

No Killer Instinct

Tuesday, November 1, 2005

Business-wise, it seems this morning that some of the killer business instincts has drained out of me.

Without them, what will motivate me to pursue business and especially sales?

Of course, the killer instincts may return.)

But could love ever replace them?

That would be nice.

But is love strong enough?

Jesus says yes. But he wasn't a business man. Or was he? He did, after all, found, with help from St. Paul, a powerful and long lasting religion.

I hope something replaces my killer instinct. If it doesn't, I'm out of business.

Creepy, Bone-Chilling Powers

This power emanating from the cauldron also embraces darkness, sleep, and death.

What should I do when these dark powers descend upon me?

Go with them. Sleep, my son. See where they lead.

This is bone-chilling creepy. Perhaps the bone chilling, in the bone-chilling awe, is where the power lies.

The creepy, bone-chilling powers of darkness, sleep, and death.

No question I am at the edge of a new power, a new touch in my touch-feel-pluck-listen finger playing.

Thursday, November 3, 2005

Develop a Big Vocabulary:

Quantity will Lead to Quality

At this point, most of my Bulgarian, Hebrew, and other language study will consist of developing a big vocabulary. I've "gotten past" the basics, the small stuff, the verb formations and basic grammar. I can function in these levels, although often poorly.

Amazing. How can I say such a thing? Have I really "gotten past" them? Well, although I still limp, I am evidently saying yes. It came up in my mind, suddenly surfaced in my writing for a reason. So, on one level, it must be true. Why doubt such miracles? After all, they have not come about lightly. I have been working in languages for years. Perhaps I could call this "the next stage."

In any case, developing a big vocabulary is my next linguistic step.

Yesterday I wrote: "Three Years. Starting Over." I feel like I'm starting over in Alhambra, Bulgarian, and Hebrew. That is good. I like starting over; I like a fresh start.

I see it as the next three-year project, learning these on a different level: the guitar with its slow, relaxed, new piece, "Alhambra" approach, and languages with their develop a big vocabulary approach.

Thus I am now considering quantity. Quality will come later, or in the process of developing quantity. Quantity will lead to quality.

The Ant Hierarchy moves on. Now, one at a time, I will carry many words to my ant hill.

Thus my linguistic challenge is: How to learn hundreds of words? How to develop, improve, and increase my memory?

And since the goal is now to collect hundreds of words, should I also add Greek and Spanish, with its Latin base, to Bulgarian and Hebrew?

How about Arabic, with its Semitic base? Hebrew and Arabic, Bulgarian and Slavic, Spanish and Latin, Greek, and Greek. Notice Hungarian is not present. Have I given up on Hungarian? Or should this too be part of the new equation? Wouldn't it add mucho paprika? How about Turkish? Hungarian and Turkish: the same linguistic

family.

1. Bulgarian. . . Slavic languages
2. Hebrew and Arabic...Semitic languages
3. Spanish and French. . . Latin languages
4. Hungarian and Turkish. . .Finno-Ugric languages
5. Greek. . . Greek.

Yes, to memorize hundreds of new words.

It's not to learn a new language but to improve on the old ones.

Why do this? No particular reason. I will probably never use this linguistic knowledge, rarely if ever employ any of the hundreds of words I learn. Such work, effort, and memorizing is simply a good-in-itself. And that is good enough for me!

Tuesday, November 8, 2005

I think the hypothenar region, especially around my right thumb, represents the new resistance to creation area; it is the battlefield where the fight between creation and rote thinking take place.

That is where I feel the pain of resistance, and the inner struggle for liberation.

Better one creative push-up than fifty former rote calliyogic ones.

Hypothenar "Freezing," Fears, and Pains Revisited

Notice the stiffening of the hypoythenar region (while playing "Alhambra") and its old relationship to stage-fright and panic. This is the area that "froze" during my post-forty practice changes, that I dealt with during the "I must get better" period, the "If I improve, I won't feel stage fright any more. Then I will conquer my continuing performance anxiety. I'll deal it a death blow once and for all.

Thus the present pains in my hypothenar region could have something to do

with dealing with these old fears and stage-fright anxieties once again. Perhaps I am at the border of conquering them, or at least, dealing with them adequately. I believe that is true. I am, after all, at a new stage. Resistance to this new stage could indeed be reflecting in my newly created, creative and reflexive, hypothetnar pains.

Terror and the thumb.

In fact, these “new” pains I have been feeling during the past six weeks may indeed reflect, be caused by, some kind of resistance to the upcoming new world of post-mid-life strength and confidence.

If I don't find another reason to write, I may simple stop, or slowly dribble to an end.

I feel neither good nor bad about this, but rather, more like an observer that has passed through.

I've written my Credo. There it is, there it stands. My New Leaf. My Thus Spake Zarathustra.

Now I may ask: Is it important enough (to me) to go out and promote and sell it to others? Or is simple saying it enough for me? Perhaps by saying it, I have no need to say it again, and to promote it among others. I received the Word. Do I have the desire, the need to bring this gospel to others? Or is simply standing in its glory, standing there shining in freedom, glowing with the knowledge of the Word, enough? Maybe.

I have no need to prove it to others.

Nevertheless, do I have a need, a desire, to bring it to others?

I don't know.

There is a bit of relief and freedom in this coming to a writing close. A post-college, half-century obsession dribbling to an end.

I've done it!

Now what?

Perhaps nothing.

"Better to do nothing, than to waste your time."

Sunday, November 13, 2005

Depression Road

Many scattered and difficult ideas this morning.

The idea that Dr. Zany is a transitional character, and that, as such, I am through with writing, that I have said everything I want, need, and desire to say, and that there are no new horizons and vistas in sight, is a terrible and depressing thought.

