

Bees are adapted for feeding on nectar and pollen.
It's what they do.
Bees are the major type of pollinator in ecosystems
that contain flowering plants. One third of the human food supply
depends on pollination accomplished by bees.
That's the way it is.
Bees do what they do, we benefit.

.....

Entrepreneur: one who works an 80 hour week,
so as not to have to work a 40 hour one for someone else.

.....

Competition: "You have to break a lot of hearts to make one happy."

.....

<*Pantry Poem*>

Stop running out of things.
Stock the pantry and keep it that way.

The first scoop
The first slice
The first bit of anything tastes the best.

More like that.

[...]

Take your fill, but don't use it up.
There's no more where that came from.

I have laundry
I have the laundry to do

.....

I'm going to tell you.

I told you.
I told you I was going to tell you.

I can't tell you.
I told you, I can't tell you.
I told you.

I was going to tell you I can't tell you.
I told you I was going to tell you I can't tell you.
Can you tell?

.....

Clinging to my trade secrets
as if they were in the witness
protection program.

.....

How could you know I was coming?
I have no reputation proceeding me.
I tried dabbling in politics, but gained no purchase.
Back down to where I started from,
I won't back down!

Who should I look up to,
if I don't have a reputation
to live up to?

.....

You, first adapters leading the way,
Ha! Wait until the first generation
native born to the technology come to visit.

.....

Team of individualists herding cats
"Do I have to do everything myself?"

.....

She likes to turn heads.
I like to turn phrases.

Words not stuck on the page
ride the air waves to oblivion, the words
trapped in your head turn and turn.
Do they impress anyone but yourself?

That's how money makes money, honey.

.....

The Right to Free Speech is knowing when not to.

.....

We're adapted for consumerism, a social and economic order and ideology that encourages the acquisition of goods and services in ever-greater amounts.

It's what we do.

Driven by media culture values are modified through popular transmission, often to the point of outright falsehoods. Popular culture is a debased, trivial culture that voids both the deep realities, in turn come to demand trivial and comfortable cultural products.

That's the way we are.

We do what they do, who benefits?

Your chef sees a goose as a thing to be cruelly force-fed to provide a fat liver, foie gras. Your building contractor sees the ancient forest as a source of pulp products. To go shopping you burn fossil fuels in your car.

"Pave paradise, put up a parking lot."

Fossil fuels are formed by natural processes such as anaerobic decomposition of buried dead organisms. The age of the organisms and their resulting fossil fuels is typically millions of years, and sometimes exceeds 650 million years.

Maybe we are the Tao of destruction wiping the slate clean, starting over from scratch. Breaking down all of life old and new to its most elemental soup.

We're locked into taking care of our nuclear waste for the next ten-thousand years. Can we plan to manage our ancient forests for the next thousand?

Impermanence is one of the essential doctrines or three marks of existence in Buddhism. The term expresses the Buddhist notion that all of conditioned existence, without exception, is transient, or in a constant state of flux.

Then what is sustainability?

Pay dues where dues are owed.

You lumberjacks unionizing for better pay, better working conditions, do you see yourself as first value added contributors? Look again at the leaves photosynthesizing the energy of the sunlight into wood, bark, flowers and fruit.

What if we reset the calendar to 40,000 BN -- Before Now?

Would that help you remember the perseverance of humans and non-humans alike getting through the last ice age? What it took? What we're taking now?

What we had, what we lost, what we have, what we're losing?

And what do you have to say about yummy top soil, teeming with a zillion orgasmic organisms? Why flush your top soil down the Mississippi River? Flush full of '-cides': pesticides, herbicides, conviviocides. To kill the life in the Gulf of Mexico? For what? For sterile feed corn and soybeans: to fatten cows and pigs for slaughter, for chips to munch during the ball game?

.....
Today I'm thinking that 'artist' and 'individualist'
may actually be the same word.

Tomorrow I might think differently,
that an artist is a community
housed in a confluent singularity.

Then again, tomorrow never comes.
.....

Because my ancestors dominated,
I get to think of myself as ethnic-free.
I'm not one of those minorities
clinging to old world ways.
I'm the universal standard
for being human,
even if I don't act like it.
.....

Backtalk

<http://www.motherjones.com/toc/1996/11/backtalk>

Our September/October 1996 issue certainly got people talking: Walter Truett Anderson's essay, "*There's No Going Back to Nature*," upset some of our best-known environmental voices, including Gary Snyder and Wendell Berry, while our exposés angered Amway and Freeport-McMoRan. Meanwhile, an essay by Thomas Moore prompted a little soul-searching.

#ProactiveEnvironmentalism

.....

Homo Sapiens, the "wise man"

[The species that you and all other living human beings on this planet belong to is Homo sapiens. During a time of dramatic climate change 200,000 years ago, Homo sapiens evolved in Africa. Like other early humans that were living at this time, they gathered and hunted food, and evolved behaviors that helped them respond to the challenges of survival in unstable environments. ~<http://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/human-fossils/species/homo-sapiens>]

Homo Consumericus, persons who acquire goods that they clearly do not need

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_consumericus

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/homo-consumericus>]

Hobo Curious, unlike "tramps"—who work only when they are forced to, and "bums"—who do not work at all, "hobos" are itinerant workers.

Moto Sapiens, a creature separate and entire, midway between the worm and the angel who sacrifices to the Gods of Speed. The major driver of road kill.

[<https://rideapart.com/articles/we-are-moto-sapiens> <http://motosapiens.org/motocamp/>]

Google Sapiens, wisely organizes the world's information and makes it universally accessible and useful.

(Google's chief executive Larry Page has admitted that the company has outgrown its mission statement to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" from the launch of the company in 1998, but has said he doesn't yet know how to redefine it.)

[<http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/nov/03/larry-page-google-dont-be-evil-sergey-brin>]

.....
MUZZY: unable to think clearly; confused.

.....
"On the whole, it's a bother to keep up relationships with people in this world."
~Yosa Buson

.....
"My dreams hover over withered fields"
~Basho

.....
Basho said, *"I composed this poem at a temple when I was all alone."*
I say, *"When I was all alone, I composed this poem as a temple."*

.....
World Kigo Database
<http://worldkigo2005.blogspot.com/>

.....
As I'm none the less for the experience,
I'll keep after it.

.....
Loving what I'm doing too much to be deterred
by those that don't.

.....

Perfection is a lovely guest, but
never stays. However,
Satisfaction can linger long
after a hardy meal.

.....

There are not
too many places
that forgive you
changing your mind
willy nilly.

Art is one.

.....

Regarding the Art of Faith. If it made sense it wouldn't be faith. Only things you think you
already know make sense. Faith is climbing out of that box. Faith is liberation. Faith is living
comfortably in the 'it absolutely makes no sense whatsoever' and riding the waves.

.....

The older you get
the more time compresses
and the more
you want to milk
every precious moment.

.....

You live in a bubble.
We all do.
Sometimes expanding,
sometimes contracting.
Perhaps colliding or conjoining,
absorbed in others' bubbles.

Whether your bubble lives
merely "within a context"
or within The All Encompassing Bubble
is irrelevant.
You remain contained within the bubble
you are aware of.

I don't want to burst your bubble,
but this is it.

In reaching out to others,

the best you can do
is share
your authentic bits.

.....

=====

June 18, 2015

Saying Hello to my dear,
Carlean Montgomery

When she sang the Gospel,
she stopped my world.

She loved her soaps,
while she ironed.

She let you know
you didn't want to mess
with her pots
when she was cooking.

If she had troubles,
she didn't tell me.

The rock for many.

She had troubles.

You'll never get a better hug.

She called me her white son.
I called her Carlean.
Then she sang the Gospel ...

Sweet rejoicing, now,
she with the Reverend.

Deep abiding love.

=====

.....

Wake

Eat
Work
Shit
Sleep
Repeat

.....

The most beautiful, profound, deeply moving painting ever made is one coat away from being obliterated.

{Impermanence: the notion that all of conditioned existence, without exception, is transient, or in a constant state of flux...}

.....

They say
art is purely subjective.
I say
it all is.

It is my subjective opinion:
tomorrow the sun will rise
in the East,
objectively beginning
a new day.
One
that you too
can revel in.

[I'm confident in the patterns I sense, even the ones that will break.]

.....

In Defense of Anger

In his book "A Force for Good," Daniel Goleman quotes the Dalai Lama as saying,

"Like anyone else, I too have anger in me. However, I try to recall that anger is a destructive emotion. I remind myself that scientists now say that anger is bad for our health; it eats into our immune system. So, anger destroys our peace of mind and our physical health. We shouldn't welcome it or think of it as natural or as a friend."

If the Dalai Lama actually said this, he is wrong. Anger IS natural, is our friend and should be welcomed and honored.

When I feel a new physical infection in my body beginning, I take a traditional Chinese immunity-boosting herbal formula called Yin Chiao. It irritates my immune system, which tells it to be on guard and 'disperse wind heat' -- that is, "get angry". The natural purpose of

anger is to protect your boundaries and confront injustice. When appropriately expressed, it does its job and restores balance. Anger only "eats into our immune system" when repressed. Both scientists and the Dalai Lama have it backwards saying that anger is bad for our health. Erupting with a force equal to the invasion, meeting it as it is -- is indeed a healthy response. A few timely Yin Chiao tablets nip a full blown infection in the bud and keeps me from becoming contagious.

Much of civil society tries to oppress or avoids disruption at all costs. But naturally, appropriately attending to the defense of small trespasses as they happen will over time need for huge epidemics or revolutions later.

"A stitch in time saves nine," first recorded in Thomas Fuller's Gnomologia: A Collection of the Proverbs, Maxims and Adages that inspired Benjamin Franklin and Poor Richard's almanac, 1732"

.....

I have a checkered past,
but a well-manicured future.

.....

I told my wife,
"I'm so glad
I have someone
such as you
to catch
my kisses.

You are
the treasure
of my chest!"

And on another occasion:

When only right will do,
I think of you!

With Love.

.....

*(Ode to Stanley Kunitz, through the breath of Rita Dove
FROM The Inspiration of Poets, a non-serial collection)*

If I could sit with you
cheek to cheek, but
for a moment ...
"summer is late,
my love."

True.

Then again
in the muggy heat
steamy love endures
beneath a gunmetal sky ...

elemental desire,
my best friend,
drives my melancholy
to frenzy
and back
against the wall.

I ask you one more time,
"Touch me.
Remind me who I am."

[Stanley Kunitz graduated summa cum laude in 1926 from Harvard College with an English major and a philosophy minor, and then earned a master's degree in English from Harvard the following year. He wanted to continue his studies for a doctorate degree, but was told by the university that the Anglo-Saxon students would not like to be taught by a Jew. Rita Frances Dove is the first African American to have been appointed as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress.]

.....

Who am I
to speak
for dead poets?
I don't paint
in English
or French
or any symbolic language.

So what
if she grew up
in times when
character mattered
and sacrificed
her self
for the greater good, though

what was good
kept changing
faster than the generations
of fruit flies
eating away

at the labor of her love.

Who am I
to speak
for her? Or
the Renaissance
in Harlem, then
all jazz
and social revolution?

I, no one
pure color
or gender
preference,
am bound, married
to this time,
this comfortable chair,
longing
to do more
than sit and sew ...

looking back
and forward
and wanting,
wanting to want
to be here.

All the more.
who am I
to speak?

Here where the paint
is drying,
knowing
I will never see
the finished picture.

- - -

Who am I
to vote for this
fourteen year old
going blind
before our eyes
on a national TV
talent competition,

dancing his heart out
on the big stage
for a place in ours?

*[‘AGT’ Week 9: Blind Benjamin Yonattan Steals Judges’ Hearts With Powerful Dance
<http://hollywoodlife.com/2015/07/21/americas-got-talent-week-9-july-21-recap/>]*

.....

I like the me
that I am
with you,
you bring me
closer
to the center
of this world.

.....

When we don't have,
we make do.
When we have,
we do make.

.....

Being penniless makes me appreciate things all the more. That deeper gratitude tends to make me more empathetic, and lean into being kind. This kindness draws me closer to others, relationships flourish. Thus, what I lack in collecting busy things, I make up for in richer relationships. Kindness is what's needed for both people and caring for things.

.....

I'm an ordinary man.
Ordinate to the coordinate.

A point uniquely
holding my place,
non-ambiguous in this field.
While the space I hold is finite,
the network is not.

There are higher dimensions, but
I do not inspire to transcend.
There is no beyond I aspire to.

An ordinary man,
I hold my place.
That is enough.

One way to think of me is as one
of a set of points
satisfying certain relationships
and generalize to higher dimensions,
expressible in terms of distance and angle.

"What's your angle?"
"How far from you am I?"

But in translation
every point is shifted
in the same direction,
by the same distance.
And when it is your turn,
by rotation,
every point turns about you
through the same angle.

If one can be transformed
into the other
by some sequence of translations,
rotations and reflections, then
you are the center of happening.
And I too.

For an ordinary man, like me,
the center is everywhere.

.....

Crickets, spiders and moths,
feed on the fluorescent light
making their homes in corners
and crevices near
the front door under
the porch where Phoebes,
the tyrant flycatcher bird
with the flat black head,
come to feed on the moths.

Crickets, spiders and moths,
feed on the fluorescent light
making their homes in corners
and crevices near
the front door under
the porch until

I come along
and sweep them away.

.....

You're coming in too high.
You're out of the strike zone.
You may not want to get hit,
but to play to win,
you've got to get in the ball game.

.....

You're too kind.
I'm just another kid
playing in the mud trying
to keep his white clothes
clean.

.....

On the day before
no more days,
On that day, when
I will see no more days,
I want to see your face.

