

## Mastery and Helplessness

Friday, August 20, 1999

### Making Money: The Path Is Set

The tremble of God.

I was feeling okay, ready to concentrate and focus on and finances, even energized, before I spoke to Bernice. I told her all about my visit to the Andrew F. Capaccio Law Center. But, once I excitedly and happily poured my heart out, bango, down I went. Her blanket of pessimism covered me. Well, her attitude is a poison I have to watch out for.

The good part that came out of my visit is my new funneling and total focus on making money! Their “method” of helping me pay off my debt was “too good to be true.” They would pay it off for me, at about fifty cents on the dollar, and “only charge me \$6700. They said my credit would still be good “after awhile.” At the end of this meeting I felt not only uncomfortable but that these debt reduction centers are not my way. Actually, visiting the Law Center made me realize my position. It eliminated all possibilities of outside help. It reduced my attitude to “me or die.”

Yes, “me, make money, or die!” In this view, paying off my debts is almost “besides the point.” Truth is, I could pay them all off tomorrow if I liked. But then what? If I don’t find a way of earning more money I’ll soon be in debt again. Yes, I would fall into debt again unless – and this is the big “unless” – unless I make money!

Making money, more money, is thus the absolute answer to all my money problems! It will pay off my debt plus.

Forget about pouring my mental energies into how to “cut back,” contract, or lessening my life style. I’m not in therapy to contract but to expand. Sure, I’ll be careful and more conscious about my expenses. I’m already taking out smaller ads, and doing

the mailing myself. But the larger and important expenses are still there: the basics like house taxes, food, and the mental necessities that make my life worthwhile, writing and therapy, for example, are still there. If I give them up, why bother living? They are my life's blood, my sources of inspiration. I cannot and will not give them up. I will not "cut back" my life to meaningless.

However, I will expand it to a total focus on making money!

Again, this not so bad. I've got all the "products"; I've got the tours, weekends, dance classes, guitar lessons, concerts, bookings, etc. I want to get them out, get them public. Making money with and through them, by selling my talents, is a fine form of expansion. It is the way I want to go.

I have been "getting ready" for many years. Now I am ready. For total focus!

Nevertheless, true transformation is always slow.

Mowing one row at a time.

There will be slippage.

But the path is set.

### Expansion Is Usually Followed By The Downs

#### The After-Effects Of Expansion

My downs are self-created. But the suggestions of others ( in this case, Bernice) can feed them.

Why do I feel this black, thick, and heavy blanket over me?

I want a support voice for my expansive self.

Once again this quick down I have, this debt-down feeling, must be the after-effect from an expansion.

How did I expand? It came after my meeting at the Law Center; it came with my decision to give up looking for outside help and to focus totally on my abilities, talents, and brain energy, and then to funnel it into expanding my money supply.

Bernice, of course, makes things worse. But, then again, she posits the challenge.

A good idea for me would be to see my downs as an after-effect of expansion. When I feel down try to figure out where and how I have just expanded.

### The Practice Of Bravery And Courage

Not panicking in my financial situation is, believe it or not, an expansion. Dealing with it directly, with concern but without panic or fear, is indeed, the practice of bravery and courage.

Holding onto my stocks, believing they will eventually go up because they are good companies, and they are low, is, not only an act of faith, but more so, the practice of bravery and courage.

True, there is no way of me really knowing that these are good and solid companies. And, even if they are, it certainly will not assure that they go up. Shit companies, ones with no earnings, etc., ike internet companies, rise phenomenally. Therefore, in one sense, their market value has little to do with their actual worth.

The whole stock market, the investing and even speculating phenomenon, has more to do with faith, bravery, and courage, than with concrete "reality." It is all one gigantic act of imagination.

One hopes one imagines right.

Hope is an act of faith. As such, it is part of the practice of bravery and courage.

Saturday, August 21, 1999

### Expansion Is Greeted By The Door Of Down

Yesterday I figured out the finances; I figured out how I could do it: Get thirty-

five folk dancers per class, get five to six guitar students a week, get two club dates and two school assembly programs a month, and I would be making \$4200 per month or about \$50,000 per year. Then I could pay off all my debts and even make a little money on the side. I would be home free. Plus this program entails pushing my talents, not a bad thing.

I could make mucho money. And this without weekends or tours!

Tours and weekends would be “gravy.”

What an expansive financial and personal thought and concept. Suddenly, it all fell in my mind. Why now? I thought. It felt like a miracle. Finally, an answer to my financial woes had come. And this along with a positive personal direction.

As I say, I felt so good and peaceful – for about an hour. Then, bango, the Door of Down slammed on my mental finger. Ouch and oweee! Terror emerged from its hiding place. What about my Greek tour? I’m not making enough money on it. I’m treading water. I’ll slip back into debt. What hope is there? I may sink back even further. Etc. The voices of doom blew in from the west corner of my put-down mind. Like a tornado, they roared in suddenly and strong.

About two hours later I realized what had happened to me. Here was my pattern emerging once again: a down following an expansion. Fascinating, fascinating. Could this really be my pattern?

Is this pattern common among others? Or is it uniquely mine? The reason I ask this question is: if this pattern is common among others, like the up and down, in and out waves of an ocean rolling, then I might simply have to accept it as part of life’s suffering and struggle. But if it is not common among others, if it uniquely mine, then perhaps I can change it, even eliminate it. Here my weapon would be awareness, awareness of the pattern.

And if it’s common, you can’t change it?

### An Important Discovery

This is a most important discovery. It would explain my downs in terms of expansions. It is a positive approach. My downs would be a positive, that is, they would be a “result” of an expansion.

True, in my own warped way, my downs are my own unique way of finding love. No doubt it comes from my childhood training. When I expanded Ma would either be cold or say, don't act that way, or don't run wild on the lawn. No love there, only disapproval, direct or subtle. So expansions were outwardly squashed. I learned to push them down. To express them openly and publically would only lead to disapproval and the subsequent removal of love. So I learned to hide them.

Soon I internalized this mental mechanism, so that now, whenever I expand, I mentally push myself down trying to remember the ancient form of Ma's love.

In any case, this is a major understanding of how my mind works. We'll see where this leads.

Just realizing this insight into my mind – a realization which is itself an expansion – makes me want to go to sleep, retreat into the warmth of masturbation, or hide under the covers.

And this in order to recover and reclaim the ancient kind of love my mind is used to knowing.

Money is also a form of love. Earning it represents my search for love outside the house.

I can't believe these thoughts I'm having. Look at this one: If I do twelve school shows a month (at \$350 a show) that will net \$4200. That alone covers all of my monthly expenses!

True, it will take six months to a year to build up. But “all” the money is in schools. Plus they are the “future” (through children.)

Me returning to schools? Me calling and selling to schools? Me giving guitar lessons? And what is most new, the idea of me liking it! Amazing.

But I have solved my Alhambra problem. And this even though it took twenty years. I am returning so different. I hardly recognize myself. But, evidently, I am returning.

Could my “amazement” at these changes be my way of retreating ever so slightly from them. I’m saying, oh no, this can’t be me. This isn’t really happening to me. I want to move away from it, stand back in awe of wonder. I don’t want to enter this place, at least not yet. It is still too hot for me, too fresh. Give it time to cool down; give me time to assimilate my new place, state, and status.

There is nothing wrong with giving myself time, nothing wrong with wanting love. And there is nothing wrong in taking it in all the so-called “warped,” strange, and unique ways I try to get it.

August 24, Tuesday 1999

### The Tree Posture

The body is the vehicle through which happiness passes. Thus caring for your body is a very worthwhile pursuit, a worthy dedication.

