

## The Excitement of Getting Nowhere

Thursday, May 18, 2000

### Beginning of Life on a New Structure

Maybe this so-called “success place” isn’t so good; all my motivation has been stripped away.

Something is missing. The bite, push, and vim. I’m too happy, calm, and shining to do anything. Could this be the latest disguised form of lid, the newest way of pushing down my excitement? Or is simply the signal that an ending is at hand?

I want motivation. I love the feel of its driving force pushing me forward. Where and how can I get it now that I am inwardly so “successful?” This form of “success” is death to my motivation.

Therefore, perhaps it isn’t success at all but the latest form of lid. Watch out for this. It is the other side of real success, which is: the ability to live in the excitement.

Perhaps all this means that my wonderful Tunisian tour with its Arabic excitement is over. I’m dribbling at the corncob, sucking dry the last juices. Succulence is fading.

Time to move on.

I am in the throes of an ending. A new beginning hasn’t started yet. What form will the next Tunisia take?

What will motivate me now?

That I can accept my reward is amazing to me. It no longer has the aggressive, lustful, angry, snarling feel of the spoils of war. More of a quiet smiling and shining quality.

Love in the penis. A new phenomena?

I'm amazed at how forceful I am with her now.

Saturday, May 20, 2000

### Holding

#### Yoga Postures

Movement breeds flexibility;

Holding builds strength.

Movement in the salutation to the sun, the warm-ups;      holding in the postures.

The "new" element for me is the holding.

Can I transfer this holding, and its concomitant building of strength, to other areas of my life? Thus the concept of holding would be the foundation, the beginning of my new motivational base.

### My New Playmate

Why now? Why do I want to practice holding my good feelings now?

Probably because in the past I was too busy playing with my lids.

But my lids have run their course. I've played with them as much as I can.

They're exhausted, out of gas. No more juice.

There is nothing left to do but find a new playmate. Madame Holding, nicknamed Miss Sustaining, with her sexy body, beautiful face, and alluring sensuality, may well be she.

### Victory of Lids

The true sign of the conquest of a lid is total boredom with it.

I used to live for Mrs. Lid and all her little Lid children, Mary Masochism, Sarah the Sadist, Betty the Beater, Wilomena the Whipper, Sandra the Slave Driver, Tanya the Tie and Bounder, and, of course, their twin sisters, Edna Ecstasy, Juniper Jump-Up, Ronda Hit-Me-To-The-Roof otherwise known as "Send Me To Heaven Flying, and Jennifer Joy.

Now I still flirt with them. But I'm moving on to a new girl friend, Madame Holding. She lives somewhere in the middle in the Land of Calm. Her hot lava flows in strange peace-filled streams of sustained Excitement. I do not quite understand how she does this yet, but I am beginning to. More important, I want to learn!

#### What Was That Pained Look?

What was that pained look on my face? It was the pain of confusion: What neighborhood do I belong in? Where shall I go? Which one should I enter? The old up-and-down, toss-and-turn, throw-you-off-the-ledge-pick-and-pull-you-out-of-the-abys, one belonging to Mrs. Lid, or the new sustain-the-balance, calm-and-confident one belonging to Madame Holding?

To sustain a good feeling with you is a major accomplishment because, among other things, you bring out the memory of love and appreciation of me that I lacked, or rarely got, as a child.

#### Whacking the Tulip

Dandelion Jim sucked on his deep sadness down in the Dump Bar. His dirty finger nails, covered with matzah ball grease and stink-stew of melon purple, dug deep into the mud-plugged bottom of Tertiardary Land. His tomahawk, a pubic entry to

public lives and prior rhythms, could not fathom the pitifully gaunt space of wiry primogeniture, primodeniture, and primo dental service so far below.

He shouted from his perch on the tulip stand: "Will all wigwams present please stand up!"

But no Indian present could buy a tepee worth a damn.

Well, that's the way it is when Primo the Genital stands pat. He wakes often for morning service. But today he will not rise up for the occasion. He is furtive and clinging this morning. Will Dander Hip, his running mate, ever cease to bring in the blossoms?

This was the question asked by detective Hairy Lip Hip, gastronomic and whitewashed intestinal directory for the Isles of Langerhorn hockey team. "Puck, puck," he said. "Can a pancreas really skip past a lymph gland? Will a liver ever scream into the incendiary soup? And what of Jack the Ripper Duodenum? Will his pajamas crease before the spermatic onslaught of Muenster cheese gone wild in the deli?"

Wild, wild. Mrs. Sadness sat in the stew washing potatoes for the afternoon army lunch. "Hello, Mrs. Sadness. Won't you please come in? Would you like a chair for Squashed Potato, your evening accompanist?"

"Indeed, I would." Mrs. Sadness gnashed her teeth. A lean, mean look crossed her ruttled face. She readied her hand to grab a pound of flesh from hench person, Jack the Unripper. His tulip had unfolded early that morning.

Mrs. Sadness's evil eyes swung left and right. They whacked the dandelion under Central Eyeball Station just before the train came in. "Ho, Ho, Cuss, eh?" she snarled. "Will you ever staunch the mad dandelion? Your whipper bottom just can't make the sardine this morning."

"Why was I thrice rejected?" asked the Dandelion. Hot pot anger boiled beneath the snatch, hidden and scarred by a mountain of tulips.

Dandelion whacked the tulip with his thirteenth bicep.

### Taking Calm-Joy Ointment

That's why I was sad; that why I was crying: I don't want to lose the passion.  
Any of it!

Yes, things can change. We can descend and grow. But I never want to lose the passion! That's final.

Why I am questioning it now, I do not know. Does it have to do with internal success, confidence, and calm? Maybe. But, truth is, who wants these things if getting them means losing my passion?

Therefore, internal success, confidence, and calm only have meaning if they goes with the passion. Otherwise, I might as well junk them.

Perhaps my internal Tunisian tour success, my growing confidence with its concomitant calm is causing me to hold back the floodgates. After all, shouldn't I be ecstatic about it? And being able to stand rejection, letting it roll right by me? All this is major good stuff. I should be jumping for joy, climbing the roof, screaming out hallelujahs at the top of my lungs from every squire and gable. Instead, I'm suffocating myself under this drippy lack-of-motivation blanket. What the fuck is the matter with me? Dump this shit, Jim Gold. Rise up! Scream out hosannas from the rooftops! Burn and pillage my brain! Light it with a firestorm of calm joy! Yes, Calm-Joy. A new ointment, a balm for the soul sold in all good Camel and Sahara shops. Necessary pharmaceutical equipment for any voyage across the desert of life.

Maybe the pained look on my face during this past month has not been so much one of sadness but rather confusion over my Tunisian entrance into Calm-Joy land.

Sunday, May 21, 2000

### Touch

Is it the nature of the experience that makes me sad? Or is it my attitude towards the experience?

Of course, one of the attractions and beauties is that it makes me sad. My “Russian soul” likes to suffer. There is much beauty in suffering.

Is this true?

I cry when I hear Beethoven. Why not for a touch?

Is it the same, or am I fooling myself? The sadness of Beethoven feels like an elevation; symphonic crying is a catharsis.

Is it the same for touch?

Is it a lid in disguise?

No doubt, part of it is a lid. Or is it?

Or am I trying to soften its mystery by analyzing in order to escape from the pain?