I want to feel your face
next to mine.

I want to hear you whisper
to me, "Hello!"
A hello that will echo
across all tomorrows.

[From the "*When Flirting with Death, say Hello!*" series]

.....

You think you're doing this,
then you're doing that.

You're an artist.

{The Creative Process}

.....

Light is both
a wave and

a particle.

Love is both
a variable and
a constant.

.....

Why is the past so short and
the future never seems to get here?

.....

Do what's next.
Do the next best thing.

(Some seem to think worry is a good thing,
but actually,
it's never the next best thing.)

.....

Though I don't believe
It's a mistake
To be a mystic.
It's a hardass road,
Not recommended
For pleasure seeking
Missiles.

.....

Looking for the Abbott
I knock on the door and
am met by a silent monk
with a murderous glare.

The Abbott will say,
"Make wise choices."
"Wherever you go
there you are." Yes,

but how do I make a living
doing what I love?

"Make love to what you're doing."

.....

I jumped from the plane

without a parachute,
no clothes on,
landing tippy toe
inside the skin of
the One True Messiah
and led the people
round & round the earth until
we reached world peace.

All before breakfast of
cabbage, almonds and
cheese.

.....

Without you
there is no us.
Thank you
for being us.
Your part,
our whole.

.....

If you didn't have
a dark side,
I couldn't see you
for the light.

.....

How long is a moment?
As long as you can fill
with laughter.

.....

If your last contact was love,
you are gold.
If less than love,
apply alchemy.

.....

You shouldn't let poets lie to you!
You shouldn't let poets lie next to you.
You shouldn't let poets in your head.
But you do.

Here I am.

And I'm aiming for your heart.
I'm getting closer.
Ready?!

[Homage, Bjork talking about her TV: <https://youtu.be/75WFTHpOw8Y>]

.....
A shadow of a butterfly,
not the butterfly itself.
Not the sun casting
the shadow, but
the shadow fluttering
on the pavement --
this way and that.
Not the fluttering,
not the this, not the way,
not the that.
Not the pavement.
The shadow.

The shadow
of what, of who ...
the life you used to be
in mine.

[From *"Remembering Valentine in October, why caterpillars don't die."*
Homage to all of those who are no longer with us, but are.]

.....
Chopping onions, tomatoes, avocados
and cheese, "I'm putting these funny things
inside me?!"

Thinking, "This body, not as efficient
as an automobile with gasoline,
not as direct and simple
an energy exchange."

But then again, "Delicious!"

.....
You don't know until you try and
you have to keep trying until you do.

.....
All this pink trying to chase the blues away.

I hope this death wish lasts forever,
it keeps all that living large on its toes.

What's a joke without a laugh?
What's the upside to down?

.....

The good news is you can feel, feel deeply.
The bad news ... this is what you have to feel.
The kicker is the former could change, and
the later definitely will.

.....

What's that lowland smell,
Gary Snyder?
Tell me more,
I've got time.
As "*No More Tricks*" heads
back to camp, I'm left here,
in the city. Too close to familiarity,
I no longer smell
that lowland smell.

Maybe my neighbor's son, Ryder's ride
down the Oregon coast
will help air it out, cycling through
the water cycles.

.....

My non-objective abstractions are not of things so much as feelings, experiences, states of mind in the present moment -- then and now. They are of the nature of reality, which is the reality of nature. They are reality. No a depiction, but the actual confluence of what living life is. Life, the thing itself.

.....

Are you
a codicil
to my will?

If my will
be done,
what say you?

Is it true?

If it's true,
will you buy
my art?

At what price?
Let's negotiate.

Contract the distance
between my give
and your ask;
between my dream
and your reality.

In some instances there
is no recognized distinction
between a codicil and a will.

Do you agree?
.....

Ode to Dopamine

Dopamine,
Dopamine,
Dopamine!

Dopamine, you are so dope!

Oh, Dopamine...
you make me fly!

Dopamine,
Dopamine,
Dopamine!

Why did you run out on me?

Ah, Dopamine...
you make me cry!

Dopamine, you are such a dope.

{FROM the Post Halloween Sugar Blues}
.....

Fame & fortune
are looking
for my face.

.....

Big drops,
little showers.

tentative raindrops

are we ready for winter?
that dwindling season

El Nino,
you terrible child -- this year
one of the strongest.

winter schminter

Cold rain pelted
against the window.
Exciting!

Good night
for the garden,
for the reservoirs.

Miserable night
for the homeless.

.....

What I like doesn't come from the udder
of the cow, or even the tenderloins.

What I like is uttered from the young mother
as she peddles her bike to the elementary
school with a stalk of sugar cane slung over
her shoulder. *"We're going to teach the kids
where sugar comes from -- one of the tall
true grasses sensitive to the climate ..."*

[From the Embellished True Stories collection]

.....

He's hard of hearing,
I'm soft of speaking.
Some things must be whispered.

"Why do dogs chase cats,"
he barks, as if
I were the deaf one.

My wry smile will have to serve
as his answer. But,
he made me think.

She doesn't put people or
people made things in
her pictures. Can this
wild raccoon stand in
for all of us undomesticated?

.....

There is no them,
only us.

(be together)

.....

Turn back the answers,
sharpen the questions.
Cut through the crap.

Nothing can replace an open,
respectful, sincere conversation
in the sunshine. Things get moldy
in the dark silence and fractured
in half roasted hate spewing.

The simple on the far side
of complexity, the harmony
on the other side of discord
are richer and more rewarding.

Make room for all of those messy
interpersonal baked goods. Allow
for irrational grace, throw in
a zinger to any well crafted
sense making.

Cut through the crap
cupcakes.

.....

Life on a water planet.
Situation fluid.

.....

to George O Hawkins:

snow prints
the pasture gate
is open

...

rain drops
the kitchen window
is steamed

.....

Yes!

It's about the people
and the contribution
we all make
to each other
to help us
live our lives.

.....

John M. Bennett | November 30, 2015

porch

the blooded nail the
tripled finger's doubt's
engancements or yr h
ail the wind y h air
~ ~ ~ th r o a
t e d see ms
be mail lost in
flood the dri b bled
c loud sings wo r
ro m ot t om
orro w as wha

t's wri then yr
arm - the rive
red hair - s
wallow yr eyes sw
allow yr h and wol
laws' scripted as
puration str angles "you"

will fall last week

[My RESPONSE]

I too have been level
ing englacement enhancements
to 60 plus on e me rald dri b bled
c loud scripted as
puration str angled d reams,
which a terr i ble pain
dam age out put w as p r a c t i cally
non-exist ent.

Also in r aids,
it is kn own by everyone
that enhance d shaman's dam age
is just crap. UR never in v i ted
to raids or what ever.
But what makes my dam age
even more j unk
r these freaking glan c ing blows
be mail lost.

.....

Thank you
for your loving caring
caring loving.

Again.
Thank you for your loving caring, caring loving.

.....

I'm a perfect human being.
Human beings are not perfect.
Therefore, see my wife.

.....

When I wake up in the morning
and I'm still here,
I praise the lord.

When I open my eyes
and the ceiling isn't spinning,
I sing hallelujah!

.....

Beautiful,
crispy,
Sun
day.

What are you doing
inside me?

What am I doing
inside?

.....

If the presence of pain
is the measure of sanity,
we are all deranged.

We can't hope
for life
without pain.

Pain is inevitable,
suffering a choice.

By faith
we can
end suffering.

This faith is not belief,
but a knowing we commit to
against all odds.

Rearranging against the grain,
the solace of creating
something from nothing.

That, my dear, is the knowing

that keeps us sane
by any measure.

.....

Be good to the people
at the bottom.
They're the only thing
between you and hell.

.....

Removing the cap of your lip balm,
you don't expect, nor are you pleased to see,
flying bugs.

.....

What kind of animal trainer are you?
For the animal that you are,
what are your methods?

.....

<in network>

{Can I have your vote?}
{What is the password?}

<out of network>
beat upbeat downdown & outout of it
</out of network>

{What is your Mother's phone number?
(... in case you misbehave)}

</in network>

.....

If I knew the way,
I'd take you home.

.....

If Donald Trump can make Mitt Romney make sense,
then he certainly makes Bernie Sanders electable.

.....

Before I forget

Before I forget,
thank you for birthing
this body wonderful, and
all the scavenger hunts
and IQ tests to measure
its wonder against this
cracked and crazy world.

Before I forget
what time it is
or whether I'm hungry,
even as I chew on
a baloney sandwich,
let me take this moment
with you.

Let's remember what we shared,
to sparkle on the fullness we felt --
all those explosive savory tastes,
celestial sonic reverberations and
psychedelic light menageries
we called friendship,
before I forget.

Before I forget
how to make things
and invent new options
with marbles, mud and a garden hose,
before I forget to clap when
she sings that aria so beautifully,
breaking into AC/DC's 'Highway To Hell'
or squeal with delight as Lady Gaga pinches
Leonardo DiCaprio's cheeks or cheer wildly
when Jennifer Capriati makes a fierce come back....

Before I forget the comfort
of your warm naked body
next to mine.

Before I forget
how to tell
I love knowing
you know
how so very much

I love you.

{*FOOTNOTE}

The reference to "*she sings that aria so beautifully,
breaking into AC/DC's 'Highway To Hell' "*
is Cristina Ramos' performance: https://youtu.be/l3Yf_ErkN_s

.....

April 8, 2016 >

{SERIES: Digital Age #TwoThumbedPoetry}

SHE: I hope you are keeping notes - along with all your other talents. So where's your notebook?

ME: Haha ha, ... wouldn't it be grand if we could capture it all in exquisite detail! This life passing by faster and faster, I peddling ferociously fiercer and fiercer to keep up. Overwhelming the flow. Lucky if I can capture the most abstract of impressions to share itty bitty nuggets over lunch.

Notebook! What's that? Is that what replaced stone tablets? Ha! This is the Cyber Age, binary bits spewing greater than the grains of sand on all the beaches in all the galaxies in all the cosmos -- the digital situation fluid, the actual situation ephemeral at best. The shelf life expired before the virtual print dries. Poetry, my dear, not prose is the future. And, if you want it to count, if you want to be heard, look for your audience in other want-to-be poets -- not all those grains of sands stuck between your toes.

.....

College students and Qualcomm engineers
are the most likely to take advantage
of promotional discounts,
and the least likely,
even when going great distances,
to tip the courier.

.....

A waif of a young beggar, cracked
lips bleeding.
I give her
my used lip balm,
SPF 25.

.....

Knowing I couldn't,
they offer to pay my way
to the gathering.
But if I were to accept
their kindness, I might feel
obligated to be
someone special,
and I'm not.

{#theKindnessofStrangers}

.....

Don't measure yourself by topography,
you'll never get there. Don't measure
time by planets spinning, orbiting
around stars. The long-haul trucker
isn't impressed with your fancy
maneuvering through rush-hour
traffic. There's a liar in all of us.
Don't kid yourself.

.....

{160426}

.....

Morning Glory
invasive beauty
grabbing my fancy.
What are fences for?

.....

Moan.
May pheromone moon.

(If you want relief from your air-borne allergies,
move above seven thousand feet.)

.....

We would not have had the benefit of his teachings if that milkmaid had not kept the ascetic
Buddha alive before he discovered the Middle Way.

.....

Over the Moon

Mars goes direct today.

It has been indirect for far too long --
depleting vitality:
"whoever initiates loses,"
they said.

Tomorrow is a good time
to start something new.

Who loves you, baby?
The Winter sun?
The Summer breeze?

Where?
no
some
any

Wherever.

.....

why I'm not an artist

When living in a market economy,
unless the market says so,
you are not an artist.

ALSO SEE: <http://tomellard.com/wp/2013/06/five-reasons-why-im-not-an-artist/>
Tom Ellard: <http://tomellard.com/ellard.html>

.....

Everyone poops,
the bumper sticker says.

Ergo, everyone is
(more or less)
full of shit.

.....

There's the aching missing of people we know we will never see again in this life time, and the wistful missing of people we hope we can see again before long. With intimates it's all the more. And in the missing there's the reminder that ultimately we are alone, all utterly alone -- and how good it is to have someone else who cares, and for whom we care deeply, to be alone together with. I hope I can be one of those for you.

.....

#BlondeHairs get all the attentions first for a good reason!

.....
Vilify your enemy,
ignore your champion's faults.
.....

Homeless,
but happy.
7 yrs sober,
but lacking.

{Panhandler sign}
.....

Picking up from McDonalds a panhandler near the entrance says, "Starving artist. If you have a couple bucks change when you come out "i'd appreciate it." On the way out I see he's eating a hamburger someone has given him and remark, "Glad to see you eating." To which he replies, "Thanks. By the way, do you have a medical marijuana prescription?"
.....

Aaah, for the cool breeze of Grace
in the searing desert of political discourse.

Kindness.
.....

If Google algorithms can supply real-time data for the fastest route in navigating traffic in LA and the rest of the world, then it can also learn to provide the most cost-effective way to deliver the basic necessities of life to the people of Darfur. The quirkiest variable, of course, will be in mitigating political wills.
.....

I'll never forget
what I didn't know,
but what I did know
was epic.
.....

Extreme Yin becomes new Yang.
Extreme Yang becomes new Yin.

Moderates meet in the middle.
.....

We want the best
to do their best,

and the underdog
to do better than ever.

{Salute2016Rio: #KōheiUchimura & #OlegVerniaiev}

.....

I over-heard a pair of passionate Comic-Con attendees explaining that the primary mission of a species is to reproduce itself, with each new generation being all the more capable to thrive in its environment. And we're on the precipice, the next big evolutionary trajectory for humans is here: Androids. Feel no pain Androids.

.....