Yet the currents of the mind continually storm the body.

The tree posture, in yoga and in life, grounded in the rich full soil, roots the body in the flexible strength of the earth.

Of course, storms of mind will continue to assail it. But the tree, though bending and swaying, shall not be moved.

August, 25, 1999 Tuesday

My Power Reflected In Her Eyes

My power is in her happiness, or rather, my power is found in making her happy. She is dancing under me because I did it. I did the work; I did the digging. Because of me, through my efforts, she is wriggling, writhing, wrapping, and running in ecstasy. Through the power of my efforts.

That is exciting. . . and expansive: to see the happiness and joy of others resulting from the application and expression of my power, to see myself reflected in their eyes. I walk into them, onto them, through them, I reside in them; my efforts shine in their eyes. I lock horns and conquer their inner demons; I step into their mental chambers, take over, and bring them joy.

What a way to look at her and Her! What a way to look at the weekenders and the Weekend!

My power is in my submission!

Instead of a big killing, mow one row at a time. Thus two guitar students equals one row at a time.

Friday, August 27, 1999

Admire My Toughness

(In order to stay out of second place)

Toughen up, buddy, toughen up! This is one of the realities. I have accepted it. Living with its conflicts and pains is part of what I (have to) do. Not dropping to second place, staying in first place, must be my main occupation and pre-occupation; it must be my top priority.

I am making cruel, difficult, hurtful decisions; I am hurting the one(s) I love in

the process. Yet I see no other way to do it. I am tossed and torn between Scylla and Charybdis.

The only thing I can do in this situation is admire my toughness. Believe me, right now these are only words. Perhaps some day they will be part of my reality.

Is this another example of feeling responsible for the emotions of others? Probably. But that doesn't make it any easier.

Indefiniteness, indefinite pronouns: these are Russian grammatical mental concepts. I am ready to grasp them.

Saturday, August 28, 1999

Perhaps it is even better that way, even best! A letter to the Great Disguise, the Great Mystery, the Great Kabbala. The true name of God cannot be spoken. Thus, when I write about You/She/He/It, words only trace the true substance.

How can you truly write about the flight of a swallow? You can only live within its experience.

Just because I am learning about the dynamics of my expansions doesn't mean the ups and downs are going to go away.

They may last for awhile, even forever. We'll see. Meanwhile I'll just have to keep suffering through them.

All teaching is "merely" an extension of your own learning.

Sunday, August 29, 1999

I wonder if my worries about money secretly protect me from other concerns, that is, from worries about health, death, etc. In other words, would I always find



something to worry about as a way of occupying my mind?

Viewed in this manner, worries about money, which I have always had since I got married, would be a secret device my mind has created to protect me from perhaps even greater and more damaging worries.

No question that borrowing money has, in the past, kept me stimulated and excited. True, it has gotten a bit out of hand, and I want to change the debt/equity equation somewhat. Nevertheless, it might be wise to remember positive aspects of my strange relationship with money. For the general public, borrowing money can be and usually is a frightening thing to do; to be in debt is not only noxious and scary, but it is even considered somewhat "evil."

But my mind, working in its strange and surreptitiously healthy ways, does not seem to follow in the tradition of the general public. It is wise for me to get to know it and learn to live with it.

It seems I have stopped writing funny, imaginative pieces. I've even dropped my wonderful word salads. I wonder if this is because I write first thing in the morning when my mind is heavy, reflective, and "serious." Afternoon or evening writing might be different. By then I am certainly in a "more public," off-the-wall mood.

The off-beat might be more of a late morning, afternoon, or evening phenomenon.

I am at the borders of a whole new way of doing yoga.

I wonder if this worry about debt is mine. Or have I internalized Bernice's worry? Yes, I am concerned about it. . . but more on the level of annoyance. Bernice, however, is panicked about it. During my moments of panic, do I panic because she has transferred her worries to me and I am afraid that her wrath will come down on my

head?

Probably this is so. Truth is, my debts are a pain in the ass, but I have lots of pains in the asses. This one is, at the moment, a little worse than the others. It has moved from a minor to a more than minor annoyance. But it is not a major annoyance yet; and it is not a panic. I have an out to every problem in life. It comes in the answer: I can always die. This answer solves all problems. So, if I have this answer, and have had and used it all my life, why not use it again now. If this final solution of freedom is always standing in front of me, giving me courage and fortitude, why should I worry beyond the normal, mosquitoes-flying-around-my-head level?

Minor annoyances make up my daily world. I simply throw my debt into the mix.

It will be solved when the time is right. That time is approaching now.

Sadness through the yazik and the empty rolls. I have chosen not to beat myself over the situation. That is the major expansion – and cause of the ensuing down.

I took a step forward: I said I can be happy; I can make it on my own terms; I can stand up alone and be satisfied. I'm strong, sufficient, an island unto myself, and it's okay.

But also I felt terrible about leaving her. And the old sadness returned. She will love me more if I feel terrible. If I feel strong, happy, sufficient unto myself, she will be hurt and leave me.

I said I must do it at my own pace, in my own way. An expansion. And I believed it a little more; that is the expansion. The contraction is the ensuing down, the "I'll lose her, she'll abandon me," etc. But I'm onto it. Also I'm combining courage (heart), submission (to the God within), and exhilaration!

Monday, August 30, 1999

I wonder how I will survive this trip.

Yes, I can bring books, Russian studies, running gear, yoga practice, novels, and computer. Plus there is also the telephone. Well, that's a start. Maybe with all my "equipment" I can get through it okay. We'll see.

Is there anything "new" I can look forward to? Is there any reason beyond my vow for me to go? Can I find something more?

Maybe yes, maybe no. After all, it is not called the Netherlands (Low Lands, Down Lands) for nothing. Does that mean I have to be nervous and depressed because I am going?

Of course I always have pre-trip anxiety. Truth is, part of me never wants to leave the house. It is so pleasant and safe here with all my known routines and things in place. Plus here I have my work.

Well, let me try to make the best of it.

I read in the New York Open Center catalogue the description on Sharon Salzberg's course: The Brahma Viharas. It said, among others things, that "In the Buddhist tradition, metta is taught as a practice, along with meditations that cultivate compassion, joy in the happiness of others (sympathetic joy), and equanimity. . ."

Joy in the happiness of others. To practice and cultivate it. Now that is radical! This is what happened on the Camp Smorgasbord weekend. I was starting to look at my power to affect others; how to get personal satisfaction, happiness, even joy simply is seeing how I affect others. How I, through my work and personal effort, can bring them joy and happiness.

This a wonderful "new" way to look at business! Rather than focusing on how much money I can make, to focus instead on how much joy and happiness I can bring others! Ha, that would be a new one! To find my own happiness through the

happiness of others; to find my own joy and exhilaration through the joy and exhilaration I bring to others. This is, indeed, an incredible “new” way of looking at things. If this can be my focus for the new year, a new millennium focus, what an accomplishment that would be.

Of course, the mere fact that I am saying it, introducing it into my journal, means that I am getting ready to approach business that way. The reign of money is coming to an end. And with it is falling its accompanying reign of fear.

Imagine if I could run my business in the realm of happiness, joy, exhilaration, and bringing all these qualities and experiences to others? Indeed, what a new world that would be. I like it. Nay, I love it!

How to do it is the question. Truth is, I do it already. I just have to recognize it, then focus on it. It means dropping the wet blanket of money worries and other heavy ego drag downs.