I look for love but try to avoid pain. I sense an escape attempt here. Love blends with pain. The mystery of love and pain are too great. By trying to avoid pain will I also end up avoiding love?

Will there always be an element of pain as I break old boundaries in my quest to open up, expand, and grow?

Is it more a question of courage and heroism? To bravely jump into the struggle, to courageously face and deal with the highs and lows of the search, the pain, love, suffering, and joy that comes on the road of expansion.

This means flat and calm are only temporary resting places on the path. It means that on the spiral upward, in order to progress, there will be no end to pain; but no end to joy and pleasure either.

Thus plunge into the pain. Ha! Learn to love it since there is no choice.

I was fooled and confused. I thought, because I now felt internally successful, calm, and suffused with Tunisian confidence, that my days of suffering were over. I

had finally “arrived” and would no longer have to feel any pain.

Ha!

Maybe being internally successful, calm, and filled with  
Tunisian confidence means I can now face even more pain!

And, in the process, continue to grow even more.

The road to growth and expansion is not easy road. Perhaps strength, courage,  
and even heroism are measured by how much internal pain you can take.

Pain, as the gateway to growth, cannot be avoided. It can only be denied.

To live like a table top is okay for a table.

Monday, May 22, 2000

### Melancholy, Sadness, Nostalgia

Terrible melancholy and sadness over pictures of the past. Time is flying by;  
nothing is substantial; nothing lasts; nothing can be held onto. It is all transient, empty  
forms, and ultimately meaningless.

What is this melancholy, sadness, and nostalgia? I’ve had it “forever” and have  
always avoided facing it. Too sad. Thus I never look at old pictures, read old letters, or  
even go over my old writings. Too sad. . . and threatening.

Why? Is this melancholy-sadness-nostalgia another form of lid? It reminds me  
of loss. Am I mourning the passing, the dying of an old way of life, and its old  
attitudes? The fading memories pinch and stab me with a heart-breaking “gone  
forever” feeling. I cry from the pain of loss.

I am haunted by this recurring sense.

Why? What is it?

Is it "only" lids?

Or is it more complicated than that?

Is there passion involved in trying to meet an immediate goal. . . say 50's in push-ups?

Hey, why not?

I'm always hoping I'll solve my sadness problem: some day I'll be "cured" of it and it will go away.

But perhaps the melancholy and nostalgia sadness is simply a growing pain: it is the creaks, sighs, and groans of a tree reaching for the sky.

Is there passion in squats? In squat steps?

Yes, there is passion in Russian dancing. And in Tsamikos back-bents, too.

Remember, that's why I started doing these exercises in the first place.

Passion and squats, passion and back bends, and turning on one squatted leg: return to Russian dancing and the Greek Tsamikos.

Written before folk dancing:

I am at the root of self-loathing and sadness. Experiencing my two-year-old self: On the one side sits surrender for nourishment. Sadness, self-loathing, and later anger come from following this route. On the other side sits excitement, mad shoe wildness, masculinity, self-confidence, and calm assurance.

Even my two-year-old self knew this.

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

For my two-year-old self, a self which is still with me in the present day, the sadness is overwhelming. It comes in the form of "Give up and go to sleep." It's just



too sad to stay awake.

Friday, May 26, 2000

My Mind Comes Up With A Definite "No!"

The thought came up: the stock market is definitely not right for me.

Does it have something to do with cracking the wall of sorrow, sadness, and self-loathing?

On an intellectual level, I've known for months, nay years, that I haven't been making money in the stock market. And yet I've stayed with it. Hope lingers on.

But now my mind has come up with a definite "No!" It says the stock market is a gambling will-of-the-wisp for fools. I have been that fool. I don't mind gambling, but I do mind losing money for so many years. And yet I have not been able to give up my money making hopes no matter how illusory they appear to be.

But this morning my mind came up with a definite "No!"

Why now? What does it mean?

If I pull out of the market, it means I will be out of that life forever.

I know there is no long-term meaning to the word "forever."

Yet it feel like it will be a symbolic step out of the old neighborhood.

Is this true?

Does it really mean I am getting ready to start over?

How will I feel if the market turns around? And what about rowing my boat, sailing into the changing winds?

And if winds do change, perhaps they are only now blowing me out of the market. . . at least for now. I can always "get back in" if the winds blow another way. But will I want to? We'll see when the time comes. Meanwhile it is now.

This “definite no” feeling has nothing to do with the winds of market change; rather it concerns a life change, an inner shift in attitude.

The stock market was a twenty-one-year wind. Nevertheless, who knows where and how long the next one will blow?

It also has to do with how good it felt to pay off part of my loan (with my Velasquez guitar money), and how good it will feel to pay it all off, and, for the first time in years, be debt free!

Perhaps the pushing and birth of this new feeling is one of the reasons for my “definitely” moving out of the market.

Perhaps the market bred and fed sadness and self-loathing.  
We’ll see.

Maybe this is what free means: freedom from the twin sisters of Sorrow and Sadness, and Brother Self-Loathing.

Perhaps even the desire to make more money, through the market or otherwise, is part of it.

Monday, May 29, 2000

### Miracle Chakra

Today is my birthday. What is my present? The miracle of my folk dance/guitar performance at the Community Church on 35<sup>th</sup> Street in New York City! I gave a unitarian performance in a Unitarian Church.

My birthday present is the self-knowledge and acceptance that I create miracles, that my outward performances are now part of my miracle schedule. (This has always

been so but I didn't realize it. Or rather, I held back – lidded – the realization.

I call this place the miracle chakra.

It is a new level. The miracle chakra exists above the sadness-sorrow/self-loathing chakra where I have (had) been living most of my life.

I can't talk about it yet. Nor do I want to try.

First I want to experience it. Then I will write about it.

### The Arabic Phase? . . . Feels Right

When I finish Scandinavia, I will have completed my original tour plan to cover fourteen European and middle eastern countries. I began this plan at age forty-four and anticipated completion in eighteen or twenty years, by age sixty-four. Now, I may be in the process of planning a new phase, an Arabic phase. It would include not only such Maghreb countries as Tunisia, Algeria (forget about that one for now), Libya (maybe), and Morocco, but also places like Egypt (will be done), Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iran, and perhaps some day, even Iraq.

Tuesday, May 30, 2000

### Historical Writing

I just had a terrible and frightening thought: Could I be moving on to historical writing? I've already written on everything else, that is, humor, fantasy, funny, self-analysis, journal, fiction, and etc. But I've never written about history, and my interest in the language of history: its words and names.

Wednesday, May 31, 2000

### Fear of Death

Fear of death reigns over me. Sleepiness, too. Sleepiness covers it up. So does

sorrow, sadness, and self-loathing.

The flow of “I-am-wonderful” destroys my Riverdale home on the hill. It washes away the house of infinite colors with its smells, tastes, and desires. Decimated by the hot fire blast. Blown to smithereens. “I-am-wonderful” fluid flows through the neighborhood like a river of enthusiasm. What is left after this torrent? An empty shell, a bombed out crater, cinder blocks walls, empty doorways, blackened window sills. Vacant and staring, empty-handed, empty-footed, and empty-minded into space, like bombed out Lebanese buffer zone buildings after an Israeli or Hezbollah attack.