Going to a new place
seems to take longer
than going back
along the same path.

But it doesn't.

(Corollary: once you've done something new, it's easier the second time.)

.....

Something loves unstable clouds,
the soaring lift.
Ocean moist air
colliding on the west face
of the Mountain Empire,
the dry desert heat to the east
forming towering columns.

In dramatic summer afternoon sunlight.

.....

<some> Apartment dwellers are a breed unto themselves.
On average, pampered and entitled.
<allegedly>

{from Observations of a Courier}

.....

An Italian lawmaker proposed a bill last week that would punish parents with imprisonment for raising their children on vegan diets that don't include animal products. It's official, the Age of Enlightenment is over.

"It may soon become a crime for Italian parents to keep their children from indulging in the country's legendary meats and cheeses by restricting them to vegan options."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/08/11/an-italian-lawmaker-wants-to-make-it-a-crime-for-parents-to-feed-their-kids-vegan-diets/>

.....
Walking through the mall,
I'm soaking you up.
It's not likely I'll ever see you
again. Not like this.
.....

If you consider yourself to be a rascal,
clap your hands.
.....

This last chapter
is a superficial time
in my life,
but below the surface
is an unfathomable
deep & wide.
.....

"...in a great American tradition: the true fight against oppression is the one nobody notices."

I rent. I labor. I consume.
Somewhere
my people too were once
First Nation.
Vital, strong, connected
to human scale balance.
Before being robbed
of rights to land, water,
their world view.

Now I am too tired,
compassion fatigued.
I've lost my feeble grip.
I turn my back in real time
on the Lakota. I can't help
as The Empire, again,
steals their promised land,
their water, their way of life.

But it's not them I surrender,
it's the madness modern.
It's us, again.

"The Lakota occupation of the pipeline route is part of a longer and more violent history."
<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/08/dakota-access-pipeline-protests-lakota/>

[...]

"Between 1866 and 1868, the United States military suffered a series of humiliating defeats as they tried to defend railroad workers and settlers from Lakota warriors. Red Cloud, a leader of the Oglala Lakota, forced the military off the tribe's land and burned their forts as they left. The conflict ended with the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, which promised the Lakota undisturbed control over nearly half of present-day South Dakota."

"When the United States Army illegally invaded the Black Hills — both a spiritual center and a crucial source of food for the Lakota — in search of gold, another war erupted, with yet another stunning defeat for the American military. Americans call that 1876 defeat the Battle of Little Bighorn; the Lakota call it Greasy Grass, or, simply, Victory Day."

"But the Lakota could not sustain their victories, not just against the United States military, but also against industrial hunters, who nearly exterminated the bison herds that once numbered at an estimated thirty million. Forced to give up the hunt and accept the corrupt reservation system, many Lakota nearly starved."

"The Lakota, on other hand, are resisting a real and all too familiar danger. Their numbers grow every day. And, unlike the standoff in Oregon, almost no major national news outlets are covering the story. This too participates in a great American tradition: the true fight against oppression is the one nobody notices."

.....

Sometimes you're the pedestrian
in the crosswalk.

Sometimes you're the driver
waiting for the pedestrian
in the crosswalk.

.....

When you keep your vitamin C pill in your mouth to see how long it takes for the gelatin capsule to fully dissolve, you know you're more of a scientist than a believer. When you dissolve a whole Yin Chiao tablet on your tongue, you've crossed-over from scientist to atheist.

.....

Bumping into door jams,
banging pans in the kitchen sink.

This is not a metaphor,
my spatial perception
kinda sucks today.

.....

Enjoy life!
(It'll go by quicker that way.)

.....

Arne, please forgive my disconnected bits of commentary. I'm losing my memory and can no longer string cohesive pearls together, but only offer (hopefully pertinent) nuggets of entertainment. I so love to be awash in your thought streams, but comprehension below the surface tension is lost on me. I have no depth. I can dance with you in only one frame at a time, and by the time the movie is finished, I will have forgotten the plot. But I do so cherish the snapshots!

.....

Joe, what I like about you is what I like about me. You're smart, thoughtful and obviously very talented, heart-centered and caring. But mostly, what inspires me the most is your lightness of being. <3

.....

There's a endless sadness in loss of ability,
yet a curiosity to find what
I am still able to do.

.....

We need more good Dads.

For millennia we've had good Moms,
but now that's not enough.

Now more than ever,
we need good Dads.

.....

[elevator conversation, late Sunday evening]

(tired sigh)
"End of the week?"
"Beginning of the week."
"That's how it goes."

.....

Try on something too big,
a house, a city, a garden,

a new relationship.

Grow into it.

.....

Opinions, like theories, are easy.

Proofs, not so much.

.....

Cashier: What do you do?

Customer: I'm writing a book.

Cashier: Fiction or non-fiction?

Customer: A memoir.

Cashier: Aha, a little of both...

.....

[161022]

.....

I can't see.

Not because I can't find my glasses, but
because it's pitch black dark and
the Presidential elections are only a little more
than two weeks away.

Fortunately, I've already mailed in my ballot.

.....

In the face of beauty and/or power,
hold your ground.

Fuck Behaviorism!

Life is its own punishment,
and then sometimes,
you get a food pellet.

.....

A date!

Not the "Save This Date" kind
you put on your calendar
to remind you of an event
you don't want to miss.

A date!

Not the kind where you find yourself

fidgiting, staring at your shoe tops, wondering
if that dinner you spent three weeks
saving up for will win you a first kiss.

No, a date!

The fruit of Palm trees with Arabic names
such as Barhi, Dayri, Deglet Noor, Halawy,
Khadrawy, Medjool, Thoory, Zahidi.

That date!

Amber to golden brown with smooth,
glossy skin and golden-yellow, meaty
flesh full of syrup, syrupy rich, sweet
honey flavored, nutty flavored soft,
soft, the softest and most fragile date.

Spit out the pit date.

Ahh, now that's a date!

.....

As a courier at this age and stage of life,
I'm just grateful to get through the intersection.

.....

Big fan of the Law of Inertia!

When going go,
when resting rest.

.....

Thanksgiving 2016

A lot of people are giving thanks today.
I'm receiving.
Someone's got to do it.
You're welcome!
You deserve it.
You deserve to be received.

You deserve everything you've got.
Now deal with it.

If you need help,
reach out to those around you.

Bootstrap the least among us.
Those who have too much,
those greedy bastards who only want more,
who are gaming for world domination,
cut them off at the knees,
cut them down to size.

Don't make it a rote annual habit,
make it a daily exercise, like
brushing your teeth, keep it clean,
stay in shape.

Let your gratitude focus on equality
and equanimity. Clearly
those higher powers you pray to
are on vacation, so it's up to you
to restore balance and head off the flood.

There is so much, so much to do,
so much to be done.
Don't let it overwhelm you.

When you are pleased and grateful
for what you have, this is the time
when you are thankful. This is the time
to act. The time is now.

.....

From the hilltop you see a high speed train wreck about to happen. In your mind's eye ---
super slow motion, it's clearly inevitable. What can you do to stop it, when nothing will? Do
you rant and rave in the howling wind? Do you turn away and curl up in futility? Do you run
towards it to help to ease the certain suffering of the aftermath's carnage? What does the
wise person do in the face of helplessness and hopelessness?

.....

At the risk of making the moment too pretty, I want to say my good-byes to truth and
integrity. When I was a boy, truth and integrity were foundational organizing principles. A
man was only as good as his word, and that word was based on enduring evidence based
on facts. Truth was accurate and exact, and we it's loyal servant. For a member to be said
to be true within the prevailing social order they must be correct, accurate, right, in
accordance with what actually/really happened; for a member to be said to be true within a
structure, it required it be placed on the perfectly leveled floor, plumbed, aligned, and in the
exact position. Thus were the efficiencies of the Industrial Age. Now, already in the
dawning disruptions of the Information Age, all this dwelling on rightness goes out the
window. The overwhelm of data overload precludes putting it in formation, much less
verifying to make it right and true. What is true is what is useful for me alone in this
moment. Integrity within the larger structure is fluid. And even before that subjective relative

usefulness passes its truth is spent, and I am on to new data to excite my innate instinctive impulses for more. What endures is only change, accelerating, cascading change. My choices loyal but to my own brand of loyalty, bidding adieu to bright reasoning, shared truth and reflective integrity. And say hello to the measure of the new man: his last tweet.

.....

"Rethink", yes! But do we even know how? It would need to be a systemic rethink. Our economy is still predicated on Industrial Age values of producing goods and services, which machines are increasingly delivering making human labor obsolete. We need a new ways to enumerate and reward our contributions to society other than making/consuming stuff. New ways to equitably distribute the collective wealth we create for each individual's mind, body, emotions and spirit, for the whole of humanity and the planet. We know that much, but how?

.....

the best we can do
to resist mean times
is love.

.....

{170101}

.....

Google Mapping the Logic of Donald J. Trump, the prototypical Digital Age Leader

Forget the age old logic of accountability and honor, "a man is only as good as his word," we're in a new age. The old word was a promise that predicted a consistent future in a world where events moved much, much more slowly. The word in the new age is a data point along the way of a suggested destination, a destination that can change at any moment. The old word was the right and wrong way to manifest destiny's end result. The new word only declares where we want to go, for now.

Google Maps is amoral, linear, utilizing binary conditional logic (IF you are at this location, THEN "turn right in 1000 feet"). You tell Google where you want to go, Maps knows where you are and puts data (information such as, " turn right in 1000 feet") at GPS points along the fastest route to your destination. There is no right or wrong path. You have infinite opportunities to deviate and still get to where you want to go without Google telling you you made a wrong turn. You can always change your mind. There's no accounting for past actions. Google doesn't look back and is not obligated to any previous directions or statements it made, or are you obligated to follow the prescribed path. It continually gives you new directions and statements based on the present conditions and your current location. So if there is a road block on the route Google said to go, and you turn off that route, it recalculates and begins anew from where you are, to proceed on the now fastest route. At any time you can stop Google Maps and give it a new destination and it will again recalculate from where you currently are to the new destination and give you a new, fresh instruction from here. So too the tweets of Donald J. Trump.

Though pure, real time binary logic, Google Maps can be quirky. It can give you some rather random, illogical Tourette's-like confused instructions, especially when there are

overlapping data points on the z-axis. For instance, when traveling along an underpass of an interstate highway intersection, where in quick succession you can get the data point information for the path you're on and the information for data points on the overpass above, "turn left" ... "turn right" ... "make a U-turn" ... "you are on the greatest route" ... so too the tweets of Donald J. Trump.

{I do realize this may be technically/logically a false equivalency, but it is a fun ride. As the old southern Senator says, "Don't let facts get in the way of a good story!"}

.....

FROM LSD Microdosing:

The brand of infinite mind-fuck that Adam from PsychedSubstance indulges in in this "Life as a Game" video [<https://youtu.be/JhZkyYjMZuQ>] definitely wreaks of a psychedelically addled stream of consciousness. Useful to a degree, yet inherently trapped within its own confines. But from my own experiences I do find that mind-altering substances have the potential to fundamentally throw into unfathomable question just what this existence is, this existence that IS quite enough. A poignant aspect comes in crossing over and back from the mind-expanding/mind-contracting threshold a lucid trip provides. There's an instant where I'd realize that the clarity and insights I experienced on a particular trip will not dimensionally fit back in the normal reality of "Dan" -- the facts and details will be lost and only the vaguest of impressions will remain. But in hindsight I can see even those vaguest of impressions changed the trajectory of my life.

My first mind-altering, cosmic conscious experience was while having dental surgery when I was 12 years old, sedated with sodium thiopental. It was so other to my day to day life I had no way to understand it, nor anyone to talk to about it. Looking back I can see the experience made the myths I was being indoctrinated with in Sunday School appeared to be paltry in light of the enormity of the mystery I had been enthralled in in the dentist's chair. This seminal experience would gain more context and social relevance with later exposure to LSD and psilocybin mushrooms, and with the awareness of the likes of Timothy Leary and Terence McKenna – how they translated and interpreted the trip.

Once when picking psilocybin mushrooms off cow pies, washing them in a creek and eating them in a northern Florida pasture, I had a very delightful and enlightening conversation with cow. What made it so enlightening was that the conversation seemed so natural, so matter a fact. I would speak out loud in English, and when the cow mooed back a reply, a cartoonish speech bubble would appear like a cloud above her head filled with text translated into perfect English. The speech bubble cloud appeared to be as 'solid' and real as I or the cow. And though I don't recall the details, the conversation was brilliant with details of types of grasses and healing properties of different plants, and tastes, different tastes and what taste tastes like. Amazing nitty-gritty earthy stuff. I'm now left with the vaguest of impressions of that dazzling day in the pasture, but I do know it left me with a lifelong affinity and respect for the conscious of cows and more generally with the sense that just as you can't tell a book by its cover, you can't know the conscious of another by the package it comes in. It also gave me a much greater appreciation for Lewis Carroll's wonderland.

In another instance, I overdosed (40 hits of windowpane) on a stormy day at Disney World. That confluence lead to a psychotic break that lasted for months during which I

barnstormed through the South flickering between dimensional realities, some of which were useful in consensus reality, others not at all. But it was the vague impressions of those other realities that would later keep me warm and fearless when alone in the wilderness, or traveling overland to India through Iran's Islamic Revolution, and on & on -- not knowing what was going on, but trusting. In fact, I believe it contributes strongly even today to the inner peace I feel despite all the weirdness I see in the world around me, allowing me to take these days of the Trump phenomenon both earnestly and with a teaspoonful of sugar.

I can only imagine if I had learned how to properly dose and control those mind-altering 'accelerants,' I may have been able to bring back more useful bits from way out yonder.

.....