Yes, I used the word "depressing," and it is not a cosmic type of depression. It is an I-am-at-the-end-of-the-road, depression. And it is not the end of a road, but the end of the road. This is death in living form.

Concomitant with these thoughts is their reflection in my body. The ache of the universe rolls and rides through my being, lodging its nibblings into every joint. Hypothenar has been hit, along with both knees, periodic lower right back, and, of course, shoulders and neck. Why, even my right elbow reflects this misery.

And I say misery because I am miserable, yes, miserable and totally disgusted. What the fuck is the matter with me? Perhaps, well, no doubt, hidden under this misery, and riding with this disgust is anger and boiling beneath anger, must be rage. But I don't feel it. I assume it. What kind of rage can this be if it not deeply felt, but rather only an "assumption?"

Yes, I've given up on anger, rage, and even the edge of disgust. No wonder I'm miserable. And could that be why every joint aches? They aches with screaming.

But of course, I cannot figure out what I would scream at, why I should be miserable, why I should, or am, angry. Everything is going so well! Business is popping along. I am out of debt. I'm busy, busy, busy. Three of my books will soon be

published. I have twenty-two people for the Greek tour next year. Business is together and looks good. Of course, of the future we can never know. But mentally, I am ready to go out there and sell like crazy. This is also good, a good mental attitude.

Even my spirit feels a bit overwhelmed but good. All seems together and well. Yet, my body is falling apart. There must be something I am missing, some hidden element, some mouse of misery, gnawing away at my guts. I feel it in my body. But I don't see it.

Why else would I have such pains?

According to my long-time accepted theory, body pains are reflections of mind pains. And mind pains reflect a broken spirit.

But I thought my mind is on track, and my spirit is working well. Everything feels (felt) so together. Could I be wrong? Is there some post post post post transitional element I am missing?

What about Creation? Well, even that feels like an intellectual construct, a mere mental methodical attempt to reinvent my miracle schedule.

No, I am in a new old place, or an old new place. And I feel old. . . and wise.

Being out of debt helps. . . but it also hurts. Old forms of stimulation have vanished into a zero-to-rising-sum bank account.

As for writing, evidently, I have to keep at it, especially this journal New Tree form of writing. Perhaps Dr. Zany isn't as dead or dead as I thought. Perhaps he exists in this New Tree, first person form. Perhaps he will slowly morph into me, and vice versa. Perhaps his crazy babble-filled language forms will drift into New Tree as they sometimes did in New Leaf.

Perhaps what I have lost is not my desire and need to write, but rather my desire and need to be published.

But perhaps it is is not a good thing. And it may not even be true.

Perhaps my hypothenar problems relate to my right hand mouse use, which, in turn reflects some kind of resistance to the next step in writing. I hope this is true. And

maybe it is.

There is no doubt I need to keep writing. And this form myself.

There is no doubt there is continual frustration and resistance in selling my writing.

There is no doubt I have not wanted to put time into doing it.

There is, up to now, no doubt that I don't want to become a total sales person. I still want to create, be the artist, etc. Yet, in the "Been there, done that" mode. the creation and being an artist part has been fulfilled. And this, certainly enough to satisfy me. I see no new creative directions, especially those that point and direct me inward.

What is left? Outward. What does outward mean? Sales.

The, as St. Paul (may have) said: What is left? Only sales, only the gospel, only the gospel of sales, of bring the word, the Word, to others.

Am I at the St. Paul stage? Is that really "all that is left?" I've done everything else. And, just as I do not pursue tour sales for ego enhancement, so I would not be pursuing book sales for ego enhancement. My ego has been enhanced enough. Sure, a little more enhancement never hurts. But I no longer have a crying need for it. I have much more need for a direction.

Could it be that my next direction, the only one left to me, even in writing, is sales?

The gospel of sales. Even though I may resist it, a resistance reflected in all my body pains, it may nevertheless be "all that is left."

How depressing.

But could it also be elevating? Well, not yet. But some day?

I'd like it to be elevating. I hate the thought of having to follow a route of depression. Yet I may have to. And this simply on the basis that the "depressing route" is all that is left.

The sales route is the depressing route. And yet, I am forced to walk it since that is all that is left. (Of course, I can chose to stay frozen in one place, and not budge, but I

doubt that would work either. No doubt it would be worse; and I probably couldn't do it anyway.

What am I left with? What is the summary?

1. I could be Dr. Zany as he/me creates his/my New Tree form of Zany files.
2. Sales are all that is left for me. The Depression Road of Selling is the route of the future and the only one I can walk.
3. Bodies aches and pains reflect a resistance to seeing, entering, and following this Depression Road.
4. Jesus created the message. St. Paul, like a postman, delivered it. I hate becoming a postman. Can't I simply create like Jesus Christ? Why must I be reduced to simply being a postman? How dull, boring, and mechanical. And yet, I see no other road for me.

So I am on Depression Road. We'll see where it leads.

What is on Depression Road? Tour sales, book sales. It means creating a Book web site, etc.

I would be following the Sales Route not out of passionate desire (as I did the Artistic Route) but basically because I have "nothing else to do." I can find nothing particularly good in the sales route. It seems rather mundane, boring, and "useless." No sparks of divinity here. But, rather than live in a vacuum, I see no other way or choice.

Depressing as it seems, the St. Paul stage appears to be all that is left for me.

The drive and passion has been driven out of me. Or rather, it has dribbled out of me. The shell that is left can only choose and follow the Depression Route of Sales.

So what would I sell? Tours to make a living, books as a sideline, a "hobby."

Self

My old self has been totally saturated, sated, and fulfilled. That is why there is nothing left of it, nothing left for it to do. First came shock at its completion. Then followed a transitional period. Then came the realization and rebirth of a new and boring self, the depressing, gospel delivering Sales Self.