High above the coccygeal plexus, located in the nurturing and wonderful heart region, lies the miracle chakra. At the base of spine, fed by anal currents, lies the center of sorrow, sadness, and self-loathing. But this turbulent chakra covers up an even more primitive one. It is the most primal center, ruled by terror. Its name is: Fear of Death.

Along with the fear comes an incredible power. My guitar playing flies! Speed, power, and clarity! I’m onto something here.

Thursday, June 1, 2000

### Focus on the Energy

Sadness has returned. . . briefly. Further evidence that I am leaving. . . and getting stronger.

On the surface, nothing has changed. But there is a rising independence. My sadness “proves” it.

By leaving I lose nourishment. I may die. But awareness of this fear makes “leaving” easier.

But in this bottom-line terror chakra also lies tremendous energy! It feels basal, earthy, subterranean, anal, shitty, mud-like, primal, fundamental.

Focus on the energy.

It can cut through the sorrow, blow away the sadness, smash the self-loathing, and even conquer the Fear of death!

I'm leaving the Land of Sorrow, Sadness, and Self-Loathing. Not a bad place to leave.

Friday, June 2, 2000

The old is dead. The triplets, S,S, and S (sorrow, sadness and self-loathing) are moving to Dead Land.

The new place is "I-am-wonderful-flow-through."

Can I share it with her? I cry at the thought.

Saturday, June 3, 2000

I'm afraid she'll get sick of my whining.

I'm afraid I'll get sick of my whining.

I am sick of my whining. I am ready to move on. . . to Freedom and Goodness.

I'm afraid you won't like me if I'm not in the sorrow, sadness, and self-loathing state.

My power is in my softness.

Monday, June 5, 2000

Understanding the roots of sadness is a tremendous victory.

The sadness was so heart breaking. The crushing of a soul; utter annihilation of a self.

It started around age two. That's when I decided to surround my soul, to build

my defensive wall. I ensconced it in a shell.

I am breaking the shell. Crack, crash, bango! The walls are coming down! Years of hidden suffering and secret pain seeps through the cracks. It turns into a trickle, now a pouring. Finally, the CPF: Cleansing Process Flood.

Tuesday, June 6, 2000

### Politics

I must like politics. It has bite.

Political opposition was never tolerated on my mother's side of "orthodox communism." My "interest" in freedom went underground. It became a 'secret love.'

Now it is surfacing. We'll see where this leads.

I have a passion for freedom. Perhaps that is what is coming out, and being expressed in my new "public interest" in politics.

I wonder if an "admission" of my passion for freedom, and its expression through acceptance of "interest" in politics is my first step beyond the flat field of two-year-old thought. I'm ready to break through to new psychic frontiers.

Won't this give a new meaning and immediacy to my interest in history?

I think it will. Look how I loved the passion of the Marxists I once knew. They used the certainty of their knowledge to demolish the "idiots" around them. I was fascinated by their destructive power.

They were the Jascha Heifetz of intellectual thought.

I admired their cold technique and their ability to crush the humanist opposition musicians (like my father) who were "weak with open-mindedness" and interested in "mere" warm, soft, fuzzy freedom.

The thought of "expressing myself in politics" brings a touch of sadness. Out on

the ledge, at the edge of the cliff, falling into the abyss of abandonment, opposing them all, rejection, slap-in-the-face, bite-down, stamp on your-puss, kill-the-little-bastard, kick-and-stamp-on-him, slap-him-arm fears of no nourishment, abandonment, and terrors of death.

But otherwise it's okay.

I have been sleeping under a rock too much of my life.

Time to wake up.

There's also the thought: if I express my true political opinion, I'll get killed.

Wednesday, June 7, 2000

The need to write is still there. But the need to write New Leaf journal is over.

I have indeed turned over a New Leaf.

What is next?

All my beloved customers should read my books. Aim for twenty to one hundred readers. . . a small but dedicated following. (Would this be true of music, too? A tape or CD?)

### The Dream of Improvement

The dream of improvement as a good-in-itself.

The infinity of improvement; climbing the infinite upward spiral of Jacob's ladder.

In the past, the dream of improvement was tainted by loathing and its accompanying sorrow-sadness combo.

But the past is dead. Only ghosts remain. Can I embrace the dream of

improvement with no strings attached, as a good-in-itself?

I don't want to give up my motivation or give up the nourishing goals that feed and promote it. But I don't want to follow the old hammering route of loathing, sorrow, sadness, terror, and fear of death, either.

Is it possible to follow the pure dream of improvement, climb the infinite dream ladder upward? Is it possible to ride the never-ending current and live lovingly in the upward flow?

Saturday, June 10, 2000

### Rock-Solid Confidence

One-two years old. Ducking and dunking in the beyond-womb waters by my twin sister.

Rock-solid confidence in the calm of my inner freedom. Safe and secure in my ball of self. Nothing can touch this inner me, not even the push-down, death and defiance, dump and dunking by my twin sister.

Yes, she wants to kill me, get rid of me, push me down, destroy and dump me. But nothing can touch my inner core. And this, even as my infant body slices, pushes, and shoves its pushed down way up and down the corridors of watery feeling that inhabit the outer land of my one-two-year-old crib self.

What's it like playing guitar – and living a life – with one-two-year old, rock-solid confidence?

I experienced rock-solid confidence during the one-two-year-old stage of my life. Totally secure within. Then I started to question and lose it when, at two years old, as I lay on my back screaming about something (I don't know what), and my mother admonished me: "How dare you! What about your sister?" That started the down and



backward path of the Great Shut-Up. . . which lasted until last week's return of calm freedom.

It only took six decades. But who's counting?

Saturday, June 11, 2000

A Meeting With Soviet Steve

The sun rises across the Bering Straits of my barren personality. It whits and whimpers, scattering from side to side, barreling along the infested and convoluted highway towards the arctic Tundra and the flat Pinelands of Siberia. Cold and wet, festooned with dromedary etchings, this camel-laden, lump of watery shit, this pile of personality in a bag, a screwball wedged between pillars of steel and lumps of plasterboard caked with wet coal and molasses sunk in deep-hued purple, this canvas sack filled with wet personality now rides, slides, and glides across the tundra oblivious to psychotherapy, and howling of distant wolves, and steel-jawed bear traps ogling the walking ego with each eye.

Stripped of its search warrant, the wayward personality slings shit from a starboard container, shooting from vast mangonels its heaving and heavy lumps of coal-black shit high in the virgin forests of Siberia.

"Can a medieval fortress ever survive in a delicatessen?" asked Lumpen Proletariat, the Stalin linchpin of former Soviet delis.

"Never could, and never will," answered Soviet Steve, grand stevedore of Grey's Anatomy. His heavy hide and bulbous legs crossed the festive waters beyond the Kamchatka Peninsula with wide, wild bell bottoms. "And what's so interesting about Siberia, anyway?"

Steve's beady Soviet-style eyes narrowed into Lumpen delicatessen cornea; he bore, in wolf's clothing, the cornucopia of better time bombs exploding beyond sanctuary waters. "Can't you see the Soviet Union never worked?"