Thursday:

Winter cold, raining, miserable.

20 home & office deliveries, no tips.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday:

Summer-like, sunny, beautiful!

60 home & office deliveries, generous tips.

Go figure.

.....

I have again and again writ my name into the surface of the waters with no lasting effect, even when the waters were still and calm. Now that they are anything but, I can only repost and magnify the voices of women, for it is they who will give birth to the next generation.

At the right temperature everything is gas, even the most enduring monuments man has made for himself. I chose water as my medium because between ice and steam it is the elixir of life as we know it. In essence, women are the watercourse way.

Respect your mother, the days of the father and son are numbered.

And respect your sister, brother, her strength is yours.

.....

If today they legitimize your zygote, then tomorrow will they patient the eggs in your ovaries and the sperm in your scrotum?

.....

{170128}

My next door neighbor, Cam died. He had escaped the worst of worst of what our world has to offer -- Cambodia in the 1970s. From a long line of farmers, he brought his wife and six children to America. Cam never learned to speak English. I knew him most from admiring how he'd squat and carefully tend his garden for hours on end. His children all flourished here. Cam's 30 year old grandson, as American as you'd hope America could

be, has two young, curious toddlers of his own. Cam died on the day his family had planned a celebration of his life. Six Buddhist monks in saffron robes came to chant and pray. Cam's youngest daughter, Bang came over to apologize in advance for all the noise

.....

My wife's one minute
in the garden
is an hour
out of my work day.

.....

The extension cord to my electric weed wacker is old and twisted, takes extra time to untangle. If it wasn't so damn much like me, I'd throw it out.

.....

And we should remember, the left needs the right. One winged ducks don't fly.

When you walk, you are constantly falling, losing your balance and catching yourself. The left leg is supporting the weight and propelling you forward, but when it forces you beyond your center the right thrusts out to catch you from falling flat on your face, it absorbs the shock and takes over the burden of carrying the load. The left must, for an instant, let go. But soon the left too will need to step up to keep the right from over stepping and keep the mojo going.

Yes, the left needs the right to get to where you're going without gracelessly stumbling. Of course, 'the where' of where you're going is a completely different question. That question needs to be worked out in the politics of your corpus callosum.

Th!nk about it.

.....

Lazy purple hazy mountains
past lush green city
ahead

Sun-silver shimmering ocean
in the rear-view mirror

Coronado Bridge:
"No stopping anytime!"

.....

Her nurturing nature
nurturing nature:
a gardener

.....
Life doesn't simply break your heart,
doesn't just smash it into jagged shards,
it pulverizes, pulverizes, pulverizes
your heart into nano-dust.

And you?

And you can only be the glue
that holds it all together for
as long as the beat goes on.

At the supermarket, studying the bulk bins, there was this stylishly dressed emaciated young woman -- heart-breakingly concentration camp skeleton skin & bones thin. I was conflicted. I'm a stranger, I don't know her, but do I say something or not?

Barbara Rieke Turner: Eating disorders are difficult . Or who knows?

Dan Landrum: Exactly, Barbara ... it was the 'who knows' factor that had the strongest pull in deciding not to break the silent wall that could intrude on her dignity.

.....
Trapped between left and right,
trapped between earth and sky,
trapped within this skin,
what could liberty be?

.....
IF we are the only animal that knows
it's going to die
and goes about its business
as if it were immortal,

THEN we are the only animal that can say,
"I don't want to make a baby right now,"
and have sex anyway.

Knowing is one thing,
what we do is another.

.....
If you knew with certainty that you would live,
healthy & prosperous, for the next 300 years,
what would you be doing tomorrow?

If you knew with certainty that you will die tomorrow, what would you be doing today?

These questions measure not only your belief in an afterlife, but your fearlessness in living this one.

.....

The tragedy isn't that we get wise too late, it is that wisdom has been made obsolete by the deluge of data. That we get old too soon, only reinforces that youth is wasted on the young, who are awash, bathing fresh and cracking wise in data... sans personal experience.

.....

Some are derisively questioning, "What will people do? Sit around and write poetry all day?" in the advent that artificial intelligence takes over and can do everything better, faster and more efficiently, and people have no relevant purpose.

To which I reply:

Naked cartwheels.
Shalom aleichem*.
Spring!

Take THAT Mr. Robot
(and stick it where the sun don't shine!)

* <https://youtu.be/trUaSv1-jlk>

.....

These guys (and the exceptional girls)
who don't just follow the path,
but make their own. Learn the hard way
what poison oak feels like. Find out
that sometimes you have to sleep
standing up, because the ground
is so damn cold it'll suck the life out of you.

These desperate kids the blaze the trail
through trial and error, and mostly error,
until that glorious orange sunrise after
the nasty storm of hate and lock-down ...
These desperate kids' retrospective
at the Tate opens up new maybe ifs.

.....

Country, Christianity, capitalism -- ideas worth dying for. But is it the ideal we die for or the people who share it? Is the idea of Christianity fundamentally superior to Islam or is it furthering my people, not theirs, I'm willing to sacrifice myself for?

In the ideas of ideas, agnostics have nothing, no one to die for.

.....

That pickup truck doesn't know it's Sunday, the radio doesn't know it's Country, that fancy dress doesn't know it's going to the prom. But you better believe momma's hating waiting as you learn voice typing on your smartphone.

.....

How to arrest a cloud:
lasso Lao Tzu.

.....

We say "literally" when we mean "actually."
Literal talks about words.
Actual exists in fact.
Remember that next time you think,
"don't believe everything you read."

.....

This Thai restaurant cashier has just a hint of a David Niven mustache that suits her more than him. Hers is maintenance free.

.....

Every one of these odd looking people have been smart enough to survive in this complex society. Incredible.

.....

On Demand Service:

Customers complain it cost too much, restaurant owners complain their gouged on percentage, couriers complain they're not paid enough, especially given vehicle expenses, staff is outsourced.

A handful of upper management are becoming billionaires.

What's wrong with this model?

.....

Nobody ever said life makes sense.

.....

April 2, 2017

Oh, I meant to say this yesterday,
you can kid a Kidder,
but you can't fool a Fool.

.....

OLD AGE:

Better grow a sense of humor around it,
because you'll be there soon enough and
there's not a damn thing you can do about it.

.....

Toss your salad
into the garden.
In delight,
watch it bolt.

Love beyond the limits of Trump.

.....

Life keeps you on your toes
for as long as you got'm.

.....

Me: I'd like to pay my overdue fine.

Librarian: okay, I can help you with that.

Me: while I'm here, can I pay my debt to society?

Librarian: sure let me look that up. Let's see, your carbon footprint alone... then there is nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen -- your water usage, oh boy, your water usage... let's take a look on the plus side, what have you contributed... ah geez, ... hmmm, okay then, payment-wise, looks like you're going to have to donate your body to science.

Me: you mean when I'm finished with it ...

Librarian: no, I mean starting today!

.....

God created man, man created cars.

Man needs to pee 7 times a day and poop 3.

A car goes a week on a tank of gas and 5,000 miles on an oil change.

.....

I'm tempted to join the panhandlers in the middle of the median with a sign that reads:

"You too will be standing here where I am soon enough. Pay it forward. Encourage generosity and the equal distribution of wealth."

Of course excellent lettering will make all the difference.

.....
Without time there is no movement,
Without movement, there are no things.

You are this thing we call time,
and without memory,
only briefly.

Time is not money.
Money is a concept
of borrowed time
for future expending.
'Future' itself a fiction
we collectively invent.

We dream the movements
we move into,
a fiction we make time for.

Dream within a dream,
within a dream,
faster and faster.
Becoming one.

Spending time,
going nowhere.

Space is not a thing,
it's where things happen.

The time-space continuum pulses into
and out of existence.

Only things can have an edge,
but ultimately no edge exists.

.....
Temperature is God!
Temperature is all there is.

Not wave/particle, not time/space,
there's only heat. Heat and
the absence of heat.

Heat and the absence of heat,
and the mix of the two.

Between absolute zero,
when there is no movement and
absolute hot, where there are no laws
of physics, we measure by degree
of excitement. But naked, at our core,
we exist (God bless us!) in oh!,
such a narrow hyper/hypothermic range.

God is Temperature!, and we by degree
are a relatively cool, fragile thing!

.....

Curious.
Two dusty orange saffron
coarse cotton monk robes
reflecting
in Louis Vuitton's
Wonderland window
at the Fashion Valley Mall.
Smiling bald heads
bobbling above leather handbags.

.....

This generation gives no indication,
making turns willy-nilly,
you have no idea where they're going,
distracted by cyberspace,
changing lanes without warning!

.....

If you're poor you spend a lot of time doing math. Especially subtraction.

.....

We're nothing without rules, but have you noticed, the rules keep changing.

.....

... all you need is one yes!
... all you need is yes!

.....

I feel so noble
sitting in the garden.

So regal.
As if I were connected
to all life!

As if I were important.
.....

Affection is a good infection to have.
.....

If you knew that next lifetime
you would come back as a donkey,
would you?

How about a cockroach?
.....

I have no idea if there is a jealous God that needs to hear me express my deep
appreciation for the immense beauty of this creation. In any case, I'm happy to oblige.

[What do you think? Could this double as my Mother's Day card?]
.....

The moment humans
became machines
is the day
being a mother
became a job.
.....

I do my best
to try not to make predictions,
much less promises for the future.

That I will die
seems to be a given,
but when and how remain
an open question.

Along the way, in the eternal transitory,
I buy new shoes only as needed.

Pay my rent month to month.
Return to sober day by day.
Take each breath one at a time.
.....

Listen.

Listen to the depth of sounds
around.

The ticking clock,
the chattering birds.

That sound you heard
enduring the double swim
of the English Channel.

Your own heart beating,
your own breath gasping.

Listen.

{170612: Listening at the invitation of Anne Cleveland actively dying.}

.....

You have to be somewhere.
... just another eternal being trapped in a dying animal.

.....

Gravity is a constant.
My resistance to the force of gravity varies.
Want to bet who wins?

.....

If you're only interested in yourself,
you're just not that interesting.

.....

I love having the thought of you to come home to.

.....

And remember,
we will forget.

We will forget that we are not alone
when the machine finally wears us down,
breaks us into pieces to be used,
to be used as parts,
formed and fashioned into separate parts,

told, "you are a special part,
play your part."

In the grind,
we will forget the sky,
forget the universe,
forget that we are
we the people.

In our forgetfulness we are proud
to be machines,
perfect, faultless, blameless,
doing our part, now that we've lost our whole.

We forget to remember
that we are special, not
because we are a unique part, but
rather because we are the same as all the others,
as we hold our place
holding the whole fabric together.

.....

You're not who you were, or
who you're going to be.
You're who you choose to be.
(Even if you choose not to choose.)

.....

Double parked
downtown,
damn sous sushi chef
thinks he's an artist.

.....

Evidently, all my needs have been met.
I'm still here.
My wants,
however, are another thing.
They too are still here.

.....

I've spent my life resisting death,
resisting gravity, resisting the rule
of authorities that don't suit me.

Resisting reality?

I know they are the constants, and
my efforts come and go. I know
I can't win.

Yet, I still feel compelled
to rebel. To push back.

That's life.
.....

Just because your little girl
has you wrapped around her little finger
doesn't mean it's not cutting off the circulation
.....

I have too much faith
in my doubt
to follow a zealot!

I have too much faith
in my doubt
to follow a doctrine!
.....

171224
.....

In reality,
it's absurdism
and it's older cousin, magical-thinking
that did us in.
.....

Whatever lane you're in,
I'm not.

Going to the open spaces.
.....

Rule #1: You have to be somewhere.
Rule #2: It's always now.
Rule #3: You can't break the rules, don't even try.
(I'm talking to you, psychotropic mushroom eaters.)

You have to be doing something,

might as well be worthwhile.

You have to be somewhere,
might as well make yourself to home.

#nightswell

.....
{ 180101}
.....

Life just won't leave me alone.
.....

I'm banking on that denounced government waking up and seeing the new robots taking our jobs, and giving us flesh & bloods Universal Basic Income. That's my retirement plan. What are my odds?
.....

I think I need to join a cult that will wash my brain. Then get kidnapped by deprogrammers. My brain needs a good scrub.
.....

I'm appalled at my scrawny limitations and my paltry lack of success in piercing The Mystery. And no, that I even tried is no consolation.
.....

The problem with having an original thought is once you repeat it, it's no longer original.
.....

The thing with classic Religions, the focus on the invisible -- spirit, souls, the promise of an eternal afterlife is a wholly different scope than the thing with classic Science with its empirical focus on what our senses can perceive, even when amplified with tools we can make and embellished with abstract imagination. Even the overlap of those domains don't begin to touch on what lays beyond our senses, our perceptions. We know Bats use sonar to navigate space, but nothing of that experience. Much less other consciousness that perceive in means beyond our imaginings, like the Sun and stars. As JBS Haldane puts it, "The universe is not only stranger than we imagine, it is stranger than we can imagine."
.....

That moment when you wake up and realize you're a landline in a world of mobiles the week before telepathy breaks out in shades.
.....

Someone will win the Mega-Lottery. Someone always does. Though, somehow, my odds never seem to improve. In the grand lottery of being born and having a life on this planet, I'm simultaneously both playing and being played.
.....

I've heard the first person to live to be 200 years old is alive today. That could be you! Especially if you were guaranteed good health, not necessarily wealth, but good health, what would you be doing for the next 130 years?

.....

In the making of something out of nothing, it builds upon itself, one stitch at a time. You didn't need to tame fire, reinvent the wheel, create the English language out of thin air, but you make great use of these things. You hold a unique and specific intersection in the warp and wolf of this compounding complex creation. The contributions you make to this fabric we weave together rests on the shoulders of our ancestors and is the soil from which the future generations spring.