I cannot resurrect the old art self. It has fulfilled its purpose and is thus dead and gone. I can only waddle into the new sales self. (Unless I find something new on the horizon. At the moment, I see nothing. I can't even imagine anything else up ahead. Evidently, the sales self is what God wills and wants, even though I don't. Well, I shouldn't say "don't." I am not actively resisting this new self. Rather I am, through lethargy and inertia, "falling" into it simply because I have nothing else to do.)

Social Self, Sales Self, and Money

Is there really such a big different in my life between sales and social? Probably not as large as I might think. In fact, if you consider that I want my life to be lived as a vacation, and I want it to be a unified whole, crowned with an All-Is-One life style, then there is a high likelihood that my social self and sales self will merge into one.

Truly, except for the money factor, what can the difference be?

Thus money creates the only distance, division, and separation between my social and sales self.

And when I think of money, and the separation it causes, what do I think of? Fear! Grasping for security, fear of poverty, having no money, dying a miserable death as a bum.

Perhaps the most important words above are "fear" and "bum." Without money I am worthless. My self identity has been reduced to zero. Although intellectually I don't believe this (intellectually, the artist reigns supreme), emotionally I do. Ego deflation, fear, worthlessness, even terror, panic, and death, these words flow along as I face the world of money. (Of course, the opposites of joy, security, self-worth, etc. occur

with the acquisition of money.)

So obviously, I must get, obtain, and have money. Thus, in my free-lance, living-on-the-edge, insecure, entrepreneurial existence, I am realistic to connect social and sales self to money.

Perhaps it is in this sense that I can understand and live the heavenly ideal of All is One.

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Running Wild on the Lawn:

Writing for the Sheer Joy of it!

I'm in the perfect position to run wild on the lawn. . . but somehow I am not doing it.

Perhaps it is because I am still in shock at the realization of this new position.

In any case, my shock is now over. Now the best thing to do is run wild on my lawn, all my lawns! I can start with writing. Write, write, write, even two hours a day, for the sheer joy of it!

Turn out countless pages. Even if Barry never reads them, it doesn't matter. Even if I never re-read or edit, or even publish them, it doesn't matter.

Writing for the sheer joy of it! What could be better?

(This is the post post post post post transitional state.)

This is where I am.

Could pain be, in its subtle, twisted, and subterranean form, an expression of joy?

Aren't joy and pain twins? Opposites in the spectrum. Check people's faces. Don't their expressions when feel ecstasy or pain look similar? Even the same? (I'm not talking about torture here, but merely the pain that comes along with daily human suffering.)

In any case, such thoughts and explorations may help me deal with pain differently by seeing in it a different meaning and purpose.

As a resistance to joy, wouldn't pain thus be a part of joy?

One must walk the road to reach the destination. As asphalt "belongs" to the road, wouldn't pain "belong" to joy?

A coin has two sides. Generally, one is so intensely focused on one side the other is forgotten. Perspective is lost.

Could I learn to see pain as "part of" my joy? Even as inseparable from it?

I would have to see pain as part of the ecstasy.

Wow!

How would this be done?

Not by denying the pain. That creates resistance.

Rather, dive straight into it. Slowly you pass through it, constantly visualizing it as you go. Eventually, with focus, perseverance, and fortitude, you reach the other side where ecstasy dwells (where the pain is transformed into ecstasy).

Running Wild in Public: Advertising at its Best!

Every public appearance, every appearance, is a form of advertising. I am advertising the walking, standing, sitting, and ever present Jim Gold Show. It is a continual and never-ending public display of self. And, since I am ever in business, I am ever advertising my business. My presence is my business. Thus, like it or not, I am ever advertising. I am ever displaying myself in public, subjecting myself to the trauma of public display with its ever-present humiliation potential.

This is the trauma of advertising. It manifests itself in the trauma of performance, and the trauma of going public. I have to pit this trauma against the wild and ecstatic freedom found in the mad shoe marvels of running wild on the lawn.

And, if I could ever run wild on the lawn in public, I would have combined, nay synthesized these two dynamic opposing tendencies.

Well, what else can I do? I've done everything, "been there, done that." There is nothing left to do but go public with my advertising self. And as a totally synthesized soul, this means mad shoe running wild in public, running wild on the public lawn.

Running wild in public for the sheer joy of it: that is advertising (of the Jim Gold Show) at its best!

Hidden deep within advertising lies the financial incentive. Well, actually, it is not so hidden.

From Latin: Ad: to. Vertire: to turn. Turn your attention to, towards. . . , in this case, me. The Jim Gold Show.

(Notice the sudden rise of fear. "What an egotist!" they will say. "Look how he is constantly talking about himself, saying the "me" word, and even daring to call his presence The Jim Gold Show. Who does he think he is, anyway?"

Thus, on one level, I am brave to speak about myself so much, to dare mention "me," and even my name itself. Who are these people, this public who will criticize me for being an egotist? And beyond that, even if it is true, what is wrong with being an egotist, anyway? Isn't it a manifestation of pride in yourself, pride in your accomplishments, and pride in being itself?

Well, what happened to humility, and the so-called beauties of self-effacement. Out the window, that's where they are going. Why should I sit in a corner when I can shine in public? Besides, shining in public is a public good. It brings light to others, lighting up the lives of others, and lightening their burdens, and en-lightening their lives.

Thus the shine of self-advertisement could only be good. The only negatives I can see come from jealousy and envy. "How come that guy can shine like that and I can't? What gives him the right? How dare he!"

Well, how dare he brings back the words of my mother. Perhaps my shining took the spotlight off her. On the other hand, perhaps pride in a shining son could put

some shine in a mother's eye.