Well, I've done them all already. These drag downs are old, tired, and ready to fall by the wayside. Where else is there for me to go? It is “merely” a question of courage to let myself live by these new joy and exhilaration standards. During the past two years (and probably longer) the protective membrane around my heart has been stripped away. What is left for me to do but expose it, release my inner core, open my heart and let the courage, joy, and exhilaration rip.

Tuesday, August 31, 1999

A headache perforates my brain. “I hate to leave! I don't wanna go! Boo, hoo, boo, hoo. I wanna stay home! No, no. Don't tear me away from my love-ly routines, ways, and pursuits.

Joy in others – and I am one of the others. Something for me to practice in Holy Land, Holly Land, Holland. Business joy in others – and the money will take care of itself.

### The Sport Of Borrowing; The Sport Of Debt

I like the sport of borrowing; I like the sport of debt. I pay for my sport with interest.

To me it is very macho, gutsy, and fun to borrow money.

Money, and the game of money is my sport. What a way to look at it. I love it!

September 3, 1999 Saturday

What is surprising to me is how little I want to write on this "vacation." It seems I am mostly studying Russian, a touch of Dutch, and that's it. And, of course, following my yoga and running routines.

Our Seven Bridges Hotel is located next to a Buddhist book store. Yesterday I bought Reflections Of Mind: Western Psychology Meets Tibetan Buddhism. It is a collection of writings edited by Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche. I bought it "for Bernice," but actually I am interested in it, too. As I am reading it I notice how resistant I am to reading so-called explanations of experience by others. I am afraid that somehow I will focus on the intellectual explanations and "forget" how in touch I am, at present, with my own awareness and experiences.

In any case, I am still reading Reflections Of Mind. We'll see where this leads.

I am also getting very bored and tired with, and of, my writing. It seems to always come out the same. Perhaps that is part of the "pause state" that I am in. I'm getting ready to move on to something. But to what I am not sure of. Humorous writing? More preparation and editing of old works? I'm not sure. But I do feel so tired of the old ways. . . .

### The Extremes

I've just done almost two hours of morning yoga.

I feel weird. Am I weird for doing it so much? Or is it a down reaction to an

expansion?

Perhaps the latter. It fits in with my past patterns.

The sadness and weirdness I feel when I'm doing "too much." I'm at an extreme. I'm an extremist.

An extremist is not balanced. Is that good? Is it bad?

Part of me thinks it is good; but part of me thinks it is bad, too. But again, isn't the "bad" the push-down, lid, wet blanket, and put down part I feel after an expansion? Indeed, it well could be.

It is.

No doubt, it is!

Maybe I'm afraid to get deeply involved in yoga, guitar, writing, whatever, precisely because of the down feeling that comes after an expansion!

Wow and hmmm.

As a teenager I used to feel so great after a six hour violin practice stint. How exhilarating! How productive! What a high! An extreme. How I loved such extremes, and the extremists who could live in the fire and passion at the extremes.

No doubt, in my heart, I am an extremist. Why? Because that's where the passion lies.

At the extremes is where you make all the big discoveries.

Sept. 4, 1999 Sunday

Too tired to write. That's the letter of the law. And Peabody Snodgrass, well-known pea plant, writer of doomsday books, and Peperititudes of Plenopies Among the Panopies of Petunia;s Pulip Patch--a book yet to be discovered by today's Scottish sycophants. marches back to his South Holland town of Swollenbutt, just six miles

south of Knishes-on-Amstel and Land's End.

It is a turnip stew of a day, and Peabody is happier than any turnip in the field. His garden has been thoroughly planted with wines from Picardy, bottled of a ancient booze from the Batavians up north, and a few Frisian swigs who sauntered in, after closing their locks on the dikes. Yes, a land locked holler can't be found among any bicycles here. But more of this tomorrow. Perhaps three times a day of Peabody writing is a good idea after all. It certainly oils the joints and keeps the pedals from slipping too far.

September 5, 1999 Monday

Often suffering offers us more security than real change.

### Accepting My Ass Hole

Its wants, desires, needs, and energy

How could I love my disgusting ass hole-- and it's energy? I don't even want to think about it. It is disgusting. It is not even part of me. I am above it. (Of course, it is beneath me.) I am beyond it; I am too good for it.

How sad this attitude makes me. After all, I have a fine ass hole. Why can't I, shouldn't I, learn to love it?

Love my disgusting ass hole. Even love the disgust of it.

The energy in my ass hole is its power and beauty.

Perhaps I need another word for ass hole, one that is more refined, one that does not retain the negative qualities of disgust, dirt, and stupidity, one that unites both power and beauty with disgust. A vision of beautiful disgust or disgusting beauty.

Can't the fluggelhoff ever be broken in this life? Must the dire consequences of

state-wise bobosnitches ever sink to new pristine levels? Evidently, this is a must on foggy bottoms.

The squiggly bottoms of a bygone booby snatcher walked headway into the herring refrigerator, boxing up the bean carts, and turning the orange juice containers into rubber necking traffic jams. Such fruits of the vine and refrigerants could not be tolerated by Larry Refrigerator of Concupiscence-Upon-Time, that wiry suburb of Amsterdam where the fruit flies grow. Bumping sideways through the canals, working backward in a whir, whirl, and whorl of mosquito netting, swatting the Great Ones, those doopers swooping down from Batavian and Frisian canals, dumping their stingers in foul and fetid flesh of "denizen turisticas," a new breed of invader to the shores of the Stirring Dam of Am.

"Hind the hickerpoopers! Away the swallow fiends!" Thus did Jack the Snipper rip and snort his way past the cocaine factory where Desly "Wild Oak" Popkins lived beneath a willow and never at sod except of Sundays.

Mewing on, can a deaver beat a pumpkin at ping pong? Such questions are rarely asked by a Buddhist. But I swatted the mosquito. So ended my career as a Buddhist.

These airy bottoms were written before bed. Can my hind quarters release such dew perpetually? Pagannini wrote Perpetual Motion. Can I write with Perpetual Emotion? Yes, as long as I keep spelling "perpetual" correctly.

September 6, 1999 Tuesday

### Return To the "Witness State"

How sad that I have to "give up" my pain and suffering, my body, and even my attachment to the thoughts of my mind. How sad that I have to "lose it all." I cry.



Meditation is "just watch, don't participate." It is staying in the witness part of my personality. The Witness State. (I live in the state of New Jersey. Must I live in the Witness State, too?) This state was once a cold and inhospitable place. When I ran up the hill at the farm and saw God hanging over my head during the witness state, I refused to "give up my body, mind, sufferings, and joys." I got nauseous and a headache just thinking about it. But now, perhaps I am at a different place, ready to move on, to look again, accept the witness state, and even develop it.

The suffering is: giving up my attachment to, and love of, suffering. Perhaps that is what the pain in my neck (and shoulders) is about. Suffering: it is a pain in the neck (not a pain in the ass, but in the neck!)

To give up my attachment to this suffering life, to give up my attachment to suffering, makes me nauseous. It also gives me a headache.

The suffering life is the second place life. But I know--and love it--so well. How can I give it up?

How can you be an artist without suffering? And, how can you experience joy without suffering?

Am I not giving up all the juices of life in order to enter and become a citizen of the Witness State? Doesn't second place citizenship offer more benefits? Is the equilibrium and calm of the Witness State really where I want to be? What are its benefits?

And yet, I've "done" the second place world. Where else is there to go?

I want to suffer; I like to suffer. Please, don't take it away!

The pain in my neck is my attachment to suffering. Shoulder pain, too, because I bear the weight of the suffering world on my shoulders.