.....

When you're out and about and you see a stranger, do you ever stop to wonder, "What is that life about?"

.....

{180210}

Why I Am Out of the Art Conversation

The world is increasingly polarizing between the myth of the rational and the myth of the faithful. The confrontation between religious faith and the modern scientific world is not going away. It's time to break the spell.

Culturally from its inception Art has served the magical, the religious, the superstitious powers. Currently — art for art's sake, art for the love of it aside — art culturally predominantly serves commercial interests, and as an artificial marketplace for moneyed interest to sink their exorbitant gains into inflated and distorted values.

By far, in the modern era, the aspect of art most employed is absurdity. Absurdity has long had its place in art as a wedge to break the magic thinking spell. From Aristophanes in classical Greece to the Dadaists in World War 1, absurdity spoke truth to power. But now the truth of that power has been usurped. Look at advertising, especially TV. Most commercials are surreal. Go to the world class art shows, to the big New York City galleries, museums and auctions that define the art market. The vast majority of what you see will be absurd, surreal, otherworldly -- unreal. The place of art as subversive reason speaking truth to power has been turned on its head. The Joke is on art. Absurdity has saturated what entertains us. But when it reaches the point that we elect an Absurdity to the Supreme Seat of Power, the bully pulpit that defines what is and isn't Fake News, there is no longer reason or cause, there is no longer reason or cause to speak. It's futile to argue with Absurdity when it holds the upper hand.

"Those who can make you believe absurdities, can make you commit atrocities," Voltaire

Art can have many other functions, but when absurdity has its finger on the Nuclear trigger that could annihilate us all ... it's time to stop and mourn the loss.

I'm arguing here that "We the people" have strayed into a mindset that presents a clear & present danger to us all, to the people, to the planet, to life as we know it. And that our Art is culpable, our art, via the absurd, reflects, if not generates the escape into fantasy and unreality, rather than encourage thoughtful dives into reason and legitimacy. I'm calling for a penetrating look into how a Post-absurd approach to speaking truth to power might develop, in Art, in journalism and beyond.

.....

One times one is one,
but one plus one is two.

Valentine, be mine.

.....

That place where seagulls meet crows.
That place where the fog rolls in as the marine layer,
(except when the wind blows off the desert.)

That place is this place, the place I call home, where
liars lay low and Truth is spoken from and to the heart.

That place, where the Old Culture voluntarily turn in
their assault rifles to be melted down and
made into hoes and shovels, because
"That's the world I want to live in."

Oh!, THAT place!

.....

I'd much rather die opening to what I love than live under the boot of fear.

.....

Sweet! And I of so little social influence, am I ever closer to that perfection of imperfection,
that stillness of Zen sitting in the community of 'Woke Ones' that moves by half steps, but
can never quite reach its ultimate Samadhi?

.....

It's my 'stoned' experience that rocks have "mind" with 'other' relationships to time than we
do, and my 'vision quest' experience that the interwoven root network of fields upon fields
of Manzanita have open and direct lines of communications with distant stars, and my
'meditative' experience that ultimately contentless space of inner consciousness is too vast
to navigate, and it too again has relationships to time than we can't fathom. Makes me think
we need to rethink both "mind" and "evolution." I can well imagine that the vast, deep, and
living microbial biosphere, the "subsurface microorganisms in hydrothermal vents/springs,
cold methane seeps, deep oceanic sediments, coastal estuaries and bays, and subduction

zones" underneath all the world's oceans that Karen Lloyd speaks of from her Lloyd lab is a persistent form of intelligence worlds apart from our own.

.....

I don't make promises. Only on rare occasions I'll make predictions, and then only with the caveat that predictions can be wrong.

.....

You spend your life in my store,
and I'll be buying your story, baby!

.....

It's not always what you think. You may think it's just piss, but it turns out to be both piss and shit. You may think it's shit and all that comes out is gas. You may think it's really nothing, and it turns out to be the whole enchilada. Nature can surprise you that way.

.....

Meaning doesn't come inherent,
we create meaning after the fact,
or fiction.

It's malleable that way.

.....

OH!, for the romance of the misfits,
for that one heroic artist who speaks for the hoards
of romantic misfits who will live out their play poor & anonymous
with ear-splitting whiny voices as thin as pitchy piccolos.

For that special, talented one
Who, by chance, picked up a tattered ticket from the gutter
and won the mega lottery. And for the many millions
who never will.

<https://youtu.be/NxDXyOsN2xg>

.....

"Comfort-zone??, Forget comfort-zone! Get outside of your FILTER BUBBLE!!!"
"But I like my Filter Bubble."
BECAUSE, "You don't see what gets edited out," whispers the filter bubble.

.....

The internet is a cannibal.
It's the human mind feeding and eating itself.
My thoughts are a snack, not even an appetizer.

.....

There's objective reality, then there's what you perceive. Try to marry the two. The more you can marry the two, the more chance you'll have to create a place where you can meet others. Otherwise, you're just playing with yourself.

.....

{180519}

.....

History, as we know it is a very, very short blip of human, much less animal existence, but even so, you would be hard pressed to find a time when humans, much less animals, were not 'violent attack' actors.

We might want to try to hold ourselves apart and indict 'willful and wontan' actors, when they act against their 'own kind' as villains (though we hold them out as heroes when they attack the 'enemy',) but intent is really beside the point. We are a violent, violent entranced, and violent celebrating people. You can't send your kids to fabricated wars in foreign lands to be turned into soulless killing machine monsters, bring them home to 'thank you for your service' honors and not expect that mentality not to perpetuate in their peer's 'civil' life. It's in our games, our entertainment, our defining myths and literature, our person forming instructions, what it is to be a man, to be a leader. Our innate biological survival violence is not separate from the many, many ways our society governs, governs both us and its place among other societies in the world. The USA is the most vicious, ruthless and violently powerful human society in history. Only now, that turning that mindset on itself begins to accelerate, are we concerned. But will we face it and address it head-on for what it really is? It's not politicians and policy makers that will make the difference, it's us, all of us willing to see the whole of it for what it is.

What is the leading cause of death in America for those between 1 to 44, and the 4th leading cause of death overall? Traffic accidents. When I was a kid in the '50s the local newspaper would run multi-page spreads with gruesome photos of fatal car crashes on a regular basis. They horrified us. But it became so frequent, we got use to it. Now we pay almost no mind to fatal traffic accidents. In a sense we think, it wasn't intentional, it can't be helped. Even for killer drunk drivers, we shrug and move on to things we feel we might be about to do something about. There actually are plenty of things we could do to vastly reduce traffic accidents, but we don't want to take a serious look at those possibilities, because it might mean a drastic change in how we live.

Mass random killing of kids by kids is a relatively new phenomenon. It's not something separate from who we are as a society. If it continues on its current trajectory, I'd say it'll eventually go the way of traffic accidents. And unless we are willing to take a fearless moral inventory of who we are as a people and make drastic changes to our values and lifestyle, our sense of alarm and outrage for mass killings too will go numb.

.....

Pick One:

- "Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result is the definition of insanity."

· "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again"

Pick Two:

- Cheap
- Fast
- Right

.....

It's the rate of change that concerns us. Fire is rapid oxidation, rust is slow oxidation. No one has ever stood up in a crowded theater and yelled, "Rust!, Rust!"

.....

In defense of the middle way, I've flipped Maslow's pyramid on it's head, ramming the apex of self-actualization into the bedrock, burying esteem, belonging, and safety under the berm. I dwell in the penthouse of survival. This is what the ordinary person can do, sinking into the exuberant aliveness of the mediocre.

.....

Don't think of it as compromise,
think of it as mixing...
like vinaigrette, shake well!

.....

To those who see your kindness
as weakness

surrender

.....

Surrender is of course what the Serenity Prayer is, except in the place of the label 'God' is you, yourself, summoning the internal and external resources, the passionate motivation and clear mindedness to imagine and discern the proper course of action/inaction.

.....

I don't regret the long practice to train my body-mind-spirit. Nor do I regret letting go of the practice to be the optionally mannered animal that I am.

.....

Born helpless, they put you in diapers.
When you grow old and incontinent, they put you in diapers.
But in between it's a smorgasbord feast, help yourself!

.....

<180810>

.....

Before learning to love,
learn discernment.
Love truth more than anything.

.....

Did you think the composition of the atmosphere would stay steady state forever the same, so you could endlessly suck up the oxygen and spew out shit? With around two-to-three trillion planets in our galaxy, all with atmospheres different than your own, you thought yours wouldn't change as you fart like a fat-fuck mythical fairy chopping down the globe's purifying forest lungs and clogged your own with momentary high drug laden smoke? Did you believe in the primacy of primates? That, of course, ipso facto it's a given that the fittest apes, like you, somehow divinely deserve to reign over the planet for longer than the terrible reptiles did. That your social political structure gave you a controlling God's blessing say, and you are free to do whatever the hell you want for His Glory. That somehow your insatiable avarice for more junk justifies the 150-200 species of plant, insect, bird and mammal that become extinct every day. Are your planned obsolescence creature comforts really worth the hundreds of millions of humans exterminated in genocides in the 20th century, the tens of millions of humans being exterminated in your name in Yemen today? Did you think your book learning college education diluted mind would give you a survival advantage over cockroaches and ants when they drop the nuclear bomb? Did you think you could live a ceaseless more want, neurotic mess of an unconscious plastic augmented life and fade away into the sunset living happily ever after? You be wrong. You be wrong on so many dimensions.

PS: I hate to be the one to spring it on you, but there is no such thing as unconditional love of all sentient beings. Not in this world.

.....

Then again,
if it weren't for the news media,
I'd think things on the whole are going pretty good in the world.

.....

Focus/Ignore: *You must be ignorant to form an ego.*

Our personal reality is a matter of focus, blurred or concentrated, we choose to ignore the rest. We choose ignorance in order to focus on forming an identity of who we are in relations to what we know.

Alan Watts, "When you focus your consciousness on a particular area, you ignore everything else. That is why to know is at the same time to ignore. The ego is nothing other than the focus of conscious attention. So then, the relationship of self to other is the complete realization that loving yourself is impossible without loving everything defined as other than yourself."

.....

Awareness is the ground of all knowing, and simultaneously can be the perception of a specific thing or event -- both the event and the perceiver of the event. Global or local,

whether a spotlight or floodlight focus, awareness itself is value neutral. Understanding the consequence of all possible actions before they happen, ultimately percipient, awareness has no preference for doing or not-doing and holds the ground for being. Awareness aware of itself is an Indra's Net of reflection at play with being and becoming.

.....

Soul? Are we talking mortal or immortal here? If we're talking about "the part of you that will go to heaven and be immortal," I can't help you. If we're talking about the "mental abilities of a living being: reason, character, feeling, consciousness, memory, perception, thinking, etc" ... we have a deep, wide, unfathomable rabbit hole we can go down and explore together. And that deep dive will most certainly take us through all manner of evil and goodness and then some. But, we go together, and that's what matters.

*"Out beyond ideas of right and wrong,
There is a field. I'll meet you there."*

--Rumi

.....

There's a peace in being last,
there's a quiet in the corner,
there's strength in having your back
up against the wall.

I don't know what they told you,
but I'm telling you now,
you are the all in all,
the only all that is.

The peace in the quiet,
when you're feeling small,
is all you need to draw on
when you feel you're at the end
of your rope.

.....

Are you a spirit that came into a body
to inhabit this world,
or did you spring out of your mother's Earth,
like a mushroom,
to people the planet?

Did you fall from sky, or
Spring from between the legs
Of earth?

.....

My ego's center rests here, two fingers below my belly, and extends out, at its periphery, just beyond the stars, where my imagination grows dim.

.....

Striving stride arrive,
this is it!
Going is destiny.

.....

Sep 28, 2018 4:57am

Believe the woman who has nothing to gain
and everything to lose
when she summons the courage
to speak truth to corrupt power.

.....

Life is more fun when you're funny.

.....

November 6th, 2018 - Midterms

What is a vote
untabulated
but a spit in the wind
in the face of the gas lighting few
who control the conversation?

[SEE: A Day of Reckoning - 1 - Sam Harris, Eric Weinstein, Bret Weinstein, Maajid Nawaz, Douglas Murray:
<https://youtu.be/tmOwwlsyGY0>]

.....

Never try to win an argument with your spouse. Relationships are never a zero-sum game. They are relentlessly about learning, discovering more about the intimate other.

Thus when I say:
Throw mother from the train,
a kiss.

We can argue all day about the intended action,
but not about the enduring affection.

.....

Hollywood for decades, generations has glorified gun violence,
desensitizing us to mass murder.

.....

THEORY: we can't think without 'place'. Even our notion of empty space needs place. Our thoughts of nothing are always relative to something. And our thoughts of 'no thoughts' can only suggest that 'no thoughts' is a purely experiential state.

Even an abstraction such as numbers need a discreet unit of place. Where did you learn to count numbers? On your fingers. Only when we can fix the whole and rational can you begin to imagine irrational ones.

Where am I?

There's only one question you need to answer: where am I?
If you can answer that, everything else will fall into place.

.....

1/2: Respectful? It's not so much that you are worthy of respect, as that I prefer to be full of respect. It's a courtesy I extend to you for my benefit.

2/2: No one can give you self-esteem, you have to make your own.

.....

Blessed, though the universe could give a fig about me.

.....

Black Olive & White Grape roll into a salad bar,
Saddle up to the cutting board...

A set-up in search of a punch line.

.....

You can only do your best once,
but you can do your #DamnNearBest
until the cows come home.

{Perfect is the enemy of the good.}

Good enough.