Although he spoke them with a forcefulness reserved for the Malachopski

prisoners, these were definitely not Steve's words. Far behind, hidden in a closet behind a pine tree, perched just north of the equator, stood his mother. From her ubiquitous mouth shot moths of steel. Her wooden perch was camouflaged by pine trees, pine cones, and pine needles. She prickled as Rome burned. "Indeed, my son," she bellowed in long-drawn minnow tones, "you are flesh of my flesh. Better yet, you are fin of my fin (though none of us are Finnish), and scale of my scale. Indeed you are the finest flower and flour of Soviet fish I could ever imagine or hope would be born of my long-suffering, Duma-rotten 1905 Revolution, cold-pressed Lithuanian flesh."

An injected entity floored the piston near the floor. Lumpen Proletariat jumped up for air. "What about me?" he cried as he landed flat on a pre-Stalin turnip. "Can't you see I count, too? What about twins? I want equal protection under the law, and if I can't have it I'm going back under my bed."

"Such a whiner," screamed Mom from her new ice-capped home above the White Sea just east of Murmansk. "I can't wait until the sun sets. Then I can just whop you one giant Lenin-sized, back-fisted, post-Trotsky wallop, and none of the anti-spanking police will see me. You deserve it, you lumpen shithead! You were nothing but a downtrodden worm worker, anyway. Who needed you in the revolution, worthless piece of trash? Oh sure, you gave garbage workers something to carry, namely yourself. But where would they bring you, anyway? Perhaps to the Chernobyl nuclear dump to join the other delicatessen specialties like roast lamb of Jew, Jesus Christian liverwarts, diehard Mohammeds with their flatbread Sunni Allah Aloha hoppers from Hawaii, Shiite Fatamids from medieval Egypt, or a baked can of German worms from Wurms."

"Mother, you're being rather hard on him," squeaked Soviet Steve from his floating playpen now heading toward Irkutsk via Lake Baikal. "A little tolerance wouldn't hurt here."

But Mother lifted a neolithic tree from beneath the Asian continent and smashed Soviet Steve on the head with such force that communism crumbled.

Monday, June 12, 2000

Bored

Bored. Imagine that.

Bored with old tactics and antics. Even “bored” with my one-two-year-old calm freedom mind, my four-year-old running wild on the lawn mind, and even with my conquest of the sorrow-sadness-self-loathing chakra, and my lowest terror and fear of death chakra.

Although I’m sure they will return as pieces of the past, vestiges, and reminiscences, nevertheless, I’m over the top and out. They’re fleeting ghosts with little to no power left.

The challenge of their conquest occupied me most of my life. They were the mountain regions of Spain, separating my mind into various compartments, trampling the hopes and concepts of unity and oneness on this rocky and barren mental peninsula. I took great risks climbing these mountains and hang-gliding off them. But they are receding into the background. Spain is flattening as it unifies. This leaves me, at first, calm and peaceful.

But now I need new mountains to climb.

I’m ready to move on.

But to what?

I still want my thrills. How do I get them now?

Risk.

Where? What kind?

Risk: Dive off the cliff and into the abyss of wild, passionate, free, lose, mad, fast and crazy, mistake-filled, cascading, this-and-other-worldly guitar playing.

Tuesday, June 13, 2000

Power Rising; Abandonment Residues Revisited

Low this morning. Why?

Is it because my heart wasn't in my folk dance teaching last night? Did I do a "lousy" job?

Nah, that's not it.

I've got that "abandoned by all my customers" feeling.

The power of my political breakthrough leaves me with nothing. This newfound power has "caused" my customers to flee (that is my fear). I am also disappointed and disgusted with my liberal wife. The power of seeing through the black ink octopus screen of accusations she squirts in the water behind her in order to hide her weakness and fears leaves me with nothing. My loathing of another causes her to disappear in my mind.

My political discussion pop-through power transcends politics. But with it come all my old residues, the abandonment fears revisited.

Rising power is the "cause." All my friends and customers will abandon me because I'm too strong. I'll be left with nothing. They're my support system.

But actually, I don't even care if they all leave. Expressing my true feelings, political or otherwise, in public, is just too much fun to give up!

Is loathing of another self-loathing in disguise?

Probably.

How stupid I was not to see her reality.

How could I have been so stupid to have missed it all these years! (Voilà, a self-loathing statement if I ever saw one!)

New Mother

Maybe I ought to invent another image of my mother: one that encourages me to be strong, dynamic, wild, etc.

“Yes, I love it, Jimmy boy! Go for it! Do it! I admire your power, strength, wildness, and dynamism! Jump into the abyss. Not only do I shiver and thrill at your daring, your bravery to take chances, but, just to show support and personal interest, I’m jumping with you!

“Yes, I’m going down into the abyss not only to feel compassion and sympathy with you, but also because I’ll enjoy it. I want an adventure too. It’s not just you, you, you, but me, me, me, as well. I want something for myself. But you don’t have to give it to me. I admire, respect, appreciate, and thrill to your love of adventure. I want to go on it, too. That’s why I had you as a son.

“So forget your old idea of ‘mother.’ I’m not that mother anymore. The one you invented existed only to keep you down. I’m your new mother. I’m here, not to clip your wings and keep your airplane grounded, but to fly with you!”

Written before folk dance class:

I need to take time off from folk dancing, tours, etc.

I need a vacation to absorb my gains.

How much time should I take off? Three days, a week, a month, all summer?

One or three months would be daring.

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

Traveling in the Land of Empty

(Empty Travel)

Is there strength in this new emptiness?

Probably.

I just don’t feel it at the moment.

I’m tired, tossed between hopeless and hope, flat. . . and waiting.

What am I waiting for?

A spark. Something to fill the void left by the collapse of my old “chakras” and the falling away of my lids.

When this wonderful positive event took place, instead of feeling great, elated, and elevated, it made me feel awful. I’ve recovered since then; I’ve moved into flat; I’ve climbed out of the valley. Now I’m hovering around the lowland, drifting on the plains, and sort of getting used to it. But I don’t feel good about these tremendous personal victories over my psyche, and I certainly don’t feel great. Rather, I’m crawling along just above my lowest point. I’m certainly not going backwards to my old “chakras” and lids. I couldn’t, can’t, and don’t want to. But I’m standing in a whole new psychological country. I’m learning how to navigate across its flat terrain even as I have, at the moment, no place to go.

Sue Scher just registered for Bulgaria. Getting a new customer is very satisfying. Not thrilling, ecstatic, roof-top hitting, but “merely” satisfying.

Perhaps life in the New Land will bring satisfactions but will no longer bring the ups and downs related to former ecstasies. This new stability with its inner strengths cuts out the highs and lows. Is this true? Or is it too early to tell where I am going?

Could it be that finding customers is the most interesting thing I am doing now? Has it descended to that?

Notice the obvious word “descended.”

Does this somehow imply that now I have to find my “happiness” in people?

Well, at least it is a direction.

Does this mean I will be living my life in and through the minds of others? (Of course, the “other minds” I live through are creations of my own mind.)

Customer is an audience, a lover, an other, a friend. . . .

Is this a rather disgusting view of people, or am I onto something?

Somehow just as my talks about politics transcend politics so my new concept of customers transcends customers. It has to do with my own expansion. But I don't understand it yet.

### On Setting Limits

Re 50s in push-ups:

My mind sets limits (10s, 15s, 50s etc.). and then I "follow through" to fulfill those limits.

But I set other limits. Won't my mind then "follow through" to fulfill them?