Fly the bumperwarts silly pain on my cheeks while I poop the Witness State in order to detach it. Can fleegelhofs really be such beanies? Or must I seer the ramparts to back order the sluice juices of Keizersgedrach, and cannaloni?

Suffering is the King's Canal. Can Cannaloni be far behind.

Where do Italy and Venetian cheese fit in?

September 7, 1999 Wednesday

Yes, I want to expand and grown; yes, I want more. But where does this "more" reside?

Do I want more money and recognition? Or do I want more self-knowledge, awareness, and a mental state of non-attachment? Is this the inner direction of expansion, growth, and "more" I want to follow?

The answer to the latter is an obvious "yes."

Expansion, growth, more life in the new neighborhood, are all experiences of the mind.

Outside there is "nothing"; inside there is everything. But knowing the difference is so hard.

### The "Fun Of Suffering"

In the Witness State there is nothing to protect.

But part of the "fun of suffering" is protecting, or trying to protect, myself. I protect myself from pain, fears, and frustrations. If "enlightenment" means realizing there is nothing to protect, what will happen to my wonderful "fun in and of suffering?" Where will I find my kicks, my pleasure? (Notice the word "kicks." What a perfect S

and M word. But of course, it is from these "kicks" that I get my pleasure. Kicking and being kicked is part of the "fun of suffering."

Accepting the "fun of suffering" is part of the Witness State, too. It means "watch it; don't participate, don't get attached to it." Who knows? There may be other ways of fun I don't know about or haven't considered yet.

But first comes accepting the "fun of suffering." This will be hard because part of the fun, in fact, most of it, comes from not accepting it!

I laugh at the irony. What a joke this life is!

Perhaps I can work around this by accepting the fact that I do not accept it.

More irony. I laugh again.

September 9, 1999 Thursday

### Where Is My Witness?

I like fascination. Part of me may even like anxiety. Witness my "fun of suffering."

Part of me likes being a prisoner of fascination and anxiety. But only part of me. What about the other part. the Witness part? Where is that in this equation? No question, it is there. I must only become aware of its presence.

Debt is a perfect example. I need to end this anxiety to quiet my fear of it overwhelming me as well as Bernice's fear overwhelming me. Whether the origin of this fear lies in me, in Bernice, or both is besides the point. It is still there, coupled with the expectation and hope that someday I will be free of it.

Well, that "someday" is now. On one level, what is my debt but a frightful thought, a threatening image, that keeps rising

from my unconscious mind to assault me.

Watch it rise; do not participate in it.

My fascination with the power of money leads to reaching out for it, leads to anxiety about how and where to get it which leads to still further reaching out and more anxiety.

Tulku says I get caught in this progression because my thoughts and fascinations cannot fulfill me. They have no real substance. I cannot hold them. "We continually put ourselves in the situation of chasing rainbows. And the more we chase them, the more anxious and frustrated we become."

Something to ponder, consider, and "think" about.

Written on the plane home:

Dive Into The Fire: I Love It!

The White Hot Passion Method Of (Active) Meditation

It's my panic, push-down, claustrophobic reaction to meditation. It's an old form. Meditation, to me, symbolizes and means cutting myself off from the bottom flow, and the up-flow, too. It means sitting in down-pushing neutrality, disconnecting the vital in and out, up and down juices. It is a superimposed "conscious" peace, the peace and calm of neutrality and death.

That is the cause of the claustrophobia I now feel at the Amsterdam airport this departure morning. I am simply afraid of meditation, afraid of my reactions to it, and what it means to me.

The meditation I "know" has no white hot passion. In fact, it passes off passion as just "another thought" floating through the mind, another transient feeling.

I need either to give meditation up completely or find another meaning to it.

But there is no question that meditation must have passion, white-hot, God-blasting, driving, up and down, left and right, whacked out, seat of the pants passion. It must have the white-hot flow, the Mad Shoe madness, the off-the-wall insanity.

Is this a contradiction? Are passion and meditation contradictory, and in opposition to each other?

Or are they one and the same?

Perhaps passion is my personal form of meditation.

I want to suck the juices of life dry. I want it all! I want, want, want, and need, need, need! I love the passion of wanting and needing, the inspiration of handling obstacles and frustrations. I love the fight and struggle. I don't want to "give it up" for some calm, dull, Tibetan moment. Let's face it: This kind of meditation is just plain boring. I never liked it; I was never even attracted to it. I thrive and glow in action!

Even if my meditation is passion, I hate the very word "meditation." Basically, it sucks as a sound. It is too abstract, philosophical, distant, and even clinical. No juice, spice, or fire in it. It's not even ice cold, or tear-your-skin-off freezing. It is basically "ugh" neutral.

I'm giving up on it.

I'm going back to the passion of three times a day. Ah, dive into the fire! I love it!

Maybe the "white-hot passion" method of active meditation is my form of meditation.

### Witness State As Cheerleader

My "meditative forms" are in my miracle schedule. I just have to do them more intensely and in more depth. That's what the three-times-a-day rule is: a way to experiment and see how far and deep I can go into the adventure of the miracle schedule "meditative form."

What role does the Witness State play in my miracle schedule meditative form?  
It is the cheerleader for my passion.

How did I step, slide, slip, and get so far off the mark?  
It doesn't matter how or why. It only matters that I am now back on track.  
Remembering my miracle schedule put me in the flow and in the Flow. What else is there?

It is my best meditation.

Perhaps I need to read Tulu with my miracle schedule in mind. It will make more personal "sense," or rather, non-sense.

Friday, September 10, 1999

### Practice

First thing in the a.m. Tulu readings are a good opener, reminder, and stimulant for my one-minute meditation practice.

It is, in the sense of practice, similar in discipline to my guitar, writing, running, yoga, and Russian practice.

It is another form of practice.

It is a practice.

I like to practice. I like to feel and see progress and improvement. It comes only through practice.

It is a "sitting still, Witness Within practice.

### Challenging And Tough

I looked at the clock before I tried one actual minute of practice. I lasted thirty-

five seconds.

Challenging and tough. Maybe this meditation is worth something.

Saturday, September 11, 1999

### Meditation and Claustrophobia

I meditated for one minute and twenty seconds. As the thoughts, feelings, and images came up and I tried letting them pass through me I suddenly felt trapped, claustrophobic, smothered.

That's what I felt in the airport in Amsterdam, too.

Is my mind, with its every-flowing stream of ideas, a fountain of thoughts, feelings, and images spouting up from my unconscious, an example of my mind running wild on the lawn? If so, does my inner mother, the one who reminds me of Ma, step in to stop them, to smother them? Do I feel the inner wet blanket effect in my brain and is this creating the feeling of being smothered and claustrophobia?

The dying of the body is just another adventure for the soul.

Sunday, September 12, 1999

Headache: I'm mad, plain disgusted. It's money, of course.

But I wonder if I am choosing my old fears, angers, disgusts, and headaches in order to avoid a worse fear; in order to be safe. I am perhaps in even greater mental and attitudinal danger if I accept the truism that everything changes. Truly, I do not and cannot know what my future will bring.

Faced with the danger and threat to my existence, I cling to my old attitudes. After all, miracles can and do happen. Slowly my life is changing. . . forever. Nothing is permanent, including my financial condition. Things change and evolve slowly – like

my guitar playing change, often so slowly I hardly notice them.

Guitar changes took and take years. So do financial changes. (And I only started this one in March, 1999.)

### Believing In The Miracle Of Slow Change

If I can accomplish such great things on the guitar, what else can I accomplish through the stream of time and steady work?