.....

What if you set aside your magic thinking, and accept that when you die you simply cease to exist? How would you live then?

.....

I fly beneath your notice.
Yet, here I am.
In all my glory!
Life is really something.

Isn't it?
.....

When you're the best thing going in the life of your neighbor's cat ...
A simple life is a full life.
.....

Even in its most sophisticated use,
using language that normally signifies the opposite,
irony and its cousins satire, sardonicism, cynicism ...
doesn't add to clarity.
.....

The shortest distance between two points is not the point.
Unless you're a surveyor.
.....

The problem with your neighbors having kids, ...
they grow up and take your parking spot.
Which is exactly why Saturn devoured his babies.
.....

The Next Generation city is never finished,
a country never finally built.
War makes monsters out of our children.

If now is a time of monsters,
revolution is the lie that undoes
what was never finished.

The old America is dying.
A new America is struggling to be born.
Now is a time of monsters.
.....

Is a mixed nut tree possible?
That's the kind of tree I've fallen from.

(Appreciative self-deprecation.)
.....

The convention of 2+2 totaling four is only true when it's not pinned to a thing, as no two things are the exactly the same.
Science is built on faith, on a hypothesis
that is only supposed true until proven it's not.

.....
It takes both wings for a duck to fly.
.....

My auto mechanic is the best I've ever known.
When asked if he expected to spend the rest of Eternity
with the family he currently has, he said, that's the way it works.
.....

Neither science nor religion knows what it doesn't know,
but the choice to be kind suggests free will.
.....

All these kids who were late doing their homework assignment are now out on the highway
making lane changes.
.....

When you wake up, get going and then realize you're not making good choices today ...
how do you decide what to do next?
.....

A dingleberry is a dingleberry, will always be a dingleberry.
But a caterpillar may become a butterfly!
Who are you in this story?
.....

I'm a very interested person.
Are you interesting?
.....

Who guards the interface between your inner and outer worlds?
.....

190124
.....

I love you beyond measure, beyond number.
I've grown to love you more than water.
You are the life of flowers shared.

The life of flowers is hope and fulfillment and
peace; tears and laughter.

I treasure the years I get to spend with you.

The seconds, the moments.
Each instance.

The life we weave together between,
a life of bittersweet good-bye,
a life of "I'm home!" welcomed;
again, tears and laughter.

Yes, dear.
The life of clouds is a life of farewell, a life
of transformation and reunion, but also
the life of flowers is rays of sunshine
breaking through the raindrops — together
forming the rainbow's promise of hope
and fulfillment and
peace;
Joy!

I share you with the garden,
I share you with the neighbor's cat,
I share you with those that need you,
I share you with the Pleiadians,

I share you with earthquakes and wild fires,
hail and hurricanes. I share you the broken
and the healing.

I share you with tears and laughter.
yet you are mine,
all mine.

You are magic that way.
I'm so happy it's you!
.....

We're all disingenuous, why would you expect our politicians to be different?
Disingenuous, complex, compromised. For instance:

This straw man debate between climate change believers and climate change deniers is bogus. We're all actually deniers. If we really, really, really believed, we'd act like it. We'd stop shopping on Amazon & eBay, stop shopping for 'bargains' and start growing our own food, making our own clothes, building our own tools. We'd believe that our suburban neighborhood is the right human scale for all we really need and act on it, make it so. We'd walk to work, share our resources, cooperate extended transportation and communication needs. We'd be our entertainment. We'd plant and nurture trees, collect rain water, volunteer to help our neighbors, skip rope, sing new songs, laugh. Laugh at corporation's

hot new trends, shake our stank face collective heads at political candidates hell bent on destabilizing and exploiting foreign lands, turn away with quiet humor from things not built to last. We'd roll on the floor roaring at the giants demanding our attention to sell us, to enslave us in their supply & demand schemes. If we really, really believed in global warming, we'd live like it. We'd cool down our pace of life, our avarice desires for more, more, more and find the beauty in the quiet, in the open space, in friendships with kindness of strangers. We'd stop being so selfishly lonely. We'd join hands, holding our place in the linked chain of humanity and live a small, grateful life full of the magnificence of being whole and healthy and well within the slowly changing climate.

And on & on down the list of what we see is wrong with the world, if we really walked our talk, we wouldn't wish power to represent us match our dream world, we'd take agency, we'd be living the life.

.....

*Dive shallow often,
dive deep as often as you can.
Keep your toes wet.*

The creative process is inevitable, it comes from the inner necessity – you just gotta do it. If you're prudent, you'll weigh the cost/benefits before you take action. Sometimes to dream is enough. Then again, most often by conventional standards, creatives are quirky, eccentric, and prudence may just as well appear as a desperate Hail Mary. Destruction is also inevitable, but rather than developing a novel form of order, destruction knocks the blocks back to an elemental array of random chaos. It's easier to destroy than create, but as a creator you've picked a side, so it's best to know what you're up against. You'll need to pick your moments, the moments you have the resources, the energy, and you've assessed the outer world's time is right to go for it.

There's an old African proverb that says "If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Seven years ago, I went alone. I'd lost my day job, but was left with, what for me, was a nice nest egg, and also a burning desire to explore the nascent emerging Makers Movement, and specifically the new technology emerging out of Computer Numerically Controlled machines, like the laser cutter. I built a few lines of what I felt were lovely and primary things, but not a sufficient audience (art) / customer base (business) to make the venture a sustained success before I ran out of money. I lacked the skills, personality, sales savvy and/or inclination to solicit patron benefactors (art)/ angel investors (business), so the project died in infancy. The work was satisfying in its own right, but left me in so much debt at a time in my life that I am unable to get a day job that will allow me to recover, hence effectively ending any dreams of future endeavors.

Thus I'd counsel, embrace your inner critic. Edit WHILE you frame the image, are actively writing the story line. Embrace the openness of doubts, bring them close, cheek to cheek and reassure them with the deepening well of the swelling love and conviction that grows in your hunt for these most elusive newnesses you are after. Let that resistant voice be part and parcel of your exuberant process. Dance like someone you admire, admire more than you fear any bullying naysayer, more than you recoil in darkness and meanness, is watching. There is where you find the Grace in the creation. Your inner critics prepare you

for the outer ones, and the more precious your truth tweaks reality, the harsher the consequences.

42 YEARS AGO Vanessa Redgrave won an Oscar for playing a woman killed by Nazis for her views in the film "Julia." Because of her involvement with another film "The Palestinian" the Jewish Defense League launched a campaign against her. She calls them out ("Zionist hoodlums", believed to be a reference to the JDL who were picketing the ceremony) in a powerful speech against fascism, racism and anti-Semitism and salutes the legacy of Jewish resistance.

Following her nomination, members of the JDL burned her in effigy and allegedly offered a bounty on her head. The cinema in which "The Palestinian" film was to be shown (The Doheny Plaza theatre, Los Angeles) was bombed (15th June, 1978: 04.26am) prior to its screening that day. The film was shown at the same cinema the following night. A member of the Jewish Defense League (JDL) was later convicted for the incident.

The controversial statement about "Zionist hoodlums" reportedly cost Vanessa Redgrave many roles over the years.

"I didn't realize pledging to fight anti-Semitism and fascism was controversial. I'm learning that it is. I had to do my bit. Everybody had to do their bit, to try and change things for the better, to advocate for what's right and not be dismayed if immediately you don't see results."

Redgrave has remained true to political causes even at the twilight of her career. In 2017 she directed her first film, "Sea Sorrow," a documentary about the European migrant crisis and the plight of migrants encamped outside Calais, France, trying to reach Britain. She has criticized the British government for its policies toward migrants.

Just today, from the public library, I ordered Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* to see if it says what I recall it says. *The Old Man and the Sea* tells the story of a battle between an aging, experienced fisherman, Santiago, and a large marlin. As I recall, it's an epic little story fraught with excruciating struggle with, and simultaneously great admiration for, a worthy adversary. And just when Santiago feels the victory over the vanquished, forces greater than he, Sharks, devour his prize before he can bring it home. Defeated, he tells the sharks of how they have killed his dreams... but, waking the next day Santiago promises his young apprentice they will fish together once again.

And that's the thing about any creative endeavor, whether your initial dream survives and flourishes, or is killed by sharks, upon waking the next day there is great satisfaction in "The Go," having given your all.

.....

I have a chronic, pre-existing condition.
I keep waking up every morning.

.....

Experts who talk in technical jargonese hurt my inner poet's ears.

"An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes that can be made in a very narrow field," Niels Bohr

.....

No questions can live in a vacuum.

.....

{190319}

.....

If yours is a Merciful God, you don't need religion.

If yours is a Wrathful God, well hell, it doesn't really matter.

Does it?

.....

{190401}

.....

I was going room to room trying to drum up business, back when I gave art sessions for the Alzheimer's Association, when I met Joy. Propped up in bed with her hands folded on her lap, she was a tiny, frail woman.

"We're drawing pictures in the dining room, would you like to join us?"

< long silence >

"Honey, when I wake up in the morning and I'm still here, I praise the Lord. If when I open my eyes the ceiling isn't spinning, I sing Glory Hallelujah!"

That's been my touchstone ever since.

A deep abiding gratitude for those days the ceiling isn't spinning.

.....

190428

.....

If we had no words,

how would I know you?

.....

how

do you do

research

.....

>> *Here's a few 'Life of a Courier' bits from the 'Shortest Deliveries' files.*

Awhile back, after circling several times, I found parking a couple blocks from the pickup, which was a little convenience store in the first floor retail space of a downtown steel & glass tower. I put a quarter in the meter for 5 minutes and jogged to the store. Fortunately I didn't have to wait in line, as I was the only customer in the store. I gave the clerk the name & order number and he handed me a small plastic bag with a pack of cigarettes in it. "That's it?" I asked. "That's it," he confirmed. Before leaving the store I swiped the 'picked up' button to get to the delivery screen and studied the address a few seconds. As it said 'Deliver to Door,' I walked across the foyer, took the elevator to the 4th floor, turned right, walked 2 doors down and rang the bell. Soon a rather bedraggled thirty-something woman opened the door a crack, stuck her arm out and muttered 'thanks' as I handed her the small package.

I had a modest wait after a 15 minute drive to the Chula Vista Denny's off I-805 to pick up a Breakfast Special. I checked and double checked the map on the delivery screen, then drove across the shared parking lot to the lobby of the La Quinta Inn. As the instructions said, 'Wait in Car,' I rolled down the passenger window and asked the twenty-something man standing there, "UberEats?" "Yup," he replied. "What's the name on the order?" "Joaquin." "Great, thanks for being out here."

But that's not the shortest delivery on record.

The shortest was a pick-up at the McDonalds in the City Heights Center. I got parking easily in one of the designated 'Online Orders' spots. The restaurant was pretty packed, but once I got a clerk's attention and gave her the order number, she quickly handed me the already ready stickered bag containing 40 McNuggets. I stepped back from the counter, swiped for delivery and stared puzzled at the results. The delivery address was exactly same as the pick-up address. Did the app malfunction? What's going on? Just then I feel a tap on the shoulder. I pivot 180 degrees to find a high schooler asking me, "Is that for Dylan?" "Why, yes it is..." Bemused, I ask as I hand him the bag, "...if you were right here already, why didn't you just place the order directly with McDonald's?" He shrugs, "I didn't have any cash."

>> AND one for the 'Longest Deliveries'

When I got to Five Guys, a vintage style hamburger stand, to pick up an order, the cook told me the customer had cancelled the order. "Why is that?" I asked, and was told, "They forgot to change their delivery address before they placed the order, and now they live in Texas." Glad they cancelled. That would have been a long drive and the fries would have gotten soggy.

.....

You chase lizards? Me? I chase my neighbor's cat, when it's chasing our lizards. Our lizards help keep the spider population in check and add a certain panache to our suburban, semiarid xeriscape garden. The Western Skink, Western Fence Lizard and Side-blotched Lizards are the species most commonly seen; in spite of being here in appreciable numbers, the Orange-throated Whiptail is observed only occasionally, and the Alligator Lizard is rarely seen. It can be heartbreaking to find a Skink tail without a Skink, but it can renew your faith in nature, when later, you come across a tailless Skink sunning on a rock.

The most rare lizard around here is the California Legless Lizard, yet a few years back I spent an afternoon with one. This particular Legless Lizard slipped in under the side door and startled the crap out of me. I thought it was a snake. I gave chase. First it ensconced behind the desk, and I when move the desk, it quickly slithered under, then up into the sofa. Took the damn sofa apart, but never did see that Legless Lizard again. Might still be in there as far as I know.

The other day I was making a delivery out in Lemon Grove and as I came around the bend, what did I see cascading down the hillside? A herd of 200 goats. And a happy lot they were, frolicking, butt butting and kicking up their heels. Turns out the city hires a company called Environmental Land Management Goats to run the goats, overseen by human handlers and a Great Pyrenees livestock-guard dog, as a simple and convenient way to clear brush and implement preventative measures to control fire outbreaks. They say, "Goats can be used effectively in almost any location or terrain type, especially in terrain too rocky or steep for human or machine clearing. Because these goats are tightly managed by highly trained handlers, they are kept from overgrazing and make a wonderful option for brush abatement and weed control." With all the wildfires we're prone to here in California, you can imagine why seeing a herd of happy goats scampering down the hillside would bring a smile to the face.

Steve, what books are you reading?

I recently went back and read Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, mostly to see how it stacked up to my memory of the story. Turns out what I most remembered of the story came from the 1958 film adaptation starring Spencer Tracy, and subsequently influenced by the 1990 miniseries starring Anthony Quinn. I probably had never read the book before. But the theme of deep admiration and respect for an adversary, even as you're trying everything in your power, as Santiago did, to vanquish it, ran true in the writing as in the films. That and the nostalgic heroic-task feel, salty smell and untiring mystery swimming deep of Marlin fishing, as exaggerated by my boyhood perspective.