Never mind limitless. But what about setting other, "higher" limits. Could I then fulfill them simply by "following the dictates of my mind?"

Why not?

Certainly, I mentally "set" my own limits. This means I am in charge of my limits. And, since I am in charge, I can change them.

What does this mean for, not only my push-ups, but for other activities of my life?

### Redefining My Relationships

I told Joel: "Sell my Kaiser and buy Cirtix."

He said, "Wouldn't it be better to sell Agnico."

"Why?"

"Because you don't have a loss on it."

I hesitated in the old way. Could Joel have a point? Then, the last years of losses based on his miserable decisions, kicked in. I wavered no longer. My original thought was to sell my loser, Kaiser, and buy Cirtix.

"No, let's sell Kaiser."

He wavered a moment, then said: "Okay, as you like. It will be done."

I hung up thinking how quickly and easily it was to stay with my original decision. A true psychic victory for me. And this whether my new stock goes up or down.

I felt a sudden stab of sadness. I had taken another step into freedom and the abyss. I no longer believed in or could hang on to Joel.

What should I do with my sadness? What is the answer?

Redefine my relationships.

Quick glimpse of a residue: I loathe myself for "destroying" my relationship with Joel; I am also sad because I have "destroyed" my relationship with Joel.

Check out the (former) erotic nature of this chakra.

(I'm using "M" to keep the mystery.)

Sometimes I do the "M" to foster self-loathing; also after sorrow and sadness to "pick me up." But, of course, after I "pick myself up," for a short time I return to self-loathing.

Sadness and self-loathing are twins, opposites in the same sack. From the same egg they hatch their plots. I scramble them up and eat them for breakfast.

I am becoming more and more aware of their existence and how they operate.

Thursday, June 15, 2000

### Lost

I have a yearning to be carried away, transported, even obsessed. I want to ride on Don's desire to learn Greek, or fly on the wings of my Spanish readings. I want to become Spanish, immerse myself in Arabic and become Arab, drown myself in the Greek language and become Greek. I want to focus in one thing and become an expert.



Or I want to focus in many things and become many experts. But in any case, I want to focus. I want to lose myself in something greater than myself.

Frankly, I am sick of being me, and this me I am defining is the narrow, small-visioned one – sick of its boundaries and limitations. How can I fly with these weights hanging from my legs? What airline will I take? Do I even want an airline? Isn't it better to travel with your own wings?

In any case, I feel scattered and unwhole; I am lost and wandering. Across unchartered seas I sail looking for an anchor; across wide open deserts I ride searching for an oasis of focus. Where is my fulcrum?

I can't seem to lose myself anymore. Am I too aware? Or am I again in transition?

### On Teaching: Giving More Of Myself

Here are some of Don's "ideas:"

1. Teach: read up on music theory. Teach music theory to my guitar students.
2. Focus on Greek or some other language.

What do these two "ideas" mean to me? How do they translate?

Primarily, they mean: How can I improve my teaching? Of guitar and folk dancing?

1. Teach music theory.
2. Teach folk dancers my warm-up exercises, stretches, rhythms, meter, music, background of dances, geography, history, other.

All this is about communication and "going public." It really means giving them, my students, more of myself.

This may be the new outward direction I'm looking for. I feel a slight stomach churning, the seed of excitement.

Maybe this is the way to "go public" and get out of myself. I have never really

believed in sales. But I have always believed in teaching. Of course, in the best and deepest sense, true selling is teaching: you are educating someone about a product or service. But the word "sales" has, because of my background, always been tainted. But to teach, educate (beyond and without the Board of Education Bureaucracy) study, and learn, have always been my highest values.

Thus by teaching I am learning; and I will learn through teaching. Teaching and learning feed each other, like good twins.

In any case, this may be, indeed, in truth, it feels like, the turning point for me. It is the new direction in the horizon. Not distant. It is here now!

### Teacher!

A teacher! I will become a teacher!

My parents would be proud. "You, a rabbi! My son, the rabbi!" And then, upon further reflection, they would say: "A guitar and folk dance rabbi? Well, although he's a kindly person, he was always a little bit off."

Wow, I've actually hit on something! It feels like I've turned the corner.

I have never seen myself as a teacher.

It has never been my dream to be a teacher.

It was always my dream to be an artist. Then later, in order to survive as an artist, I decided to be an entrepreneur. An artist/entrepreneur.

But a teacher? It was always a sideline, a way of making a living while I continued on my road to become an artist.

This is truly a new definition of self.

If I am (to become) a teacher, then much, most, all of the internal pressure on me

to become and be an artist – and an entrepreneur to support those desires – is off.

The reward of a teacher is satisfaction at the progress of his students.

The belief in education was one of the most fundamental values I grew up with. I believed in it, too.

Only it was often thwarted and warped by my parent’s desire for me to become a public school teacher.

“Yes, Jimmy, once you get your teacher’s license you can become a public school teacher and have financial security. Then you can be an artist or whatever you like. And you’ll have summers, holidays, and weekends off.”

This always seemed to be the absolutely wrong reason to become a teacher. It was a true Bored of Education concept.

You become a teacher because you love learning and love to study. That’s it. No external or other reasons.

Saturday, June 17, 2000

### Turning Point

From now on if others ask me how I am or what did I do today I’ll give them the “real” answer. True, when I do, they may not be interested in what I say. That bored look about Spain and Spanish history may cross their face. They may fall quickly asleep as I talk about word origins and the history of sound changes in the name Carthage, or how the name Barcelona comes from Hamilcar Barca, the Carthaginian general who assembled an army of Spanish infantry and Numidian horsemen as he planned the conquest of Italy; after he died, his son Hannibal, with his army and elephants, defeated Rome at the battle of Cannae in 216 B.C. They may not care. But so what? I love it. I always have. What great cracking sounds! Hamilcar! What, by the way, does the name mean? And what about his second name, Barca? What does that mean? To me, these

are great questions. Their answers are certainly worthy of pursuit, especially when someone asks me “How are you?” or “What did you do today?” It might even start a great discussion. I might find an answer to my questions. Or, worst case scenario, they may fall asleep right before my eyes. In that case, I’ll just follow my flying thoughts or pursue my answers alone.

In my head, I certainly fascinate myself. But outwardly, until now, no one knew about it. Well, that’s over. I’m at a turning point. I’m going public as an “interesting person.”

This certainly is a turning point.

### What Are Mad Shoes?

When the spirit descends and the higher forces enter your mind and body, filling it with their awesome power, and wonder fills your being, and the shine of divinity fills your eyes, fills you, with wonder, and, filled with this spirit, you start jumping around, running wild, and, filled with ecstasy and crazy happy for your existence in this world, dancing like crazy, and a divine madness floods your being . . . you are having a Mad shoe experience, that is dancing with divine madness.

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

### On Improvement vs “Maintenance”

If my mind is now in order, is it time to work on my body?

Can it be improved or merely “maintained?”

In order to maintain it, must I aim for improvement?

Do bodies and everything else only move up or down?

Yes, they do!

Thus, there is no choice. Although there are periods of calm and quiet, so-called “maintenance” is a myth. I must aim for improvement—in body, and everything and anything else.

Improvement is the way to go although sometimes you can be stuck at certain plateaus for years.