All the pressure is off. I don't have to play "fast" anymore. I can't believe it. I cry. But it's true. There is no turning back; it is impossible.

I am here-and-now in the breakthrough, cryable present, making gorgeous and unbelievably beautifully music. A miracle of change has come to past. Believing in this miracle, the miracle of sticking with something, working incessantly at it for months, years, even decades, and seeing the slow changes and possibilities emerge, will change my life.

I am hesitant, even afraid to believe in such a miracle. But no question is stands right before my eyes. Totally and down-to-earth optimistic. It so changes my fundamental belief in life. It completely eliminates the old neighborhood and all traces of wet blanket, put-down mountain, and steel lids. Gone, they are! It is a total and utter transformation.

Believing in this miracle has been a major, major step. But do I really have a choice? It is staring me in the face every time I play guitar. Every day its power only increases. Old attitudes can only collapse in the face of its power. disintegrate under that withering light.

But believing in it will take time. I'll just have to live in its atmosphere and work under its heated lamp. Let it take its course. See what happens.

But the guitar playing is the paradigm.



It has to do with believing in my own experience. Do I dare believe it? And this even though it is right in front of me.

Changing beliefs takes time.

Why should I believe it just because it is right in front of my nose? I hate being pushed or rushed.

I'll believe it when I'm ready, in my own time.

Binking peedlehoffers bump and grind. Across the caterpillar highways they roll.

Can a detergent ever soak up such a sauce? Or must the melon man forever rine on his wigwam vine ever planting his seed in the Bumper Crop?

Ah, the rivers run down to the sad sea soaking marmelade tossings. Infant asides and infanticides compete at the crossroads. Ah, such buntings of pomergrante excelling splendor with succulent-sweet buttersnap underpants dangling among sewer-cleansed walrus teeth, and this while onion-peeling purple daffodils hole up among onion-bulbs in the background.

Can a turnip ever walk a plant? What of siding and its effect on Jennifer Van Doolittle-Do-Less, Dutch servant ganster from Rotterdam. She stuck her finger in the Rijksmuseum's Van Dyck only to come up with a gay squire from Switzerland.

Monday, September 13, 1999

Anthem For The Year: "One Thing At A Time" Plus Hope

Equals First Place

Catastrophizing means pushing myself into second place. It is old-neighborhood thinking. My present vestiges are how I've been handling Ben's melanoma and my

debt.

“One thing at a time—” mow one row at a time—is the first- place approach. It is also the one of direct experience and meditation. This path must also be sprinkled with hope, positive thinking, prayer, God’s help is on the way, etc.

Maybe I should leave my debt alone, not touch it, not sell my Keogh, etc., and use it as a practice: The practice of non-catastrophizing and handling “one thing at a time,” one row at a time.

### Looking To A Better Morning

I usually start of my mornings with the thought: “What bad thing can I handle today to make my life better?” Isn’t this the catastrophizing, second-place approach taking place on a daily basis? I think it is. I begin the day, not only looking for a problem to solve, but trying to solve it from a second place position. This kind of thinking is so deeply ingrained in me I was not even aware of it until this morning.

Wouldn’t it be better to start of my mornings thinking about God and my relationship to Him? Indeed it would.

Pray for Ben. I could start my practice now.

### My In-Room Center

Today’s meditation: experiencing my old room, my teenage violin room, my God room. Ho, how beautiful! I cry. This in-room center of God head experiences is my protector, salvation, and strength. What warmth, richness, and love!

What a beautiful thing (image) to meditate on!

No catastrophizing in room; no second place. Only passion, beauty, and love of God. Not a bad place to be. Revisit my room, and hold it dear to my heart.

Yes, I want to leave the old neighborhood, but I never want to leave the beauty of my room. I want to remember it and carry it within forever. It is my “forever” experience.

Perhaps the sadness I feel after an expansion is caused by my hesitation to jump into the fire of excitement and savor it. But fires are too hot. It is more a question of seeing myself differently, that the fires of passion and excitement are me.

Of course, God is within. Of course He is part of me and vice versa. He has many names. Among them are Excitement, Passion, Growth, Expansion, Wildness, and Tears of Joy.

If there is any miracle it is that God is within. Of course, this is not a miracle but a truism. But it feels like a miracle whenever I realize it fully.

Thus the real miracle is double capital Me.

### I Am

It has to do with making peace with and accepting the fact that I am the Excitement, I am the Wildness, I am the Tears of Joy. I am.

Perhaps my sadness comes from not accepting the above “I am.”

By not accepting it whenever it happened I’ve always found a lid to cover it. In this sense, pawning it off as a “miracle” becomes (became) just another lid.

But Expansion, Passion, Growth, Excitement, Tears of Joy have no lids. They are a never-ending source. They flow on forever. They run into eternity.

Meditation is a new and different skill to practice and develop.

Thursday, September 16, 1999

Pride of accomplishment. For me, to experience it, has been like pushing mud through a sieve.

### Meditation Up To Now

9/11/99: Claustrophobia. 1 minute 20 seconds.

9/12: Aware of breathing. 2 minutes

9/13: Experiencing my old room, my teenage violin room, the God room. Oh, how beautiful! I cry. This "in-room" is my God head experience, my protector, salvation, and strength. What warmth, richness, and love. What a beautiful image to meditate on. One minute forty seconds.

9/14: Breath. Quiet. I wanted to focus on excitement but only breath came.

Meditation is a new and different skill to practice and develop. Two minutes.

9/15: Breathing. Thoughts of my body and neck; images of rising, stretching taller, and letting all the images pass.

The breathing leads to a wide open path. A beautiful, infinite, blank state source. A fountain spurting through infinite space and the which-way universe. Two minutes.

9/16: A cone shaped piece of shit-like sticking substance rising like a flower in my craw. It cannot be dislodged, released. It stems (flower-like) from my stomach; it rises from my solar plexus. I watch it, observe it. Then I "try" to let it go. As I do I start to cry.

Crying is okay. I witness it.

I have made gigantic qualitative leaps. Tremendous progress on all fronts. Even arriving at and starting the practice of meditation. Talk about pride of accomplishment! And this even though it doesn't feel like an accomplishment. Well, maybe it does, but I don't want to admit it. . . yet. Mud still pushing through the sieve.

It is an accomplishment!

Sizzle with pride!

I observed the sadness as it crept up on me this morning.

I've reached a juncture: either face the pride of accomplishment or cover it up, hide it, lid it. Then get sad.

"Obviously" I'm choosing the former.

My mind is running wild and the pride of accomplishment juices flow through it. Here come the flying lids, too. Whack them away with my powerful sieve-shaped shield. Deflect them with a mighty smack!

I feel the push-down mud (Pride of accomplishment mud) in my shoulders and tingling arms. Sit with it.

Shoulder and neck pain. Pride of accomplishment push-down pain. The burden of being great, the burden of feeling great. Realizing this makes me cry.

Meditation is not excitement, growth, or expansion.

It is another realm.

It is the realm that watches over excitement, growth, and expansion. But it is never excited, never grows, never expands. It remains always the same, ever watching,

ever witnessing.

Friday, September 17, 1999

Start three-times-a-day work again. But add meditation. That's the difference: I've added meditation to three-times-a-day, to my miracle schedule, and to my life.

It is the building base upon which all the others rest.

But meditation is a practice that somehow cannot develop and grow. It simply is, always. My job is to remember it, and stay aware of it.

Witness, watch, observe, know as the Knower. Witness watches the long tube of my inner self as it rises and falls.