But there is a real problem and a real fear here. And part of it may even be realistic. Jealousy and envy in others and by others, if strong enough, can definitely kill or destroy you. Look at communism. A whole system built on envy. Certainly the Soviet system didn't hesitate to kill and destroy.

Shining in public definitely has its threats. Behind the barbs of so-called egotism and "You're an egotist, selfish, and only think of yourself!" lies the viper fangs of jealousy and envy.

Advertising has its dangers. But not advertising, hiding the self, diminishing, and repressing the ebullient ego, may be even worse.

Here I am equating "ego" with "self." This is a somewhat false comparison. The self represents, or at least is close to, the Universal Self. Ego represents the smaller aspect of the self. Actually, "ego" is used when one does not realize one's personal connection to the Universal Self. Thus the term "ego" is used by an unrealized person. "Unrealized" means non-realization of the nature of their true self, of its Universal quality lying constantly and ever within.

All universal qualities contain a truth. Thus in true advertising you are advertising true and universal qualities through truths about yourself.

The Fear Replacement Therapy Program

Overwhelmed by work is replacing the financial fears of poverty, debt and a general lack of money.

I'm somewhat "happy" with this development. I wanted a new fear. Life was pretty empty and dull without it. I had finished with the old financial one. "Been there, done that." During the interlude, the transition, I fluctuated between shock, lost, and attempts at unhappiness but found only victory, success, and glory strewn about me. The feeling of victory is good for about five minutes. But this one lasted many months.

I think I have come to a turning point. A new fear has been born: Overwhelmed by work!

On Creating Physical Discomforts

If creative discomfort is what I crave, then perhaps aches and pains manifested in the body are part of it. This would mean part of me craves physical pains. If I crave them, would I create them in order to fulfill needs and desires?

This would explain why my body hurts: It hurts because I want it to hurt!

Creation inspires and uplifts. But is also a pain in the ass.

I want to be creative. Thus my mind creates physical discomforts to spur me on to higher creations.

What is the nature of mind?

Is the nature of mind to be creative?

Monkey mind jumps from place to place. But is the nature of mind also to be creative? Is that not its essence?

I hate to think that. I want a life of pleasure not of pain. But it may not work that way.

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mildly Annoyed and Temporarily Discouraged

Down and out on the new business model.

Thursday night folk dancing in Chappaqua ended on a low note. I felt down at the end. . . but I don't know why. True, we had very low attendance, but that was not the reason.

Perhaps, is it possible, that in reality, I don't feel down at all. In actuality, I may even feel good that the class is over. Am I disguising this by feeling down? I'm not sure.

A puzzle. I felt down. . . but there is no reason to feel this way.

Maybe I'm low because I canceled Thursday night in Yonkers. But here a real decision was reached. Sad it has to be canceled, but a good part of me had wanted to cancel it. I was indecisive until last night. Now I know. And that is good. I lose nothing by canceling it. And I gain both time and saved rent money.

So what is so bad?

The feeling of defeat.

I planned it, but it didn't go.

But even though it didn't work out the way I hoped, the way I planned, am I really defeated? Of course not. Only mildly annoyed and temporarily discouraged.

And that discouragement will be wiped away as soon as a new (and better) idea arises.

But I am nevertheless, angry and disgusted that only three people showed up for the class. Even though I am well paid for the job, such low attendance temporarily damages my spirit, hurts my mind, and scars my emotional core. Evidently and obviously, folk dance teaching is about more than just making money. It has an important religious, psychological, and kabbalistic spark component as well.

Saturday, November 19, 2005

Work, Fear, Karl Max, and Overwhelmed

Entering the Overwhelmed Life Style.

I'd like to learn how to "move easy in harness."

I have a fear of work. I fear if I work too hard, I will hurt myself.

It goes back to Ma. She said, "Don't work so hard. Take it easy. Be happy." Somehow this implied that work was not good for me, it would hurt me. Better to do less or even avoid it. Stay in your room and practice violin. Then I will love you.

Perhaps hanging on to this fear of work is my psychological way of hanging on to Ma's love. If I work less, she will love me more. Twisted, but true.

There is an intimate connection and conflict between my desire for love and the

fear of work.

Harkening to Ma Belief that working too hard will hurt me helps create the overwhelmed feeling when I do work. And when I do not have it, part of me tries to recreate it! I mentally pile on more work so I will eventually feel overwhelmed. I love the overwhelmed feeling—it connects me to love. But I also hate the overwhelmed feeling—it connects me to fear, imprisonment, and claustrophobia; it strips me of freedom.

If I had heard work is good for you, more work is better, then instead of hurting, it would create love, running wild on the lawn, joy, ecstasy.

I am presently caught in the conflict. Now I lean towards “work is good for you, more work is better.” It is the idea of work as running wild on the lawn. Yet, I am also still afraid work will hurt me. I hear Ma saying “Don’t be so wild. Don’t run wild on the lawn. Stop. Relax.” (Repress your energies, etc.)

Thus, part of my mind keeps hearing her: “Work can hurt you. Watch out. Be cautious. You may slip and fall over the cliff. Be afraid. Fear getting hurt. Worry about the pain that too much work, over work, will cause. Karl Marx never wanted you to work so hard. Neither do I. Be overwhelmed. Let terror run your day. Fear is good for you. It will tie you to me!”

How many of my physical pains are created by this mental construct and conflict. I am squeezed between fear of work and the desire to work.

This puts me at the border of a great psychological truth.

Caught between the ecstasy of overwork (running wild on the lawn, Hemingway style), and fear that work will hurt me.

The fear that work will hurt connects me to old neighborhood Ma’s love.

I need love. But I have also left the old neighborhood.

Time to look elsewhere. Time to expand the room of my imagination. Time to go outside my house into the gone public world.