During these periods you trying and banging at the doors even though breaking through many often take decades, even lifetimes.

Written just before folk dance class:

My job is to invent new forms( not to maintain the old, although that's okay, too.)

1. Writing: onward! Pour it out!
2. Folk dancing: New choreographies!

After I realized this, I started dancing on of my old Slovak choreographies. My soul returned. I know my direction. I'm finally on the right path again.

Wednesday, June 21, 2000

### Re Folk Dance Teaching. . . and Love

Instead of "using" and "pushing" my students, think of it as introducing them to the world of beauty and higher energy.

This means admitting, saying, to myself: I have the confidence; I personally know such a world; I have definite knowledge of it. Thus, I can introduce it to them.

Well, if not me, then who? I do have knowledge of it. I've devoted my life to it.

It is another example of expanding confidence, of going public with the inner world of beauty and higher energy that has been my secret lifeline since my birth.

No wonder I am so tired. I am carrying herculean ideas and world-shattering changes on my back.

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Heavy Cloud of Pregnant Brain-Man

Weighted down by my past?

Invent new forms?

The next level of miracle schedule?

But miracle schedule doesn't work anymore.

Nothing works anymore.

All I have left is nothing: No thing, no thought, no spirit either.

Am I depressed? I thought I had moved beyond depression. Perhaps this is a new "I have conquered all; I have arrived" form. The "lack of motivation" depression.

And yet, I'm not depressed even though I am. I'm depressed even though I'm not.

Part of me feels macho and smart for having "conquered" depression. "I used to get depressed. No more. I am cured. I figured my way out of that social disease. I am thus "better" than I was and certainly better than "them." I've won a victory over my mind. I can stand up and say, "I am happy, I am successful." It means Ma doesn't have to worry about me anymore. Now she can go about her business. Of course, her business is worrying about me. By "being happy" I have put her out of business. She too, is conflicted. On the one hand, she wants me to be happy. On the other, if I am, she's left with nothing significant to do. She becomes depressed. Then I get depressed because I now have to take care of her.

The circle goes round and round. Where does this leave me?

Part of me longs for a good old-fashioned depression. Then at least I could get back to work. I'd have hopes for a return of the depression upside which is inspiration. My present state is so blah.

Perhaps "depression" is not the right word. It sounds very clinical and as if something is "wrong" with me. After all, isn't "real" depression a lidded state? And it's reverse side is anger. But I am not lidded, nor am I angry.

My state is rather a kind of prelude to creation. I've had it many times before.

And I welcome it, too. I don't know why I call it depression. I just don't know what else to call it.

Even as I'm writing this, I'm beginning to feel slightly better. Thus, this so-called depression is a real positive for me. What should I call it? Elevating depression? Depressing elevation?

Once again I must say part of me thinks that depressed people are losers. If I'm depressed, I'm a loser. But, truth is, when I'm depressed, I'm a winner! This is really weird.

I must find a new word for this state.

But this is, evidently, the only state that will save me. It is a state of grace, a prelude to a visit from God. It always feels empty and down. It is like a cloud forming in the sky. The more it fills with rain, the heavier it gets. Until finally, it just bursts, covering the earth with water and glory.

So, perhaps "heaviness" is a better word than depression. After all, something is "weighing me down." I even began this morning's entry with the words "weighed down" by my past. I followed it with the word "perhaps." But I knew I was weighed down. I just wasn't sure whether it was by "my past" or something else.

Weighed down, heavy, pregnant. Daily evaporation creates a rain cloud; slowly it fills with moisture; then one day it can stand it no longer, and simply bursts.

I am like that rain cloud. A heavy pregnant brain-man. Perhaps it is all as simple as that.

The word "depression" is loaded with lids. It contains both the put-down force of earth-mother's iron milk and the heavenly power of father's white-hot lightning rod.

A better expression might be "pregnant cloud formation."

Maybe these awful feelings will never go away. Maybe I need them in order to be creative. Maybe they are make me creative! Certainly, they motivate me to be creative. I'll do anything to get rid of them, and ex-pressing them is the only way to get rid of them.

Perhaps I have been unrealistic to secretly expect that enough psychoanalysis will "cure" me of them. First of all, it will not. Second, even if it could, would I want to be cured? Evidently, unpleasant as they are, these awful feelings are my life's blood of creativity. Without them I might as well be dead. They feed me. Becoming aware of them is one thing; for that psychoanalysis is good. But getting rid of them is completely different. Aside from being impossible, it is not even desirable. Well, it is possible to get rid of them: A frontal lobotomy will do it. But that is certainly not the route I want to go.

Thus nausea, disgust, sorrow, anger, pissed-off-hood, elation, disappointment, frustration, wonder, awe, they're all a necessary part of the cornucopia of creation. Indeed, they are awful in the true sense of the word: awe-filled.

How about bodily aches, calf pains, emptiness, fatigue, sleepiness, and all the agonies that accompany daily life? They're all nourishing. Instead of trying to give them up I should have confidence in my miseries! A new welcome mat for frustration, pain, sorrow, suffering, back aches, ankle pain, joint-creaking arthritis, and the long list of human miseries that accompany existence. They are all food, nourishment for the creative mill.

I wondered where I would find my nourishment now that I have "succeeded" in removing my lids. Well, I can find my nourishment in a new look at, and appreciation of, my old miseries. Yes, they are wonderfully filled with humor and pain, irony and contradiction. Agony and suffering at their highest and lowest levels are, fortunately and unfortunately, my life's blood. All the twists and turns in my delicatessen, from my ankle to my neck, and even below and above these visible parts, are the delicacies I



can choose from in order to enter, partake of, and be part of the smorgasbord of creation.

They say artists have to suffer in order to create. I'm beginning to see exactly what they mean.

Such suffering is a form of food and nourishment. As such, it is morally neither good or bad. It simply is.

I had, after Tunisia, reached a point where I thought I had conquered all suffering. I had succeeded in understanding my lids; I had "made it," was successful.

However, in alleviating my suffering I ended up relieving myself of all motivation. Without motivation, I felt empty. I suffered from lack of motivation. Consequently, by not suffering, I ended up suffering even more.

What does this say about life? To avoid suffering may not be such a good thing. And to try to relieve others of their suffering, as liberals so often do, may not be so good either. In fact, it may be, and often is, quite destructive. By relieving others of suffering, you can also remove (destroy) their motivation to improve, grow, and attain self-knowledge.

Tampering with suffering is a tricky business. But awareness is always a good thing. Becoming aware of the labyrinthian road of your suffering and its personal value can only help you.

### Welcome Suffering

Unlike Marcus Aurelius and the Stoics, I do not want to learn how to endure suffering. But rather, like the mystics, I want to learn how to welcome it as a pathway to higher learning.

The upward path of suffering contains the agony and the ecstasy. It is the redemptive path. Is that why Christ is on a cross?

Masochism is suffering without transcendence. It is secular suffering and thus is only ego involved. The ego suffers and that is the end of it.

But when the mystics suffer, they are redeemed through the transcendence of ego. They enter the spiritual plane, which, by its very nature, is not open to the secular.

Friday, June 23, 2000

### Upside Down God

It all stopped working.

Motivation at zero. . . . I'm getting low, too.

Even the desire for greatness doesn't work.

What a lid! Wow!

Or is it something else?