I still want to the excitement, growth, and expansion. It is just that I am adding the Observer to my life. He/She/It will watch, not only over me, but under, beside, and around me as well. He/She/It is a new dimension. Thus, on one level, nothing has changed. But, on another level, the Witness level, I have added an Observer to watch how "nothing has changed.

Of course, on this "lower" level, everything changes, daily, hourly, moment by moment. The "I" of my Observer Self watches these changes from its perch high on the mountain of Deep Neutrality. It "enjoys the show" as it does nothing but sit in its box seat and watches. It doesn't even pay for a ticket!

Is the Observer a peeping Tom?

Well, yes, but more of a peeping Jim.

### Lids In Disguise

Ah, my mind is so clever. It wants this "pain of awe" in order to push me back down again. In doing so, it thinks it is protecting me. My mind is trying to be kind.

But sometimes it is also stupid, narrow-minded, and stuck in the mud of old habits.

The “pain of awe and amazement” is just another lid in disguise. Just like the “miracle” lid. And the “It’s so wonderful I can’t stand it!” lid.

These lids are felt and “expressed” in my shoulders and neck. They are my “pains in the neck.”

Thus my clever mind, mired in habits of old, is using my experiences of amazement, awe, wonder, and miracles, and turning them into old-fashioned lids.

My mind is, in a sense, monitoring my expansions. And this, even though my expansions are of the mind.

#### What Will I Do?

What will I do without these lids of amazement, awe, and wonder to “protect” me? I’ll probably have to dive into the fire of my experience. But I’m afraid of fire; I don’t like to be burned.

Perhaps I’ll have to accept that the fire is a part of me. It is a new and expanded definition of my self. I cannot be burned by diving into myself. But I can make some amazing discoveries.

#### What Will My Mind Do?

What will my mind do without these lids of amazement, awe, and wonder to “protect” it? It will probably have to dive into the fire of its experience. But it is afraid of fire; it doesn’t like to be burned.

Perhaps it will have to accept the fact that the fire is a part of itself. It is a new and expanded definition of mind. It cannot be burned by diving into itself. But it can make some amazing discoveries.

Maybe I need a shorter yoga warm-up too. A la guitar.

Psychological pain reflected in my twist yoga problem: I am twisting and turning in order to avoid facing pride of accomplishment. That's why the yoga twists hurt.

Twist straight into the pride-of-accomplishment fire. Focus on it while twisting. Remember, the fire is part of my mind, anyway.

### On The Positive Aspects Of Lids

Perhaps I should see my lids as my friends. They do protect me from something, but I don't know what.

If I can't love them, at least I can appreciate their power, desire, and ability to defend me from unknown demons, or at least forces I am still not strong enough to handle yet.

What are they protecting? Perhaps it is the entrance to my secret garden. They guard the doorway to the Riverdale chamber where my spiritual treasures are hidden. As I try to grow, explore, and expand into the neighborhood beyond my room, these guards, in various forms of lids, wet blankets, and put-down mountains, monitor my thoughts and behavior, protecting me from doing too much or going too far when I am not yet ready. They are like great Mama Mothers with fanged teeth, pick axes, wet-wild gloves, and strangle ropes. On one level, their main function is to keep me prisoner in my room, to prevent me from expanding into new neighborhoods, states, countries, and continents. On another, they realize that, if I move too far or too fast, I may lose sight of my spiritual roots; I may lose my way in the worldly wilderness of neighborhoods beyond my Riverdale room.

Thus my lids have a dual function: they keep me from expanding, but they also push me down, grind my nose into my roots, reminding me to feel and face them again. By barring the door to ephemeral attractions in the outside world they force me to remember my treasury of gold shining within the artistic studio of my mind.



Saturday, September 18, 1999

Alhambra flowed. The most gorgeous ever.

I'll have to "work through" the fact that I've gotten so good, that it has become so easy.

Meditation: Arabic letters. Spaces going up. Two and a half minutes.

Sunday, September 19, 1999

The thick fog of ego falls over you during the night. Slowly it encases you in its hard shell. During the day, every day, you must break the shell. This is my reason for three times a day.

Monday, September 20, 1999

### The Meaning Of Three-Times-A-Day

I woke up with a headache this morning. Yesterday I felt somewhat disgusted. I had the "I had it but I lost it" feeling; I had the three-times-a-day rhythm, timing, schedule – but I lost it.

I lost it Sunday morning. Why? Stayed up too late Saturday night, woke up late Sunday. Tired, tried changing my routine, but ended up breaking my rhythm. Thus I lost it.

This three-times-a-day must have much more meaning to me than I care to admit.

It is the fulfillment of my miracle schedule. It is its implementation in the flesh. It rocks and rivets me in the immaculate present.

I felt disgust with myself because I gave it up – for a day, Sunday. I was unfaithful to it.

Thus I must push to fulfill it even on four hours sleep. It is just too important to

miss!

Three-times-a-day: Write, Russian, Arabic, guitar (even meditation, well, maybe not), yoga, and business. It is, along with meditation, what I am bringing back from my Holland experience. It is “what’s new” in the 1999 September world of my new neighborhood.

Three-times-a-day is my miracle schedule in full bloom.

When I am unfaithful to it I get disgusted with myself, a headache or both. It is that important. It is all important. And this, not for its surface implementation but for its deeper, deepest meaning. By fulfilling my miracle schedule three-times-a-day breaks down my ego, pushes me past it, and brings me closer to God.

It is important to remember that three-times-a-day doesn’t mean I literally do it three times a day. It is rather a phrase of intensity. And thus of passion. It means I give it my all. All day long I think about it. I touch on it, dip in it, dance with it, if even for a few minutes or seconds. It becomes part of my being as I remember it all day long.

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

### Writing Is My Meditation Technique

Meditation is not the state I want to reach.

Writing is the stage I want to reach.

The flow of words concretizes and releases me from the geyser of thoughts, images, and feelings shooting upwards from my mind. I “see” them pass as I write. I watch and observe them. In fact, my writing process is one of meditation. It is sitting there and watching my mind at work. I “let go” of the thoughts, images, and feelings in the process of writing.

Thus writing is my form of meditation. Sure, I can add sitting quietly; it doesn’t

hurt. But my writing meditation technique has concretization, and love.

It always has been. That is why I need it so. "Sitting quietly in meditation" is a nice addition. But it is not the core. We'll see if I continue doing it. Meanwhile, I'll never stop writing. It is simply too important and central to my existence. It is my path to experiential self-knowledge, awareness, and understanding. Plus, it is so much fun!

That's why I've felt so off and out of kilter since I returned from Holland. I have not made my peace with, reorganized my relationship in the new neighborhood with my writing. There was this confusion: who is the new me? Does it write or meditate or do things three-times-a-day? Is it a dynamic businessman combining all my miracle schedule forms? Has it "discovered and added something new" to its life by meditating a la Tulku? Who is this new person?

Well, whoever this new person turns out to be, he needs writing! That has not and no doubt will never change. Well, well, look at that sentence: it has "will never change." What, according to the meditators will never change? It is the witness, the observer, the God within, and all the other terms signifying the infinite and everlasting observer. If my desire to write, my need for writing itself will never change, then writing must touch the eternal element within me.

And it does!

Remembering this – along with the action of write, write, write – grounds me, will straighten me out and put me back in kilter.

I wonder what "kilter" means?

I looked it up. It means "good condition, proper order." Is it related to the Scottish kilt? Probably.

Since writing is so important as my meditation process, and since it has both concretization and love, then concretization of the process, that is, printing and

publishing, has to have its place as well.