Thus these body pains are reflections of inner old neighborhood terrors. The

right hand, hand of emotion, right hypothenar (thumb) muscle relates to the apparent, about-to-burst-forth self-expression in my guitar playing, (in music. and life in general.) I'll bet this is true of my left knee as well (in dance, running, and life in general.)

The idea of pain, that "it will hurt me," is also a connection to mother's love. That's why I so hesitate, don't want to, haven't wanted to give it up. That is why I am attracted to pain, even admire it. And this, even while I try to avoid and run away from it. Conflict, indeed. A conflict of love, over old neighborhood mother's love.

I need a new mother.

Creating a New Mother

As I reflect, I'm not even sure my mother ever actually said work would hurt me. I'm not sure she even implied it. But one thing I know absolutely is: I think and believe she did. And I act and think accordingly.

Thus my concept of mother and her attitudes has been created by and resides totally in my imagination! If this is so, then by "simply" changing my imaginative posture, I can change the concept and idea of my mother! I can "easily" move from the old-neighborhood, imagined idea of her to the new-neighborhood, imagined idea of her.

I can create a new mother!

Whom will I create? And how? The mother who loves my work, my overwork, my running wild on the lawn, my ecstasy? The New Neighborhood mother that loves the new me?

I can start by practicing the (Virginia) Luque focus on guitar playing. . . then calliyoga.

Guitar playing. . . focus on awareness, not time

Calliyoga. . . focus on awareness, not numbers.

Watch the pains as passing geese – Canadian ducks, really – flying through the

sky.

It's good to read books and hear people who agree with you. They help confirm your beliefs.

What about opposition? It exists to help confirm your beliefs. You test your opponent's strength by bouncing and throwing them against the wall. See how, and whether, they hold up. How strong are they? Are they even your real beliefs?

Opposition is a pain in the ass. It can't be chased away or ignored. Opposition is also important. . .and sometimes it works!

Guitar Playing and Turiya

There are four states: Consciousness, super-consciousness, unconsciousness (the unconscious), and turiya. Turiya is a connection "beyond" all other states of consciousness: It is total connection to the Universal self.

How about connecting my sleep state in morning guitar practice (probably an unconscious state) to turiya?

Could I connect my sleep to turiya, and play guitar at the same time? This would connect guitar playing to the Highest State of Consciousness!

Practice playing "while sleeping." Sleep with the guitar but play it at the same time!

This entails, among other things, learning how to "sleep in the classical guitar playing position."

Tuesday, November 22, 2005

Faith Tested

If my mind feels better, will my body follow along?

I still can't believe I am (may be) suffering from "tourist knee" (a tour replacement of "folk dance knee), and perhaps a new one, "guitarist thumb." This, along with "computer shoulder."

That makes three sufferings. All are based on my art forms. How so?

1. Tourist knee: The art of the tour, which is actually a replacement of the art of folk dance.

2. Guitarist thumb: the art of classical guitar, and music.

3. Computer shoulder: the art of writing.

All these are means of self-expression. Even my business aspects, as seen and expressed in the tour/folk dance/booking business, are means of self-expression.

Mostly, I believe they relate to the restraints I put on self-expression. Holding back the wild flow of energy. The lack of enzyme and endorphin release. Building the dam, holding back the waters.

Is there ego—and self-protection within this restraint? In other words, am I tapping into some ancient wisdom, a judgement to hold back so that I do not unwittingly fall over the cliff? Or is it simply an old neighborhood habit, one that once served a self-protective purpose but is no longer needed?

Am I living a veiled life? Has the veil, once fresh, clean, and vital now has turned into an old and useless shroud? Is my body firmly in the present, but my mind still rooted in the past? Once I bring present and past, body and mind, together, will these ailments disappear with the union?

Basically, I want to believe they will. Because I want it, is it true? Will it happen? Well, basically, even though I am in a new place, I still believe it will.

That is faith at work. Now my faith is being tested. The test is found in my body parts.

That's why I don't want to go to a doctor. . . yet. I'm still testing, testing. I want to see if my mental and psychological "methods" work. I'm still testing my "Sarno"

faith. I want to see if he, and I, am right.

My left knee tendon gives a sudden pain. It hurts. But more than hurt, what actually terrifies me, is the potential and possible “meaning” of the pain: I will be immobilized. I won’t be able to work anymore. My dance career is over and with my hypothenar muscle, my guitar career as well. I’ll be helpless.

Thus pains gives birth fear of more pain. Terror sets in. Is this a “correct” terror? Should I worry? Is it even a choice? Or is mind simply playing tricks on me? Is my imagination “showing off”?

How does this sequence affect my mind? Certainly there is a body/mind connection. What is it?

Uniting Heaven and Hell in a New Life Style

Success brings responsibility. The heavy hand, the weigh of responsibility, sits heavily on my shoulders. (Is that why they hurt?) The weight of responsibility transfers and is carried by my legs, in the joint place of meeting between the strong quadriceps and strong gastrocnemius muscles. What a “joint” that is! That place of meeting is my knee. The confused crossroads, the mean, questioning, and sinister left knee.

Is this verbal babble and rationalization? Or is it real? Test of faith again.

Can faith alone cure? Does Christian Science work?

Does faith in God really heal? Will it heal me?

Suppose I take the weight of success responsibility off my shoulders and give it to God. Will that work?

I certainly need help? But should I go to Dr. Liss, or to God? Who will do a better job?

Giving it to God, handing all things over the Him, would be a giant leap of faith. And what a relief!

But will it work?

Scepticism and doubt keep clouding my mind. Faith testing.

Basically, I know it will work! Is that the next big step for me—handing myself, my art, and my business over to God? Sure I'm looking for a partner. I can't handle all this alone, especially the success.

In fact, I'd like someone to take over the whole business. I need a permanent vacation, the one I started out with. Success, retirement, vacation. They all go together. That's really the way to work. Well, if I voluntarily hand my business over to God, I could work that way.

