this weed patch of travail, torment, sadness, panic, and pleas for love.

Nobody but a mother could have given this kind of love. And my mother never gave it. I am starved for someone who will love only me. Me, me, me, love me. I can't get enough of it because I never had it. But at this late date in life, beyond four years old, nobody can give it. Even if they love me tenderly and forever and give it their all and very best shot. All these later loves suffer from being human. They all have human needs. They cannot love only me; they cannot give me everything I want forever and forever. Yes, it is a childish desire. I hate to grow up. But realizing all this is forcing me to.

Ugh, ugh, ugh, how hopeless, how disappointing. Who wants to give up my hopes and dreams of being loved forever just because of who I am? Just for me. Who could ever do that? The answer is: no one. No human being, that is. Or even animal. Some of them may come closer than others. But they all "suffer" from their own needs. They cannot be there full time for me.

Even my therapist can't be. Forty-five minutes seems to be his limit.

So if nobody can be there forever for me, who can be there for me? Whom can I count on? Whom can I find? Who will take this full time job?

The only one left is me. I'll have to take it. I'll have to be there full time for myself.

Sad but true. Perhaps four years old is the place to start.

Squishing Ants

Index, Ants, and Alhambra

First I thought squishing ants. My mother is watching. But she is not. I am within range, but nevertheless far enough away. And she is not around. She is not even part of this vision.

But I am about to squish ants. Between my right index finger and thumb.

Are these my first infant steps to power and mastery? Is that what the index

finger means? In Alhambra and Ants? And digging up the ant hill and squishing the ants? I don't feel anything for them. But I love the feel of squishing them between my fingers. Are these the beginnings of power and mastery? The first steps towards independence, self-confidence, and walking alone? My first steps in being there for me?

They're my ants; it's my squishing. Until Mommy comes along and says, "It's bad to kill ants; it's wrong. Black ants are good. Only kill the red ones."

Thus is index finger, the squishing right index finger, the finger of authority, command, power, and mastery? Is it the center of "ant" power? The killer instinct come to life. But of course such a nasty naughty instinct was immediately suppressed by my mother. "How dare you run wild on the lawn? How dare you have so much fun squishing and slaughtering those poor helpless defenseless ants? What's the matter with you? Are you a pervert or something? No son of mine will or would ever do such a thing. As I say, kill the red ones. They are evil and bad. You are actually then doing a service for humanity by killing them and thus protecting the black ones."

From four-years-old on I suppressed my killer instinct. I cramped my killer index squisher. It retreated to the sadistic room of my mine.

Thursday, September 6, 2001

Probably

If I accept the power and mastery of my ant-crushing, killer-instinct index finger, will I then have to reject the "false hope" of ever finding an all-loving mother?

Are the two antithetical? Strength and power, as manifested in my ant-crushing index finger, act as opposites to the kneeling, humbling, driveling, groveling, prostrated second-placing of the (false) hope for an encompassing, everlasting, mother love?

Is this lifelong hope another form of putting myself into second place, in effect, a lifetime lid?

Probably.

By giving up hope, am I actually (once I recover) strengthening my ant-crushing

index finger, bringing ascendancy to my power and mastery?

Probably.

Is it really so sad giving up my lid, my lifetime desire for a second place position?

Probably.

Is the hope for an all-loving mother another form of second place?

Probably.

If such a mother actually existed, I would gladly put myself under her power, acquiesce to resting quietly, peacefully, playfully, and safely in a second place position under the wings of her heavy, protective arms.

But I've always held back because part of me has always realized that no such person can exist. Only my wish for that person exists, my hope for an all-and-forever loving mother.

But it takes lots of sadness to give up the wish, lots of crushing pain to give up the hope.

Friday, September 7, 2001

Now There is a Question!

Bankruptcy, abandonment, betrayal: those are the feelings in the big Three. Betrayal by Tomi. . . his credibility has fallen to almost zero; vulnerable. . .no one will ever be totally and utterly for me; bankruptcy. . . my stocks will go to zero: three major fears and three major miseries.

And yet a part of me "does not believe them." After all, just a couple of weeks ago none of them existed. Can things all of a sudden turn so miserable? Maybe. But, on the other hand, with a slight flick of the fatalism and determinism switch, my three miseries could suddenly disappear completely. Vulnerability could go away when I find new strength within myself, when I no longer "need" someone to be there totally, solely, and only for me. Then I will be able to accept this new reality and see within it a

form of strength, a shining inner light propelling me forward and, yes, being there totally for me!

Finally, the stock market could suddenly turn around. Then I would be back to where I was two weeks ago. It might, some day, even go up! Then I would return to the enthusiasm I felt a few weeks ago when I was making money. All it takes is a flick of the fatalism switch.

Fate and the movement of the fates are not within my power to control. I can only flow along with their dictates. The part of me that sits on the side watching is the part of me that realizes this. It is, believe it or not, calmly witnessing the destruction. Imagine that, using the word "calmly." That in itself is amazing. That during this storm of presque total annihilation of my assets a part of me watches and remains calm.

Perhaps that calm, witness place is related to the shining inner light of strength that I may someday feel when (and if) I can accept the fact that no outside human being will ever be there totally for me.

Two positive spots on the horizon.

As for Tomi, questioning him: "Tomi, what should I do?" A best, original, non-accusative, and unique way to handle a possibly irresponsible situation, and my feelings of betrayal and disappointment.

The God Called Hope

I wonder how and if my hope for someone who is totally for me affects my financial outlook, my idea that somehow, someone who is totally for me, namely, "fate," a hidden hand, an invisible arm, an infinite support system, the Infinite, etc. will come along somewhere, somehow, sometime, and lift me out of my misery. Somehow, "magically," they will move in to give me money, to thus support and care for me, to thus be there totally for me.