When I read Tulku or any other meditators, when I come to the word “meditation” Personalize it by substituting the word – my word, writing. See what happens.

The space between the thoughts is writing.

The space between the exercises is writing.

### Expectations

Amazing, isn't it? Deep down is the expectation that some day I'll give a concert. Also that some day I'll be good at it.

Get rid of these!

I have the expectation that some day I will publish. But this one is much less strong.

In yoga, running etc. I have the expectation that some day I'll be strong.

In business, I have the expectation that some day I'll make money.

How to play guitar without expectations? Quite a challenge.

How to free myself from these expectations? Quite a challenge.

My expectations and concepts are getting in my way.

Get rid of them!

Stock rising expectations, too. Get rid of them!

My “down” is the place of the out breath.

Later: In the afternoon after Barry's class: I've finally reached the point of action:

I've decided to publish my journal.

I'm starting to put it together now.

I am crying for all the appreciation I won't give myself, haven't given myself or accepted, over the years. I am also crying because I am at the end of that road.

Deciding to finally publish my journal means I am coming to terms with how good it is, and how good I am.

This is so difficult to accept. It flies in the face of all my self-images. It is a totally new definition of me. No wonder I am crying. I am jettisoning the old self.

Am I crying because I am mourning the loss of the old self?

Or am I crying with joy, tears of joy, weeping and wailing with happiness that I can look at myself with wonder, love, and acceptance of my talents? Probably both. But I don't know yet.

That I can take my place with the greats, that I can walk, stand up straight, live in the company of those artistic giants I grew up worshiping, that I have come home to my core, my true and beautiful inner self, crumbles my humble walls, and breaks me down in tears of joyful acceptance.

But the acceptance is not complete. I am only at the doorway to this castle.

If I accept my inner beauty will I lose my sex drive? Will it be transformed, transmuted, transcended, transported, and transmogrified? Or will nothing happen?

It must be a grand clobbering of the old self, and placing the bugger in its final resting place. Such mourning must be for a death. Otherwise, why would I be so sad?

Maybe this explains why I've been so tired all weekend. Dying is exhausting.

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

### On The Nature Of Mind

Is my mind creating my physical problems, folk dance bodily aches and pains, because it doesn't want to exist problem free?

Is it my mind's nature to create problems?

I feel so strange and out of it. Upon returning to work I am out of kilter. And this while everything is going well in my head. Things seem "in order." Why then do I feel this sense of chaos? Well, part of me at least wants chaos, or at least something familiar to grab on to. This "things are going well" phenomenon is killing me. Do I really need problems in order to survive? Is it true I can't live without them? Is my mind in such a sorry state? Or again, is it the nature of mind to be in such a sorry state, always creating pain and discomfort, pushing and pulling in opposite directions, making an internal game out of chaos, destruction. and turning things upside down?

Could it be that the creative process needs problems in order to "progress" and even survive? Of course, we in the yoga- meditative world know there is no such thing as progress. All is one, and upside down in the other direction, all is one, too. But, if all is one, too, then all is one, two, meaning that one and two make three which equals a trinity of complex problems even Christ, God, and the Virgin Mary couldn't solve.

Maybe nobody wants to solve their problems. They just want new ones to handle.

Could this be due to the nature of mind? Is that why I have a pain in my left hip this morning? It's a new pain for me; I've never had this one before. But, of course, I've never been so "together" before. Is left hip pain caused by the "pain of togetherness?" In other words, will I keep creating problems for myself until I die? And, if my mind thinks I'm free, will it create new problems in my body in order to reflect the pains of problems my mind wants to believe it does not have?

What a mess. What a confusion. Could this really be me? Or is it simply the nature of mind? Is mind a mess? But what else could it be? Are the philosophers

missing this point? Or are they saying mind is a mess but in language that hides the truth?

I am blabbering on this morning trying to find an answer to something that has no question. I'm jumping into the rhythm of post-problem life. How strange it all feels.

I feel somewhat lost. Part of me says, Thank God I'm lost. Now I can start the familiar process of trying to find myself. Part of me likes being lost. It gives my mind something to do, a task, a problem to solve. It poses once again the grand question: Who am I?

Luckily, when my mind has this question, it can try finding the answer for the rest of my life. Otherwise, what will it do? The mild threat of being lost stimulated my mind with anxiety. How will I find my way out of this wilderness is an exciting question. And since excitement is compounded from a mixture of fear, curiosity, inspiration, awe, and wonder, I am, once again, put on the familiar, known and unknown road of searching for myself.

But haven't I already found myself? Don't I know who I am? Part of me believes I do. But if I have truly found myself, it puts my mind out of a job. What kind of benefits does an unemployed mind have? There are no private health plans I can think of. HMOs don't cover it either. An unemployed mind is a frightening thing. No wonder it recoils at such a possibility. "I want to do something!" it screams. "Don't leave me here hanging in a vacuum. I need a problem to grab onto. Give me a worry, fear, pain, anything to keep me busy. I can't stand doing nothing. Please, please, if you can't give me a major crisis at least throw me a minor hip pain. Thanks, thanks. That will be fine for now. But I'm hoping for more. You had such fine crises during the last few years. I loved them. Can't you give me one of those? How about a new debt or a good depression? I love depressions! How about a good physical ailment – like arthritis, headaches, or constipation? At least give me something. I can't stand this silence!"

You can see how my mind never shuts up. I don't know what to do about it. Meditation may help. We'll see. Meanwhile, it just keep plopping along its way, creating troubles and trying to carve out new roads in its crazy up-and-down world.

### Mind

If this is truly the nature of mind – to create and solve problems – then the question emerges: why should I bother wasting my time getting involved with the workings and products of my mind? All it does is go around in circles. My mind creates a problem; it gets solved; then it creates another problem to get solved. There is never any final solution, final resting place. It is in endless merry-go-round.

Is this true? Is it possible? Is that really the nature of mind? And there is no question that the theater of the world, the cosmic workings, wakings, wanderings, destruction and creation of worlds upon worlds and worlds within worlds are, again, merely the up and down creations of mind, the cosmic mind perhaps, but a mind nevertheless. And they say these creations and destructions, these products of mind are mere illusions, anyway. They come and go, over and over again. True, it is the theater of the world, and it looks pretty real. It has a concrete, material reality. You can feel, see, hear, smell, taste, and touch it. It also has a conceptual reality and exists as an idea in your mind. But again, ideas come and go. They too have no lasting reality.

So if this is the mind I am dealing with, why should I work so hard to pay so much attention to it, its creations, destructions, problems, and problem solving? Even though time is not a commodity and it cannot be wasted, isn't the search for long-term, permanent solutions within and through the mind a waste of time? Isn't it a fruitless pursuit? If I am looking for an ultimate reality, one that will give me security, peace, and a sense of permanence, then my mind is certainly not the place to look.

Is part of my new aches and pains due to a disillusionment with the products and workings of my mind? Am I losing belief in its substance and power?



Later: Or are the aches and pain birth pangs? I picked up the New Leaf and Gems so easily, and placed them on my desk to prepare for publication.

Thursday, September 23, 1999

Whether I play it in public or not, they do hear it;

Whether I publish it or not, they do read it.

My vibrations are always and forever part of and extending into the world. Only lack of awareness keeps me from realizing this.

Thus expectations of giving a concert or publishing a book are besides the point. Whenever I sit down to play I am always giving a concert; whenever I sit down to write I am always publishing a book. Only lack of awareness keeps me from realizing this.