In fact, it's really a personal decision, mine to make.

Not bad for one days work.

Wednesday, November 23, 2005

Business Vision and the Expansion of Self

This is a rest-of-my-life problem: How do I get my works out, march them forward, and get them into the hands, face, and body of the public? It is a St. Paul, gospel, advertising and public relations problem.

What are my "works"? Not only writing, but my tours as well. How do I get beyond my small mailing list? How do I get and go beyond myself? Ah, what a way to phrase it: Get and go beyond myself. There is always a good mountain to climb, to forge the attempt, make the valiant effort to grow and expand.

Well, isn't this first a new definition of self—one which includes the public? Of course, my old and present self include my private self. It cannot be otherwise. But to now add the public: That is an expansion, an expansion of self.)

Different Entity

After my September-November transition, where am I?

I have fused my incomplete selves into a complete self. Quantities of the old self have merged, creating a qualitatively different self. The different self is neither public

or private; it lies slightly beyond a “new both,” and make the creation of an entirely different entity.

My whole thought process is now outward.

This morning I awoke with almost no aches and pains. I wonder if this is because the “different entity,” the qualitative change which is my new self, has finally been formed.

The aches represented growing pains. I was in the process of giving birth to a new body to contain my new mind set.

With this philosophy of body building, the last two months of aches and pains should diminish, or even go away completely. Their mission has been accomplished. There is no “reason” for them anymore.

This means left knee, right hypothenar muscle, and shoulder pains will go out the window.

We’ll see if I’m right.

Thursday, November 24, 2005

Thanksgiving: Giving Thanks for Self-Confidence

Thanksgiving Day.

I’m reading New Leaf 1, searching for entries to read at my Englewood Library reading with Barry on December 15th.

Several years have passed since the publication of New Leaf 1. Now I’m far enough away from it to see how good many of the entries are!

I don’t feel as self-conscious about the entries. I can somewhat step away from them, read them as a “stranger,” and appreciate them better. Maybe I’m a good writer after all.

In fact, everything in the book, and everything I choose to read, will be good. The book itself is good. some people may not like or appreciate what they hear, but

that doesn't mean what I wrote isn't good. It simply means they are on another wavelength and are unable to, willing to, or even incapable of, understanding and appreciating it. They are in a "different space." So be it. One cannot change them. But they are not me. And their appreciation or lack of appreciation for my writing has nothing to do with the quality of my writing itself. The quality, as I can now see, is excellent!

This means I have more confidence in my writing, more confidence in myself.

And all this is true. It is not hubris to say: I am at the self-confidence stage of my life.

Self-Confidence as a Public Good

Self-confidence is a mitzvah. It can bring good feelings of stability, security, and even adventure to others.

It's freeing to feel self-confidence, but there is also some pain left from the old neighborhood.

I can read my works without (or with less?) fear of a negative audience reaction. In fact, I now "expect" a positive reaction. If I do not get one, I will assume there is something lacking in them (an inability to connect with my mind) rather than in my writing.

What is the sadness in facing this self-confidence? The loss of an "old neighborhood friend." Once I needed such a "friend" to goad me on. No more. Nevertheless, I still have growing pains. I have to learn how to adjust and live more comfortably in this new neighborhood.

Confidence in writing, and the public reading of my writing, is an extension of the self-confidence gift.

Saturday, November 26, 2005

Elana

I feel so down this morning because of Elana's death. All the piss and folk dance energy has been knocked out of me.

If I could face the permanence of her absence and cry over her, my sadness would be temporarily relieved, my depression lifted. I'd feel less heavy, more free.

But for some reason, I can't do that. . .yet. Perhaps it will come.

Or perhaps sadness, heaviness, and depression are not what I really feel. Suppose instead of the above "acceptable" feelings, I really felt annoyance and even anger. Why the hell did she die? What is the matter with her, anyway? Why did you have to abandon our folk dance class and leave all of us alone? What is the matter with you?

Anger and annoyance is the way I've felt since she got her cancer. Even with her cancer, she always came to class with a great smile, and wonderfully positive attitude towards everything and everyone. She always walked in as a shining light. Even in her sickest moments. Losing her presence, her light and positive vibrations, was a real loss. Her happy and upbeat attitude often sustained the folk dance class.

Now she has abandoned us. It started a few months ago. She came more and more erratically until finally she didn't come at all.

And now she is gone, dead and gone.

Anger and annoyance are my shield. Beneath them, bereft and abandoned, I cry for her loss.

Bulgarian Language Study Cycle

I liked the Bulgarian language progress I've been making over the past four to six weeks. So three days ago I decided, "planned," "committed" myself to a more rigid, disciplined schedule: One hour a day of Bulgarian, and twenty minutes of gaida practice a day.

The result of this new "commitment" is that I've done no Bulgarian language study or gaida practice.

Perhaps these so-called “commitments” come at the end of an energy cycle. They signify the death of an old way, the final leakage of energy; they are an ending rather than a new beginning. I grab on to the outer form, the discipline of “forcing myself to” follow a schedule and discipline rather than enter the center and heart of the energy itself.

The shining energy comes at the beginning the cycle. It directs me and lights my path. Usually such cycles seem to last from four to six weeks (usually six weeks). At their end, I make great plans; at their beginning I follow their light. At the beginning is life, at the end is death. Then a new cycle starts.

Vibrating in Place

I wonder if mine is a love problem. I cannot, or find it hard to, admit how much I love what I am doing, and that truly, there is nothing to do that is better than what I am doing! Yesterday’s bat mitzvah simply highlights and “proves” it. What was its problem? Simply that it was great! Marvelous feedback and appreciation from the attendees, people, audience, bar mitzvah family and friends. I won’t describe what happened, but rather, simply summarize: The band was great, I was great, the crowd was great. Truly, what could be better!