This I know is my, and has been, always and forever, my hope. My hope has sustained me through bad times.

If my hope is unrealistic, who will sustain me through bad times? And how? Will I be left with only my “inner strength,” whatever that is?

If it is true that there is no one there who is totally for me – and it is – then what will happen when the financial bottom totally falls out, when other support systems as well also totally fall out?

In other words, without hope to support me, who will take care of me?

Is hope really so important? Do I really need it to survive? And if my hope is based on someone who is totally for me, and such a person does not exist, how can I believe in hope?

That is why people choose God. In the glory of their imagination, born from the most intense misery, suffering, and fear, they create a God who is totally in their corner, who will totally take care of them, who is totally for them.

Should I do the same thing?

If I do, have I merely created God for my own needs? Or does such a “thing,” such an “entity” really exist?

Is there really a God? Or is He, born of need, really and merely a creation of my imagination?

If He is a creation of my imagination, can He be real nevertheless? The question I am asking is: Does my imagination have its own reality? Does it create reality? Is the creative act itself the dynamism that propels not only the creative process, but reality itself?

Does Imagination equal God? Does God equal Imagination?

Probably.

Then creating a God who is totally in my corner is okay. It may even be real. This kind of a God could be hope with a capital H. He could be Hope.

Is this all possible? Am I on the right track here?

God is totally for me.

But who is He?

An invention?

Then the question becomes: Do I have faith in my inventions? Do I believe in creativity, creation, and The Creation?

No question all exist within me. I believe in them on a "lower" level. Can I believe in them on a "higher" level, the level of God and World Creation, the level of God as totally for me?

Well, if I believe in all of the above, why not?

In the above piece substitute the word expectation for the word "hope."

Thursday, September 13, 2001

World Trade Center

Shock, shock passed to sadness. This to anger at the Twin Tower collapse. New York and I have been violated. The world has changed forever. A wake-up call. There is before the "bombing" and after. Now is after. The American bear has awakened. We'll see what happens. But the solidarity, for now, is amazing – American solidarity and world solidarity.

I am amazed at how American I feel, how deeply and fundamentally I am an American. I've never defined myself that way before; I never realized its depth. Ask me who I am and I might answer, a man, a Jew, a former New Yorker, etc, and maybe, parenthetically, an American.

But all that has changed. I now feel a patriotism I've never felt before. My home, my beloved New York, the rock, has been attacked. I feel totally violated, saddened, and enraged. And it is so personal. There is no "they," "them," and "the others." The former "they, them," and "others" are now me. Yes, I want to fight back, help do whatever I can. But first I want to recognize this new depth of national patriotism, a deep sense of knowledge that I am so deeply and fundamentally an American. I have

my deepest roots there. It is my home, and a grand part of me. It is and has always been so deep that I never saw or realized it. But it has always been there. It just took a national tragedy to make me realize it.

I love America!

I love the American flag!

I love the values American stands for! They are the healthiest, most uplifting values; they call on me and give me the opportunity to be and become my best.

It just takes a national tragedy to make me realize it.

All former political squabbles and disagreements seem so trivial now compared to this new sense of Americanism.

Formerly, America (and I) have been complacent; we felt invulnerable. No more. That was the former world, the old one. Now it is a new, "on your toes" game.

Let the "tough people," the military, secret service, FBI, CIA etc., those within and without, do their job and be their best! Toughness will and must reign. Naturally, along with fairness, and love. But killing terrorists, the enemy, the evil, is part of fairness and love. Without the toughness to do the job there will be no fairness and love, only terror and fear, and letting dictatorships reign.

Tuesday, September 18, 2001

On thinking, crying, and raging through the World Trade Center catastrophe: Only a belief in God, His spiritual values and ultimate purpose, can save one from despair.

Maybe the purpose of my tour business was to teach me how to be a leader rather than make money.

Looking back over the past eighteen years, I have to say, my tour business has made very little money. It has only created the hope, nay, the expectation that I would make mucho.

In the stock market too, I had the hope, nay, the expectation that I would make mucho.

What is this hope but the expectation of the more in concrete clothing.

Hope looks to the outside world, the "reality," and asks if it agrees with you. It is a kind of two-way street, a relationship, and ask and answer. Expectation is more of a demand. It says: "I want this. The world must give it to me." It has little to do with the "reality" of the outside world.

Should I expect more?

Should I hope for more?

Or maybe there is always more. But I don't always recognize its ever-changing forms.

Bumps In The Road

Bump on the head. Whack, whack.

Now I see on another personal level how the Twin Towers attack effects me: I've lost my tour business along with its possibility of making some money. It has also destroyed the stock market even further. Thus it has pauperized and poorerized me.

On the positive side, at least I am alive. An important plus to remember.

The Road Hasn't Changed At All

On the other hand, just because there has been a national tragedy, and my tourism business has been temporarily disrupted (destroyed?), sadness, death, fear, terror, loss, mounting debts, etc all face me, is no reason to stop the good path I have been traveling on.

The road always has bumps, ups and downs. The Twin Tower national tragedy, is, although much larger in scope and likely change the direction of history, nevertheless "simply" another bump. The road hasn't changed at all.

On the other hand, why shouldn't people travel? The reality is that air flight will now be safer than ever.

Therefore, why not take a month or so (maybe more) off from the tour business (while perhaps taking advantage of the situation by negotiating better prices,) and push and promote my bookings (even folk dancing) in the interim. My books, too.

It is time to start over.