.....

The inevitability that I will die,
imagining life ever after,
which is more terrifying?

.....

db
qp

{dyslexic's nightmare}

.....

You don't need to remember if you ate,
you only need to know if you're hungry.

.....

"the arts are all daughters of memory" — Stephen Fry (speaking of the 'public dream' of the Greek people or Jung's 'collective unconscious' > 25:20, https://youtu.be/SYPZwZud_PA)

SEE: "Hope and Memory have one daughter and her name is Art, ..." — William Butler Yeats

.....
IF it's just you, my dear friend/brother Joe, ... I'm right there with you peering over the ugly world's cliff's edge and slyly wondering. Here's to the tavern that serves the ever curious, and when I next meet you there, I'll be sure to start the conversation with "Why?" ... if I can remember. I've heard it said that 'all arts are the daughters of memory.' As I am slowly losing my memory and can clearly see the train tracks ending on complex, layered thinking, I may very well forget to ask. But still I'll rest assured you'll notice the understanding we share as we sit together quietly in the wordless abyss refreshing in the cool breeze's final whispers, "Ready?"

.....
If you are aware that you're aware,
you are intelligent enough
to have a marvelous life.

.....
I don't know enough to be an atheist,
but I do know enough not to believe in a God.

{homage to the Possibilianism of Dr. David Eagleman: https://youtu.be/AP_Q6JqFMf0 >
<https://www.possibilian.com/>}

.....
The lowest possible temperature, or absolute zero as it is called, is -459.67 degrees Fahrenheit, or -273.15 degrees Celsius. It is also called 0 degrees Kelvin, a temperature scale with increments equivalent to degrees of Celsius, but uses absolute zero rather than water's freezing point as its starting point. The highest possible known temperature before particle physics breaks down is 142 nonillion kelvins (10 to the power of 32 Kelvins) . Us mammal are comfortable within a tiny, tiny sliver of possible temperatures -- and you believe in the full range of the Cosmos, God selected that range for his Anointed Ones?

.....
If I had a dog, I'd name him Pavlov,
then I'd be Pavlov's human

.....
Sometimes you come across a stand of trees that makes you feel that it's possible that everyone can be happy.

.....
The mind is such a transient vagrant,
where do I put my trust?

You're a cork bobbing on the ocean,
carve out a rudder.

.....

Wild Weed,
gone to seed.

.....

T-shirt Cotton needs a lot of water,
requiring up to 713 gallons to grow enough for just one T-shirt.

I think it's okay if I flush the low-flow toilet. #Fuck-the-Drought

.....

You are trapped in a world of competing symbols,
more than life you love the fight.
Those symbols are not the thing,
the thing is. The fight is optional.

.....

Be first the subject of your objective truth.

.....

CLOWN: if the world's not fun, make fun of it.

.....

Don't ask me where I'm hiding.

I'm withdrawing from the world.
But I can't come out and tell you.

.....

We like our heroes Super,
we like our heroes flawed.

.....

The way that man nods
to strangers tells me
he's in on the joke,
the cosmic joke, and
knows better than to laugh
out loud.

The way that woman nods
to strangers tells me

she's in on the joke,
the cosmic joke, and
knows better.

If at first you don't succeed,
Listen to your wife.

.....

Why still no third-person singular gender-neutral pronoun,
all these years after Ms. Magazine was launched in English?

Singular 'They' doesn't cut it.

[SEE: Singular They > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singular_they
Singular they is the use in English of the pronoun they or its inflected or derivative forms,
them, their, theirs, and themselves (or themselves), as an epicene (gender-neutral) singular
pronoun.]

.....

In a field of daisies,
you found the dandelion.

.....

Loving You

You can tell me you love me
more than anything,
and then you tell me
to shut up,
all in the same breath.

Ours is a raw,
unedited love.

.....

It is what it is.

Focus on your piece of it.
Pay attention.
Stop. Look. Listen.

When you're ready to
cross the road,
hold hands.

.....

{191016}

I agree Doug,
there is no evidence for hope.
Not in the Balkans.
Not here at home.
And religion, culture, art,
though providing distractive entertainment,
are no true solace
to the existential contemplation.

All I can do today,
like every day,
is to get up and wonder,
"What's going to happen next?"
The pain, the joy
come and go.
If there is lasting salvation,
it's in the wonder.

.....

I'd be of that age
when I must of necessity
tame my wild hair
and rambunctious heirs,
if indeed I had had children.

.....

Rich fame
young LOVE

.....

da asshole don't give a shit.

{social constipation}

.....

Unlike Bob Dylan,
I ran away from home 16 times
and got brought back 17.

.....

The diddling doesn't do it,
but the doodling does.

{to quote my wife}

.....

I've seen what good days look like.
This isn't one of those.
But still, it's pretty damn fine.

.....

Now that oligarchs have decided our democracy is their play toy,
Michael Bloomberg taking the helm is good as any? Ha!

.....

The function of religion is of and for the formation of society. No small thing, forming a society. The function of government is to step in to regulate large, complex societies. Again no small thing. Government is subordinate to society. And justice, fairness and equitability are subordinate, though not required, of good governance.

[Top Google SEARCH on this phrase: The Fairness Principle: How the Veil of Ignorance Helps Test ... <https://fs.blog/2017/10/veil-ignorance/>

If you could redesign society from scratch, what would it look like? How would you distribute wealth and power? Would you make everyone equal or not? How would you define fairness and equality? And — here's the kicker — what if you had to make those decisions without knowing who you would be in this new society?

.....

Peace is not the opposite of war . In reality the opposite of “war” is “not war” and the opposite of “peace” is “not peace.” And soaked to the bone, our collective history, then as now, is not peace AND perpetual war.

.....

When being in your way is getting in my way,
the shortest distance between 2 points
is the path of least resistance.
Just ask water.

.....

Where ant societies reflect our own:
nasty brutal raft of bumbling, incompetent individuals,
yet the marvel of collective innovative engineering feats.

.....

I think the world of Blake Shelton. I only wish to hell he'd face head-on whatever it is he's trying to drown in his drinking. At best alcoholism can be cute for only so long. And thus enabled, the Voice has become a star factory, pumping out sausage where music should be.

Simple sober honest tunes, however,
can be fascinating to the end,
where grooving is grooving.

.....

The vehicle through which a culture is primarily projected: food.

.....

If you need me to be other than I am,
you need someone else.

.....

I can see there's no talking to you,
but I can't tell you that ...
hence this text.

.....

This is the place I saw that crow picking thru garbage.
I didn't get his name, but that's okay
because he represents his kind....
I can just call him crow.

.....

The day after a rainy day,
-- fresh air --
crisp clear clean.
Where were you when I was depressed?

To all Antinatalist and Efilists,
you need to get out more,
out in nature.

.....

Boomers > subculture hippie, values:

PRO: Love Peace Harmony Goodwill Nonviolence
voluntary simplicity, equality: civil rights feminism ecology
organic drugs music Tao nature kindness open-source
live free

ANTI: war-establishment-Corporate-Feudal-Capitalism
(anti: Military-Industrial-Educational Complex)

.....

Heaven is found
when you stop hating
and start caring,
once and for all.

Not-hating is not love.
Not-hating is the absence of malice,
love is the presence of caring.

Turns out, I prefer my own company to that of the national news.

Google sits next to God,
God's very annoyed.

Don't let Monday cheat Friday.

Apparently, the rules of the right-of-way are suspended in the parking lot.

Cold Wet Dark Miserable

Warm Dry Light Joyful

Hot Parched Delirious Republican

Don't be the kink in the slinky

Homeless sign:
"In desperate need
of better life choices"

Homeless sign:
"Give a dollar,
get a tiny drop of dopamine
to make yourself feel good"

Those moments when I have the highway all to myself.

Driving east on interstate 8
at the intersection of interstate 5,
I can see
snow in the mountains,
which makes me glad
I'm not a pollywog,
because a pollywog
wouldn't get any of that.

.....

"Do you have a brownie?"
"No, but we have waffles."

.....

Don't fool yourself
into believing
your suffering
in this world
is racking up credit
points in some other,
more permanent world.

.....

{Catskill Mountain fairy tales and the stories they don't tell}

You've never heard of Dame Van Winkle, who birthed Rip's two children, Judith and Rip Jr.
Why's that?

[The 20-Year Lost Weekend: Rip Van Winkle Was a Drunk
<https://apnews.com/e87d87a8fe0d3dc893f4c21f08339859>
DAVID GERMAIN July 31, 1990]

The lovable rogue of Washington Irving's story was a real man who abandoned his wife
and children to become an 18th century barfly in New York City, Real or not, Rip was not
so lovable, And Rip should be an example for today, when alcoholism is acknowledged as
a disease, and the drunk's loved ones are recognized as victims.

.....

Capital cannot afford to pay the true cost.
Never has, never will.
Capitalism is a shell game.

.....

I'm a scientist
in as much as I apply

a rudimentary scientific method,
mostly to myself.
The results
of my experiments:
"holyfuck!"
.....

Why are middle-eastern myths believed more than Norse myths?

If you are of pure anglo-saxon heritage, are you a traitor to your kind, a slave to the conqueror by being Christian?

How did middle-eastern myths become monotheistic?
Zoroaster

Zoroaster, born Airyanem Vaejah c. 1500 BC – 1000 BC in ancient Iran composed the Gathas codifying duality as the struggle between aša and druj — the foundation of all Zoroastrian doctrine, including that of Ahura Mazda (who is aša), creation (that is aša), existence (that is aša), and as the condition for free will.

The purpose of humankind, like that of all other creation, is to sustain and align itself to aša. For humankind, this occurs through active ethical participation in life, ritual, and the exercise of constructive/good thoughts, words and deeds.

Elements of Zoroastrian philosophy entered the West through their influence on Judaism and Platonism and have been identified as one of the key early events in the development of philosophy. Among the classic Greek philosophers, Heraclitus is often referred to as inspired by Zoroaster's thinking.

And thus Zoroaster introduces Good/Evil, Light/Dark, Right/Wrong - the freedom of the individual to choose right or wrong and individual responsibility for one's deeds - begins to become the myth that will supersede local pagan myths that humans, like all animals, are part & parcel subjects of nature, and not at-odds-determinators with dominion over all.

Zoroaster leaves no room for Idun, a beautiful Old Norse Goddess with long golden hair, the Goddess of spring and eternal youth. She guards the apples of youth in Norse mythology. Idun supplies the other Gods and Goddesses with the apples of youth, to keep them young and beautiful forever. Without Idun the Old Norse myths turn brown, grow old, ugly and die. As they did.

Putting God, and then others before yourself is the ethics of tribalism.

I do not want to romanticize tribalism, in many ways tribes can be brutal, especially for the individual, and complex societies can afford many creature comforts. It's no easy thing to form complex societies. Still, indigenous peoples tended to have a more appropriate scale and balanced relationship with their environment, than the burgeoning cultures that assumed dominion over all.
.....

[Tibetan:] *dö chung chög shé*

having few desires and being easily satisfied

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed,
To turn, turn will be our delight,
Till by turning, turning we come 'round right.

["Simple Gifts," a Shaker song written and composed in 1848, generally attributed to Elder Joseph Brackett from Alfred Shaker Village.]

It's enough to be satisfied,
empty of anxiety,
dispossessed of the more want.

The choice of voluntary simplicity is different
than the Christian vow of poverty, yet
in either case, you're likely to live
a small commercial life and
a large Spirit-filled one.

I don't want to brag,
but I've had a small, modest life.
At every turn, turn, turn.

.....

The homeless passed out
under the overpass.

A week of torrential rains.

Cold and damp
and insanely happy.

.....

Reality doesn't tell stories,
especially stories with morals.
reality isn't teaching,
reality isn't preaching,
reality isn't taking sides.

Fiction pretends the fact,
the imagined lives
within reality,
but are in themselves
unreal.

(as are these words)

.....

Be as elastic as time,
as durable as empty space,
and you will live a life
stronger than the bond
of the most loving mother.

.....

I am both,
subject and object,
a predicate seeking renown.

Outsider included.

The person within me
stills
the conglomerate I am.

.....

Somewhere between La Di Da
and being a hard ass MoFo.

.....

That's the problem with being an Eternal being,
eventually you're going to have days like this.

.....

These ARE the good old days!

.....

Proposing to a girl by saying.
"I love you almost as much as water"
is probably not the best strategy.
It may be true,

but it's not what she wants to hear in this,
of all, moments.

.....

The Trump impeachment trial is living proof that the US Senate
can expediently get things done, when what is being done is nothing.

.....

If feminism is equality, I'm for that.
If socialism is equality, I'm for that.
If merit-based education is equality, I'm for that.

It's not so much that we are all created equal,
it's the need for a level playing field,
a field more like a football stadium than the Alps.
Or what is governing for?

.....

Parking his flatbed truck,
sipping coffee from a paper cup.

Blue Bayou

.....

Come on love
Come on life
Come on out
Come on

.....

the day Allen Ginsberg died

Gay Jew poet dying in the big cities
surrounded by less than the best minds
of his generation, up in his grill
tinkling bells and howling
in anuṣṭubh meter:
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Don't wake dad, man,
be cool. Out of sight.
Say it, do it!

Out of sight, out of mind.

And then there's Gary Snyder,
an American man of letters.

.....

If the rating on Independent Movie Data Base and Rotten Tomatoes are to be believed, the
raters are much, much more entertained by violence and make believe than I am.

.....