And this is true in just about everything I am doing! I can absolutely find nothing better to do, no better way to live. Thus I cannot, and evidently do not want to find a “new/old way of stimulating myself through self beating in the old life style manner.” I cannot find any new ways to improve, grow, expand, and “make myself better or happier or more fulfilled.” Hard to admit, but I am there. There is no place else to go. Evidently, my “job” now is simply to vibrate in place.

Perhaps many of my aches and pains simply come from holding back this flood of joy. My muscles tense as the joy flood overwhelms me.

Perhaps I am not even overwhelmed by events, jobs, and my busy life style. Perhaps I am overwhelmed by the joy, the flood of joy it brings me!

Noah was overwhelmed by the Flood. He built an ark and learned to float on it. Perhaps I need an ark. Certainly the ocean I am riding cannot be any better.

It is Thanksgiving holiday time.

Can I learn to be thankful?

Waking up every day as a free man, free to do the things I love, is quite an achievement. Maybe thanking God in appreciation would be a better, indeed, the best way to go.

Perhaps I simply cannot stand all this love and appreciation both from others, and even from myself. It is just too much for a self-punishing soul to bear. I can learn to defend myself against misery and criticism. But how can I defend myself against the onslaught of love? No wonder I am suffering in this strange new way.

If appreciation from others, and self-appreciation, have been my main long-term goal, and I have achieved them, where do I go from here? How do I stand it? Do I simply sit around and bathe in the sun of love and appreciation? Do I learn to vibrate in key? And how will I punish myself by constantly pushing myself forwards and upwards, if I have finally arrived?

Can't I find anything better to do?

The only thing I can do is sit around and create aches and pains. In kind of a reverse stimulation, I can punish my body for my mind's feeling so good.

Indeed, I am lost in a sea of love.

Liking the Weight of Responsibility

Looking for punishment and pain? Well, success bears with it the weight of responsibility.

Aha, there's the "punishment and pain" aspect, right there in the weight of responsibility. It bears down on you, crushes and hurts you. If you like pain, and are

stimulated by self-punishment, well, there it is! A heavy weight pressing down on your head. And this, right in the middle of success!

So there you go. I've got, found, my pain stimulant. And this, right in the middle of success!

The weight of responsibility equals pain and suffering.

The release of success, of fulfilling the responsibility, brings pleasure, and joy.

You can combine them in the "simha of suffering" or the "joy of suffering." Or in the new cry: "Suffering simhas!"

Just as I like my masseuse to press down hard on my back in a hard massage, so I like the pressing down of the weight of responsibility. It feels good. It's relaxing. That's why I want it, do it, and keep doing it.

Pain turns into pleasure, pleasure turns into pain; the weight of responsibility turns into the glory of success. It's a fun cycle.

Without such burdens, I feel empty, listless, and lost.

I want to burden myself. Why? It feels so good!

The conflict between success and responsibility is the same as the conflict between pleasure and pain. They go together. One cannot exist without the other.

I love being crushed under a great burden. What a challenge! It wakes up all my sleeping energies.

Thus, pile it on! I love it!

That's why work is so good for me, and more work is even better!

Over-burdened, over-worked, over-responsibilied: maybe that's the life style I like! Certainly it has been the life style I have followed over the years. Maybe I've chosen and followed it because, deep in my heart, I like it! I may have always instinctively and unconsciously realized, it is best for my type of personality.

I've always proudly told people I've never worked in my life. But this really means I've never worked for corporate America, or bureaucratic America. But I have always worked as an individual, as an artist, as an entrepreneur. And I've always passed this off as "not real work" since I'm doing what I want, what I love.

But perhaps it is time to redefine myself. Perhaps I have always worked, and very hard. (Much of it may have been so-called "non-paying" work, planting the seeds of preparation. etc.)

Certainly diving into the Overwhelmed is the artist's way, the artist/entrepreneurial way: riding the energy of the Route of Passion.

Guitar: A perfection apuyando scale is achieved by "watching" the evenness of the right hand finger tips as they "skim" and skip evenly across/over the strings.

The playing and sound power of the relaxed, low-hanging, right hand index finger is awesome.

Truth is, I've always had pains. Only I have not been discouraged by them. But this morning, somehow, I feel discouraged. Could it have something to do with Elana's death? It's the "What's the use of going on? Why bother, if it all ends up with death?" feeling.

Attitude: When exercising, what to do when a pain arises?

Go right into the heart of the pain. See what's there.

Arm rotations. Right shoulder pain. By going into its heart, the pain has changed from a sharp to dull, sharp pain to dull pain, almost an "ache."

What is the relationship between pain and fear?

It's scary to go into pain. The question is: Is it more painful, or more scary? In other words, is it a question of pain, fear, or both? Is it fear of pain, or/and pain of fear? Does pain cause fear, or fear cause pain? Does pain increase fear, and fear increase pain?

By going into pain, you are afraid you'll injure yourself more. Will you? Or is the painful and scary route the route to cure?

Going into the heart of the pain mirrors the eternal battle between hope and courage, and despair and discouragement.

Wednesday, November 30, 2005

New Folk Dance Commitment and Business Direction

A new Tuesday night folk dance class format is a major shift in my Folk Dance Business.

It takes so long for an idea, a form, to die. . . and, no doubt, to be born as well. For years, I have resisted changing all folk dance forums and business forms to a "professional" and business-like registration process. Well, Elana's death may have been the final cause for this new, registration-type Folk Dance Business format to be born. On the positive side, it could signify a folk dance resurrection. On the negative side, it could be the end of the Tuesday night folk dance class. But I choose to view the positive. Certainly, this will and has given me a new burst of psychic energy regarding the Tuesday night class, perhaps Monday also, and perhaps all folk dance classes of the future.