Confusion? Fatigue? Both?

Whatever it is, I am beginning to hate it. I don't like feeling this way anymore.

But I also feel helpless to change it.

I'm between two opposing currents, paralyzed, waiting for one of them to take command.

It has to be the strong, dynamic, expanding self that wins. Intellectually, I know this. But, deep down, the old nourishing put-down self is fighting a battle for its life.

It is partly the "nourishing from suffering" self. . . .

But is there something else going on here?

Are my "explanations" too simplistic? Is this an old attitude (an old lid) returning in disguised form? Or is something new taking place, on a brand new level that I am completely unfamiliar with?

Am I simply exhausted and at the end of a "psychotherapy energy cycle" that has lasted, on one level, three years, on another, all my life?

Am I crouching down, bending my legs, preparing for the next spring forward,

the next leap into the upward oblivion of a new level?

Do I still belong in the lost and found department?

Who the fuck am I, anyway?

This soul searching is driving me nuts. I want some "peace;" I want to get back to my old routines, the feeding energies of my old miracle schedule, the upward-pushing wonders. I'm sick of this lassitude. When will it rain? When will thunder roll and lightning strike? How long must I stay in this sickening desert?

The only relief seems to come from this writing. . . and drinking coffee, too.

What a fucking miserable place to be. And the contradictory part of it is, that I'm supposed to be feeling good about myself. And I am! But all this good feeling about myself is making me miserable. What a joke?

And I'm paying money for this psychotherapy! I'm paying money to discover who I am and how I can feel good about myself, and the result is, when I do learn to feel good about myself it only makes me more miserable.

If feeling good about myself makes me miserable, doesn't that mean that feeling bad about myself will make me feel good?

If this is true, what is all this self-esteem shit? Truth seems to be: the worse you feel, the better you feel. How can this be? Perhaps God is upside down. This could be the deepest unknown educational truth. An Upside-down God. And we always thought He was right side up. Ha!

This means in order to feel better I have to find ways to make myself miserable. It sounds like the perfect paradox. Marxist dialectical materialism, opposites crashing, thesis and antithesis clashing to form the every-changing synthesis. Platonic idealism, Hegelian dialects, too. Marx turned Hegel on his head.

If philosophers turn other philosophers on their heads, and opposites attract, why shouldn't God be upside down, too?

Total Conflict With Myself

It seems I am in total conflict with myself. Part of me wants the soft life, part of me wants the hard life; part of me wants pleasure and ease, part of me wants to suffer; part of me wants stimulation, motivation, and growth, part of me wants the pleasures of sleep, rest, and relaxation.

Do I need performing in order to “frighten” me into a higher existence, and thus fill me with the sense of awe (fright)? Isn’t performing thus a form of self-imposed suffering? And, doesn’t part of me need this suffering through fear, awe, etc. in order to grow and expand?

The lazy me wants to sleep; it never wants the annoyance of suffering, the bother of fear and stage fright. But the bored part of me, the “sleeping dynamic” part, wants the challenge of the outside world in order to stimulate and motivate myself, and thus experience once again the sparks of joy that only growth and motivation can bring.

Although, on one level, it is very pleasant, there are no joy sparks in lazy sleep.

Although, on one level, it is very frightening, there is no lassitude, boredom, or hazy laziness in stage fright. It has plenty of motivating stomach rumbles, too. But I resist it just as I am attracted to it.

I am in total conflict with myself. These conflicts may never go away, never be permanently resolved.

Perhaps that’s life.

Is it as “simple” as that?

### Extend My Stage Fright

On one level, people frighten me. Perhaps that is why I need an audience: to frighten me. As you know, the root of the word “awe” comes from the Hebrew “ire” which means “fear.” Awesome, awful (awe-filled) means filled with the fear of God. His awesome majesty, awful might.

Now there’s motivation! I could use some of that. Stage fright might be just the spice I need to put some flavor in my life.

Perhaps I can even extent my stage fright into yoga, running, studies, and business. . . .

As I look deep into the eyes of stage fright I have an overwhelming desire to sleep.

The fade-out, seemingly peaceful and delicious, mother's apartment sleep of oblivion. It is the alluring form of death.

Fighting against this is stomach churning stage fright. It is the awesome power of the life force.

The forces of life and death struggle on my inner battlefield. Death comes in attractive attire—seductive fatigue, giving up; life dresses in stomach-churning terrors and take-up-the-gauntlet challenges.

### A New Look at Fear

Maybe instead of trying to conquer my fears, I ought to bless them!

I am arriving at a new place. I am seeing the value, not only of my particular fears, but of fear in general. Aside from the fact that fear often saves your physical life, it can also save your mental and even spiritual life as well.

It is a prime motivator. By dealing with your fears, in common parlance, learning to “conquer them” (fears are never really conquered; they are only dealt with) they teach you about courage. After all, if you are not afraid, how can you be courageous? Courage means dealing with your fear, and, in the process, rising above it).

So I don't want to endure it, I want to welcome it as a motivating friend, a learning partner, something you can take to the beach.

Saturday, June 24, 2000

My Fear as a Secret Motivator

My body will fall apart. I'll hurt myself, injure myself; I'll have a pain which will signify and exacerbate the decay and ultimate destruction of my body.

Rather than pushing forward, I have been pulling back.

When did this start? I don't know. (Perhaps, on one level, after I returned "successfully" from Tunisa.)

Why? I don't know.

But somehow I am seeing myself as frail and old.

Well, at least it's a fear. My attitude towards it has changed. Now I say, thank God I've found one, my secret motivation.

How can I—should I—turn my fear into an action, a direction, a path of building up my body. Body building. Start at my corporeal foundation.

I need a path of improvement. Age, pain, and fear of pain be damned! They are only excuses. The questions is: with advancing age, can I get even better? Can I fight the odds? My answer, of course, is yes! Or at least it is yes to the attempt, the trying, the struggle, the fight to get better.

What does "get better" mean but to improve? Treading that path will not only make me better but will also make me feel better, healthier, heartier, more wholesome, and bring a spark of divine light to my eyes.

No doubt about this.

Now fear is my stimulant. So is pain.

Does pain stimulate fear? Probably. But so what? Perhaps pain and fear are brothers— or twins— working together on a personal motivational plan for mankind. They're busy creating the Universal Stimulant in America. . . the U.S.A. It may not be pleasant to take this medicine but it sure does motivate you!

On the one side, you can be frozen with terror, paralyzed by pain. This is the non-motivational side. But once the fighting forces of anger, indignant rage, self-worth, and personal dignity

kick in, the power of the Universal Stimulant begins to work its magic.

I need the pressure of an audience for that to happen.

Sunday, June 25, 2000

### All Is One

#### Meditate On Your Own Experience

I taught dancing at the Tessler Bat Mitzvah in Madison, Connecticut. As usual, I worried: will they get up to dance? I'm walking at the edge of humiliation: If they don't get up, no one dances, then I'll have to accept payment for, ostensibly, "doing nothing." This is my ego's biggest fear. When I work at a Bat Mitzvah or any event, I am totally vulnerable; I am at the mercy of the crowd's "wishes." And they may wish not to dance.