There is no inner and outer.

For some strange reason, I feel really good this morning. What is the matter with me? I was just starting to “get comfortable” with feeling miserable; with my body riddled with aches and pain and my mind wandering about the back alleys of the cosmos in utter confusion. Then suddenly, all the vast and sundry parts of my mental mechanism jump into place! What is going on here? Who is running this show? The sun is shining in my back yard again even though its early morning and dark outside.

I want to jump for joy! There are many reasons for this but I don't know what they are. Nor do I care. Let's just ride this beautiful cloud across the sky of greatness.

### Feeling Together

It all feels so strange. I feel so together. And feeling so together feels so weird.

I feel like jumping out of my skin. But if I did, where would I go?

Perhaps I feel fine. It is my mind that's having these problems. True, my body is also twitching, turning, rumbling, and giving me trouble. But what is my body but an

extension of my mind?

Perhaps it is time to jump out of my skin into a New Leaf. Perhaps it is time to start my New Form.

### Intensity

The three-times-a-day rule has served its purpose. It has helped me cross the line and enter the world of intensity.

Whether I do things once a day, twice a day, three times a day, twenty times a day, or not at all is now besides the point. My mind and body have now been decisively separated from my meditative self, and that is the point.

I just dropped my structure.

Now what?

Friday, September 24, 1999

### On The Sadness And Terror Of Becoming

#### The Wonderful Confident New Me

It must be so. My body aches all over; I have no energy; I've stopped my three-times-a-day; I'm hardly doing any yoga and I've stopped running. Even my Mitsubishi transmission is broken. Now there's a symbol! I just won't—or can't—go. Reverse gear is okay; I can go backwards without too much difficulty. But going forwards is so heavy, difficult, and fraught with peril.

And yet everything is fine, in place, in order.

Is this true? Or am I kidding myself?

No, it is true. But I can't seem to get used to it. I can't "adjust" to it. I want to slip back even as I go forward. I am acting just like my Mitsubishi transmission.

But in the truth of this new confidence, inner power, and trust there must lie

some kind of sadness and terror.

Sadness that I am losing all the possibilities of the Mama love I used to know; terror at the prospect of now leading such an empty life.

Well, that's a pretty good explanation for my aches, pains, and lack of energy. Once again, under orders from my mind, my body is falling apart and my energy is curtailed. Destruction precedes the creation of my new body with its new energy source. Naturally, the foreman and manager of this dynamic, a process filled with both excitement and misery, is my mind.

That fucker! Why won't it go away? Why can't it just leave me alone? Let me meditate in peace. Why do I have to go through these twists, turns, subtle and blockbuster tortures just to make a few changes? True, this change from an inner doubting bordering on wimphood to rock-solid or rather fluid-solid confidence. It has taken a lifetime to reach the stage of this formidable transformation. Nevertheless, my mind has been in charge all along. It has called most of the shots. Why have I given it such power over me? Probably because I didn't know any better. No, I'm letting myself off the hook. I did know better! But I let it control me anyway. I wanted to run wild on my mental lawn; I wanted the freedom to feel its incredible excitement, the storms of its strength; I wanted to feel the surging power of being tossed too and fro, from one lawn to another, from one cosmos to another, and this even in the space of a few moments. My mind is a powerful thing, a powerhouse, really. I was captured and captivated by its magnificent versatility. Who wouldn't be? Such a mechanism! And it is mine! Or rather, I belong to it. I am its prisoner. But in being so, I can proudly proclaim I am a wonderful prisoner, a model slave with a fine master who beats me at will, whips and throttles me, then throws me to the wind to fly in all directions on wonderful magical journeys into inner and outer space.

Yes, I loved slavery, and I loved my master, my mind.

Look at this possessive: my mind? Truly, my mind does not belong to me. Rather I

belong to it. I have happily been its slave.

Will this every change? Do I want to continue as a slave? Or do I want to be free? And what does freedom mean?

The answer is a resounding yes! I want to be free.

But how do I do it? The answer lies in my new meditation. I've known about meditation for years. Suddenly, it is new meditation. Why? I don't know. Nor do I care to know. Part of this "new" meditation is: questions of why are beside the point. Observing without judgement, witnessing without involvement is the point. Learning how to do this is the new skill I am developing. I am amazed at how easy meditating like this now feels. Its "ease" is part of my new growth and expansion; it is (perhaps) the future manifestation and "expression" of my new confidence.

But I am just beginning this road. Although I can see no alternative to it I still have to live with, explore, and let it sink into my being before it becomes a part of me. When I no longer reflect on it or self-consciously examine and explore it, then it will truly be mine.

Meanwhile, I will have to face the sadness and terror of becoming the new me.

Just because I am able to write about these problems doesn't mean they go away. But my writing is often a "prediction" of inner things to come. Usually I arrive at the states I write in several months down the road.

### Breaking The Rules In The Book Of Wimphood

This new meditative power is something I carry with and within me all the time. I "view" things differently now.

Again, it is hard to accept that I have a new power. It is hard accept and admit I have any power. How can I stand myself with this new power? How can I stand

myself as a powerful, competent, confident person? How could a mother love such a son? Well, that is the question, isn't it. With or without transmission problems.

Yes, by becoming powerful and confident I am breaking every rule in the Book of Wimphood.

Saturday, September 25, 1999

### An Icy Cold Aloneness

An icy cold aloneness.

I have broken through the trap door to the attic above. Although it is dark where I stand, I can see clearly. The floor is a cold, speckled-brown marble; it is shiny, smooth, and completely empty. No paradigms here, no directions, models, or prototypes to follow. I have been thrust into outer space. Above me is the attic roof in the shape of a starry firmament; its the vault of infinite sky is amply described in Bereshit: infinite, cold, distant. Even though it is a ceiling, I can nevertheless see through and beyond it. And this even though it is endless.

No one has ever made tracks on this new slippery icy cold marble floor; no one has ever explored the cold dark firmament above me; no one has ever visited the millions of stars filling and flickering in it. Not one human being is in sight. Nor are there familiar objects. In fact, there are no objects at all. There are no subjects either. Only a vast cold infinite emptiness. Underneath this attic floor, beneath the trap door through which I have just passed, lies the entire house of my past experience. All my associates, friends, thoughts, habits, possessions, anything and everything related to "what was" is "down there" in the Great Underneath of the House Below. I know it is there. I remember it. But all these objects and subjects of a great and dying past are unretrievable. My Mama warmth lies below along with my Papa warmth and my endless desires for warmth, warmth, and more warmth. My love and desire for

acceptance also lies below. So does my old underwear. I can see it hanging there now, dried up ancient underpants swinging in the wind on a close line in Riverdale. I also see them in my Cumberland Avenue washing machine. Even though my “good” cloths, pants, shirts etc., at Jet Cleaners on Cedar Lane have been freshly dry cleaned, placed on hangers, and stand ready and able for me to take them home, I have no home to take them to.

Indeed, I stand naked before God.

But this vast and empty space feels like it doesn't have a God. At least the God I used to know. Perhaps it is time for a different God, one that exists within.

In this vast new landscape, there is no one outside, no one around to hold my hand, guide my steps, help me if I get lost. I am completely on my own. Where is the God for this state of mind? What does He feel like? Does He have a capital letter or small one? Does He even exist?

No question, the time of looking for gods and goddesses, Mama love, Papa direction, and even God Himself, outside of me is over. That's why I now stand in this vast icy cold emptiness.

On this cold marble floor I am ready for a New Leaf.

I am ready to float in the vast cold open space of a New Form.