As a start, I'm thinking of charging \$95 for 8 sessions. That would be a raise in price of \$2 per class, or \$12 per class. But, of course, people have to register for the whole course.

Suppose new people show up at the door. What should I do? Should I have a

“guest fee” which can be applied to their future registration? Probably. Should the guest fee be \$12, \$10, or \$15? \$15 feels “unfriendly,” \$10 feels very friendly and guest-like, but perhaps too low. \$12 feels “fair” (but it’s annoying collecting the extra \$2.) I lean towards \$10 as friendly and an incentive to join. (\$15 would be an “annoying push,” but might be okay too. I don’t know yet.)

This is definitely a new Folk Dance Commitment and Business Direction. It’s been many months, many years, in coming. I’m now at the “no choice” point. I wonder why it has taken so long to get here. Perhaps it is due to the post-transformational place I am now in. Or maybe I’ll never know.

Breaking the Folk Dance Bonds

In this new Folk Dance Business Form, I am also asking, nay demanding, something from others, from my folk dancers: I am demanding that they make a commitment. Just as I am making a commitment to show up and teach, they must now make their own commitment to register!

The past method has simply not been fair. Not fair to me. I’ve made the commitment, I’m bound to my effort, but they are not. This arrangement is basically terrible for me. Why should only I make the effort, make the commitment, and not they? No reason at all. . . except my own stupidity! How dare I insult myself so! It has something to do with my communist upbringing and the miserable, unprofessional attitude prevalent in the folk dance community itself, an attitude largely based on the communist philosophy of peasant and worker worship. Thus things should be free, or at least, very cheap. Ugh, ugh, ugh! How I hate and have always hated that attitude!

This philosophy of so-called “equality” is completely unequal, especially for the teacher. Ugh, ugh, ugh! Well, at this point, I can only curse and blame myself for my own stupidity. How could I have lasted so long on this low level plain of Dumbness? A prisoner of my past, upbringing, and financial folk dance mores. Well, no more. Those bonds have finally been broken!

Thursday, December 1, 2005

Lost my Belief in Writing

I woke up this morning feeling depressed. This kind of empty and hopeless depression has not been upon me for years. But now, it has been hovering over me for months. It is a post-transition depression.

It is a "success" depression. It comes because I have (hopefully, I, past perfect, had) lost my belief in writing.

In the past, all depressions lifted when I wrote. Writing was the foundation of my miracle schedule. The poetry, mysticism, metaphors, and symbolism pouring from my mind through words on the page ever put me in touch with a Higher Creative Power, made me feel full, and gave total meaning to my life on earth.

But somehow, through post-transition "success," this wonderful and wondrous belief has descended, descended, descended, and finally dribbled away.

Oh sure, I keep writing. But the post-transitional success syndrome has soaked and slowly rotted my belief in it. Thus this morning's depression.

Another sign is my waking up. I used to wake up happily and gladly and 4:30 a.m., knowing that writing was ahead. I had something good to wake up for.

Now I still wake up at 4:30 a.m. but, "afraid" to face the new "non-writing" emptiness of the day, I turn over and go back to sleep. I usually the wake up and get up at 6:00 a.m., thus "losing" that formerly invaluable hour and a half that I used for, and gave me a morning jump start in writing.

I keep waiting for this vaguely energy-less period of floating and nowhere land to end. So far it has not. But maybe this morning's depression is the first sign of life.

Writing has been the creative, non-material, and spiritual foundation of my universe. Having "given it up," no wonder I'm depressed.

Does this mean my long wait is about to end? Does it mean it is time to return?

I wonder if my aches and pains will diminish, even vanish when I do. I cannot

ask for this kind of physical happiness and freedom. It will only come as a writing by-product. Inner spiritual freedom released through the writing process.

Wednesday, January 4, 2006

Body

Freedom and Discipline

"I have to do something radical, change something radically. But what? Body politics? Or at least my body.

"How to change my body, the approach to my body – radically. That is the question."

"Radical new approach ideas:

"1. Awareness approach: Total slow-down with constant awareness of every physical movement. As an optimist, I always look for something hopeful. Hopefully, this may create better focus and concentration on relaxing each muscle.

"The Total Cripple approach: Learn total reuse of my body. ""Total"" is the key word here. Slow focus on every movement!"

"But isn't all this the opposite of running wild? What about my dream to run wild on the lawn?

"Or is this total-slow-down approach an equal-and-opposite reaction to my successful fast-and-furious, running-wild-on-the-lawn guitar playing?

"Is it the opposite reaction to breaking borders, moving beyond previous boundaries, going over the cliff, falling into the abyss with its total abandon and undisciplined freedom?

"True, these little annoying pains in my body are terrifying me. Am I over-reacting? Or am I dealing with a future trend? Am I smart in my fear, or fearful (afraid) of being smart?

"Is this a punishment for being ""too smart?"" Could I really know myself that well? Am I exploring new ground or denying deep knowledge of my old

neighborhood?

“Then, of course, there is the unifying question: Can one learn to run wild on the lawn better by learning to go slow? Can slow increase fast? Does fast teach how to slow? Can one run wild slowly?

“Perhaps I am taking the first steps of adding discipline to my new-found, running wild on the lawn freedom. And this so I do not have to fear going over the cliff, of the total abandon of wild freedom.

“Questioning of the entire “running wild” idea: Perhaps the potential chaos of running wild is just too frightening. It needs to be tamed, ordered, finessed with discipline. Disciplined freedom. The symbol of freedom is my four-year-old self running wild on the lawn. The symbol of discipline is my mother watching over me and saying “Stop!”

“Perhaps it is time to unite mother and child, freedom and discipline.”

So ends a New Tree.