Well, here's what happened: After much hidden trepidation— I know it was "hidden" because I ended up hurting my back when I bent slightly over to pick up my guitar—I walked to the center of the room while everyone was eating lunch. I announced "Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the Emma Tessler Bat Mitzvah. Now we are going to learn the hora and how to dance Israeli dancing." This announcement was greeted by absolute silence and total indifference. People continued eating as if I had said nothing. They talked, chattered, bantered with one another. Embarrassing to me, indeed. How would I get them to do anything? I figure I'd better go over to each table and ask them personally if anyone wanted to dance. When I did, a few smiling heads nodded and some smiling faces said yes. I looked back at the dance floor and, lo and behold, three people were standing there. Evidently, they had heeded my announcement.

Now at least I had enough dancers to start. I took the microphone, went to the center of the room, and made a second announcement. "We're starting our Israeli dancing now. You're all invited to join us!" Then, to my utter amazement the whole

room got up! One hundred people rose, pushed their seats back, and mobbed the dance floor! Quickly I changed my starting plan from an improvised Klezmer winding circle walking improvisation to the Israeli dance Zemer Atik. I told everyone to form first two, then three circles. In three circles no one can see my feet. I realized immediately that teaching dance steps to this beginner crowd would be impossible in the absence of watching my feet. I'd decided I would have to teach these dancers with my hands! I raised them high above my head and, through gestures, nods, pointing my fingers, and moving my arms about, I guided them through Zemer Atik. It worked beautifully. They hooted, screamed, hollered, and laughed as they flopped and slopped through the dance. After four or five repetitions it actually began to look good! They all cheered at the end. They were ecstatic, and so was I. After that a flood of incredible enthusiasm was released, they lifted the bat mitzvah girl, Emma, on a chair and danced wildly around her; family and friends came forward and invented their own dance improvisations. It turned out these people were wild and crazy. . . just what I love! Thus, on first glimpse, what appeared to be a group of stiff, suited, tightly dressed, dead-head luggards turned out to be a wild, enthusiastic, creative souls! My initial reading of them was totally wrong. It had been based solely on my fears.

So, with a little help from God, the afternoon dancing turned out to be an incredible success!

Later I thought: What a beautiful magical event! How can I now accept the fact that I was responsible for creating it?

Then I realized I was not alone. It helps to know this. I "obviously" could not have done it without the bat mitzvah participants, the "others." And bottom line, we could not have done it without the help of God. He created the ultimate miracle of our togetherness.

Evidently, I can write, play guitar, run, do yoga, study, follow the dictates of my miracle schedule alone, but I cannot teach or lead dancing alone. (Or do business, either.) There are certain situations which cannot exist without the "other."



What about Gary Zukov's authentic-versus-external power idea? I guess it is short-sighted. On the deepest mystical level, there are no real divisions. We are all connected. All is One.

That is what made The Tessler Bat Mitzvah folk dancing such a beautiful experience. It was proof, not only that you cannot do certain things alone (like teaching folk dancing) but that All is One.

Beauty-filled, beauty-full, dull of Oneness: Beauty is the All-Is-One experience.

Now this is something to meditate on! I don't need abstract concepts of high-falutin yogic theories or religious idea of Ultimate Unity to concentrate on. Better to mediate on the personal experience of folk dancing Bat Mitzvah Oneness.

It is hubris when an event such as the Tessler Bat Mitzvah dancing success takes place and you do not give credit to the higher forces? "Taking all the credit" loads you with an awesome burden. It creates an illusion of responsibility and aloneness that pushes you into hubris as your last line of defense.

Tuesday, June 27, 2000

### "Arrival"

On reading about the Bourbon rule in eighteenth-century Spain in Spain: the Roots and the Flower:

One advantage to this "calm state of disappointment" is that I can actually (read and) think clearly!

I have "arrived" many times in the past. But it has been so disappointing that I have returned to my cave, my second-place life position, so I could get some nourishment.

But now I am facing the disappointment of arrival. We'll see where this leads.

Wednesday, June 28, 2000

It is time to look into eternity again. . . and the witness state.

Meditation is seeing life from the witness perspective.

It is flat and flattened out state. There is no suffering in it. As Ram Dass says, "You can experience your life as a movie."

I am in a flattened, "end of therapy" state.

Perhaps I am ready to do this.

We'll see.

This witness state is so depressing precisely because it is not depressing.

It is so utterly flat.

When – from the perspective of the witness state – one "experiences life as a movie" how can one be involved when one is so detached?

I'm getting a headache from this perspective. I'll have to "give up" all my joys, downs, intrigues, mysteries, the play of manipulations, the highs of success, and the inverse pleasure of failure, the blood-pulsing thrills of moving forward, the joy and energy that comes with the hope of improvement and its future rewards, on and on.

And what do I get for giving it up? The ability to "experience your life as a movie." I don't even like movies.

I know the skill of living in the meditative witness state is to be simultaneously involved and detached. But how do you do this fucking thing? Is it any fun? Is fun included in this movie? Or do you have to pay extra for it? What about pop corn?

Can you be two mental places at once? Can you be involved and detached at the same time? Can you live on two – or more – levels at once? Can you live your life and be in the witness state simultaneously?

Why not?

If it is possible to live in both states simultaneously then I could keep my juices, maintain my nourishment, and witness it all at the same time. I could lead a juicy life while I witness it. Mainly, I could keep my juicy life. It is precisely the juicy life that I do not want to lose. I have been mourning its lose. That is part of the flattened out feeling. I no longer “believe” in its ups and downs; I see through the “illusion.” But I have had nothing to replace it.

Perhaps I can learn to “live in the illusion” even as I “witness the illusion.” Thus, it would no longer be an illusion. I can “live my illusion” as I “see through it.”

Is this optimistic or what?

I started doing yoga, a slow salute to the sun. I began to cry. Why? Probably out of joy.

I’ve been so lost.

Thank God, I’m starting to find my way again.

Thursday, June 29, 2000

### Ball of Beauty

Ball of beauty!

My personal witness

Shines always

About a foot above my head.

The ball of beauty conquers all fear.

No doubt about this

It is the Concentration of concentration.

It watches and smiles down on my during my struggles

With great sympathy, understanding, and shining light

But it is not part of the struggle.

### Crumbling Up

Although the ball of beauty is separate from me

It is also a part of Me

How do I "join" it?

By crumbling upwards

When the great crack comes, and the ego dissolved in Beethovenian beauty, then, instead of falling down on your knees and thanking God for this ecstatic joy, you "fall up," fall upwards into the invisible but loving arms of the ball of beauty.

The ego dissolves, you crumble "up;" the naked self elevates by "crumbling upward."

The ball of beauty never goes away.

I can forget about it, by pass it, not pay attention to its light; I can deny its existence, jump into a hole, or focus solely on the particulars.

The ball of beauty, ball of light, is always, always shining. It is oblivious to whether I notice it or not.

Like a kite, it floats on a diagonal above me about a foot from my head. It stays attached, tied to my eyes by a permanent braided white-cord string.

Since the ball of beauty is always there, seeing and staying in contact with it is mostly a matter of clearing the debris.

Revel in the feeling of power in my loins. It is so earthly, sexual, and gutsy.

Where does the ball of beauty fit in?

Perhaps in the "revel."

(Note that "revel" is related to the word "rebel" which comes from the Latin *re-*

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again, plus *bellare*-to wage war, *bellium*-war.)

So ends another Shoe.