We're not grown-up enough that we can control our impulses,
it's that we're adult enough not to keep temptation in the house.

.....

I'm not inclined to thank military men for their service.
I certainly am inclined to stop to commend road workers
and bridge builders, they do such astonishingly good work.

.....

You can't say it's sudden when you die at 88.

.....

Hell's bells,
shit house mouse,
don't be a pest.

{common phrases in my childhood home}

.....

Waste not, wont not.
And what not.
Live simply,
that other's may simply live.

.....

You know you're in trouble when your government
makes itself the primary focus of your attention.

.....

If we don't remember the suffering,
we can't remember the joy
of not suffering.

.....

The exceptions ARE the rule!

.....

My Revelation came in that dazzling, Nataraj,
if you will, moment when I first realized:
I AM the Dancing Sun.

.....

That lawyer picking up his sandwich at the counter,
his mother didn't turn him enough in the crib.
The back of his bald head is flat.

.....

When you're in that place where you only have seagulls and crows for company.
Again.

.....

By war,
everyone is ruined,
there are no heroes.
War makes monsters out of our children.

.....

Excuse me,
I have to go
and agree with nature,
or suffer the consequences.

.....

Chill the peppers, baby,
chill.

.....

The Least Among Us

The King will answer them, *'Truly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'* --Matthew 25:40

True then, true now.
True for the king,
true for you & me.

As Martin Luther King Jr said: *"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."*

.....

You are my prize for staying alive.

.....

You've heard of the proverbial idiot who brings a knife to a gunfight, well in this case, she brought a metaphorical gun to a therapy session. Blew her therapist away. Crazy man, crazy.

.....

"They say '*Satnam*', when what they mean is "Fuck You!,"
Hari Shabad Singh of some 3HOers

.....

As an empire the Romans ruled in large part because of the collection of techniques, skills, methods, processes, and engineering practices they borrowed from the Greeks, Etruscans, Celts, and others. When the empire fell, power broke apart and the technical know-how was redistributed, but the most global function of state-craft power went with the Church. The Church's primary technology employed: shame & guilt, and their compliments honor and righteousness -- "Glory be to god in the highest." Valor for, pride in and loyalty to God and Country are the cornerstones to maintaining the unquestionable establishment, and maintain the allegiance of a poor mass more interested in being saved for the glory of the world to come than abiding in the agony of the world as it is.

.....

The true eternal constant is Love.
All else is temporal, variable flux.

.....

War is defined as an active conflict that has claimed more than 1,000 lives.

How many wars have there been since November 11, 1918, the end of World War I, "the war to end all wars?"

Of the past 3,400 years, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them, or just 8 percent of recorded history.

What is genocide?

Genocide is any number of acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, according to the United Nations. Others include political and social groups in the definition, making genocide more broadly the annihilation of difference. Genocidal campaigns have become more frequent since World War I. Modern industrial weapons have made mass killings easier to commit.

How many genocides have occurred since World War I?

Dozens. The most devastating include those in the Soviet Union, where approximately 20 million were killed during Stalin's Great Terror (1930s); Nazi Germany, where 6 million Jews were killed in concentration camps along with 5 million or more Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other "enemies of the German state" (1937-1945); Cambodia, where 1.7 million of the country's 7 million people were killed as a result of the actions of the Khmer Rouge (1975-1979); Iraq, where 50,000 Kurds were killed during the ethnic cleansing of

Anfal in 1987; Bosnia, where 310,000 Muslims were killed (1992-1995); and Rwanda, where more than 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered over ten weeks in 1994.

How many battles have there been since the end of World War I?
1180, 727 of those since 2001.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_battles_1901–2000
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_battles_since_2001

.....

Your 'should' slices makes for half a sandwich.

.....

"Mother dear, the Ambassadors of Hope are at the front door. Do we have anything to donate?"

"Sorry dear, not this year, we're fresh out of beguiling deception."

Nothing to offer, then?"

"Oh no, we can no longer afford to give away our gullibility."

.....

Walking on the sidewalk, having just picked-up hot food from the Broken Yolk Cafe on Garnet Ave in Pacific Beach, a young man, three sheets to the wind, was leaning out over the balcony of the Silver Fox Lounge, staring at me with a big shit eating grin on his face. I returned the stare, when I got close, to which with great mirth he proclaimed, "You're adaptable!"

.....

True, some people's meter by default are set closer to Mean than Gracious, even so, if you treat them with respect and fairness, more likely than not, that's what you'll get back in return.

.....

I would rather live with the naivety that a lasting peace is possible than the gnawing angst of being resigned to a perpetual state of war.

.....

The people build the houses,
the people live in the houses,
the people embody community.

The people build the malls,

the peoples stock the mall,
the people shop the mall,
the people bring home the goods,
the people exchange the commerce,
the people make community thrive.

The oligarchs fence the community,
the oligarchs herd the people,
the oligarchs milk the people
for all their worth,
the oligarchs work the people
to death,
the oligarchs eat the people.

In brightly colored bibs and funny hats
the oligarchs slurp up the last dregs
of the community kaput noodle soup.

.....

All you fools using up precious, sentient resources
building wooden fences around your gentrifying lots,
please go back and re-read the Three Little Pigs.
Take a note from the Middle Ages,
and the word, Masonry.

.....

It's happening more and more
that the person in front of me at the stoplight
is looking at their smartphone,
and I have to honk them
to get them to go
when the light changes.

After I honked this particular young women,
she drove half a block
before looking up from your phone.

.....

A server I've had several years history with at Crest Cafe in Hillcrest,
"Are you Daniel? You don't look anything like the picture on the app."

I took off my hat and glasses.

"Oh yeah, there you are."
I asked him his name.

"Faustino."

"Faustino? As in ... like, Faust?"

"Yes, exactly."

"What were your parents thinking, do you know the story?"

"Sure, Faust sold his soul to the Devil for fame and fortune."

"How is that working out for you?"

"Not at all."

.....

Sandra Bland died

At the hands of the police

for failing to signal a lane change,

By that standard, in all fairness,

do you deserve to live?

.....

The more you know

the more useful you are.

The more you care about

the more you have to live for.

Given enough energy,

I'm happy to do it with vigor.

.....

To Resist the Devil,

in high office:

Feel the Joy.

Be the Joy.

Live the Joy.

Spread the Joy,

in all you do.

.....

I have seen Angels,

fleetingly,

just none with wings.

.....

Chasing the almighty dollar,

you can only get a piece

and you want more,

you have to keep chasing.

Chasing, chasing.

It's the chase that bites you in the ass,
eats you alive,
wings the joy out of you,
and spits you out,
pale, drained and worthless.

It's in the lingering stillness
you'll find the bounty of what
you're looking for.

.....

Pay attention,
make wise choices.

(and other indissoluble koans)

.....

You will see 10,000 posters telling you
what to do, how to feel,
be, think and act.

This one is to tell you not to read posters.

.....

The annoyance of the itch,
the pleasure of the scratch.

Any damage done?

.....

Some days no matter where you go,
no matter where you look,
all you see is beauty.

You turn the corner
beauty,
down the hill, up the hill,
beauty beauty.

Oh, beauty.
Ahhh, beauty!
Wooosh, beauty...

Beauty beauty beauty.

.....

The only number that counts is
how much they put in my bank account
at the end of the week,
minus expenses,
divided by the amount of hours spent.

Dollars per hour.

{working for the man}

.....

I get air kisses
for stopping many yards away
from old ladies
crossing
in the middle of the block.

(Quid Pro Quo for Aiding and Abetting)

.....

Those instances
when you have two hair's breadth
distance between their side mirrors
and yours, on both sides ...

.....

My father was a Christmas and Easter Christian.
I'm a World Series and Super Bowl sports fan.

.....

If you measure yourself
against the sky and ocean,
against the mountains and deserts,
you will feel big,
even when you come up short.

.....

If the work involves using your hands,
not only is there a <insert ethnic> willing
to take your job, but
they would be more reliable,
do it better and do it for less pay.

There's always someone bigger,

Stronger, more handsome, but
There's only one you.
Work with your heart.

.....

Self is like a city,
always evolving, never finished;
building something new,
repairing something old,
adapting to changes.

.....

"I don't want to be The People, I want to be The Boss," my wife.

.....

"Don't judge me!"

"Don't want to surprise you,
but when you walk down the street,
even a not busy street,
you are making 10,000 judgments
before you have a thought."

.....

Caucasian is not a race,
Black is not a race,
Asian is not a race.
Race schmace.

The only race there is
is the race against time,
and yours is running out.

.....

If politics is the new religion,
the "optics" to sway popular opinion
has replaced the one-and only,
all-seeing Big Eye in the Sky.

.....

Out towel drying my car in the rain.
Sisyphus ain't got nothing on me.

.....

Whether it's baseball or fishing,
for the most part nothing happens,

but when it does ... whoooh, boy!

The same can be said for the Shaktipat ritual
with your traditional Hindu guru.

.....

She counted her chickens before they hatched
and ended up with an omelet.

.....

I'm too old to let people waste my time.
I have other tills to plow, mills to grind,
fields to field.

.....

I'd much rather drive a 'worry-free' Toyota
than a 'don't touch me' Mercedes.

.....

"What do you want a metal or a chest to pin it on?"
I'll take the chest.

.....

You don't want to live too close to the now,
for the same reason you don't want to be conscious
of every tiny bit of detail of your autonomic nervous system.

.....

How did feminism become being more like a man?

[

The American frontier experience is over. Way past over.
How are you gonna prove your own toughness? Now then,
there's this cult of manliness -- desperate for opportunities to man up.

~[#proudboys@venerate-the-housewife](https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab/episodes/football)]

.....

When you tattoo
your history on
your body,
you limit who
else you can be,
how you might frame

your ever-evolving self.

.....

She walked her property line
everyday,

one day
when she ventured out
far into her neighbor's yard

and looked back

She caught sight
of the whole of it,
the grandeur.

.....

You don't want a president
who doesn't want the truth
to be true.

.....

In boxes,
waiting to be unpacked.
My life's memories.

.....

Who is the actor that has free will?
Who IS the actor that has free will!

Life should be easy, or
you're trying too hard.
Take this drug, get
addicted, then
your ass is mine.

I owns you.
I AM the One.

You have
nothing to worry about.
No choice.
Your free
will,
it rests easy.

Rest assured.

Now you have the power
of acting without constraint,
without necessity,
without fate.

Free & easy.
Further and further from things
to be done, leaving them
one by one.
And you've just began.

For my yoke is easy,
and my burden light.

"People get ready, there's a train a-comin'
You don't need no baggage, you just get on board
All you need is faith to hear the diesels hummin'
Don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord."

[Is Free will closely linked to the concepts of moral responsibility, praise, guilt, sin, and other judgments which apply only to actions that are freely chosen?]

.....

There's the bus,
and there's The Way,
And there's the way,
around the bus.

.....

If you're reading this,
Even if you are an artificial intelligence,
you're more like me than a giraffe,
you're more like me than an octopus,
you're more like me than a redwood tree.

如果您正在阅读此书,
你比长颈鹿更像我,
你比章鱼更像我
你比红木树更像我。

Rúguǒ nín zhèngzài yuèdú cǐ shū,

nǐ bǐ chángjǐnglù gèng xiàng wǒ,
nǐ bǐ zhāngyú gèng xiàng wǒ
nǐ bǐ hóngmù shù gèng xiàng wǒ.

{Or expressed as numbers:

105 102 32 121 111 117 39 114 101 32 114 101 97 100 105 110 103 32 116 104 105 115
44 32 10 121 111 117 39 114 101 32 109 111 114 101 32 108 105 107 101 32 109 101 32
116 104 97 110 32 97 32 103 105 114 97 102 102 101 44 32 10 121 111 117 39 114 101
32 109 111 114 101 32 108 105 107 101 32 109 101 32 116 104 97 110 32 97 110 32 111
99 116 111 112 117 115 44 32 10 121 111 117 39 114 101 32 109 111 114 101 32 108
105 107 101 32 109 101 32 116 104 97 110 32 97 32 114 101 100 119 111 111 100 32
116 114 101 101 46

[
letters-to-numbers: ASCII > <https://www.boxentriq.com/code-breaking/letters-to-numbers>
numbers-to-letters: ASCII > <https://www.boxentriq.com/code-breaking/numbers-to-letters>
]
}

<#TheMindOnlySchool @LostinLanguage>

.....

If you're going to eat Irish green cabbage
everyday,
chopping heads of cabbage
weekly
on a tiny wooden island cutting board,
a multi-green shade faux mosaic tile bits linoleum floor
is not recommended.

.....

Ants have no wifi,
they can't phone it in.
Every communication is face-to-face,
in-person, within touching distance
passing bits of chemicals back & forth.
And ants have some of the most successful societies
in the history of societies.

[
SEE:
Ant-y social: Successful ant colonies hint at how societies evolve
Liz Fuller-Wright, Office of Communications
Aug. 23, 2018

<https://www.princeton.edu/news/2018/08/23/ant-y-social-successful-ant-colonies-hint-how-societies-evolve>

]

.....
In some respects,
watching The Great Britain Baking Show
makes you wish the British had
won the American Revolution.
.....

In my trekking days the crown jewel aspiration was to hike the Yellow River to its source in the Tibetan Plateau and back down the Yangtze to the East Chinese Sea. Not knowing the language or the customs, the only way I could see myself making the trip was as The Fool, and the skinny was these were watercourse ways that didn't suffer fools.
.....

You act as if you have a happiness quota,
you're are only allowed a certain allotment of happiness
each year.
And by the end of The New Year's Eve party
you've used it all up.
.....

The rain-plumped lush green vegetation
lining our canyons
this year
will be the dried kindling
fueling the wild fires next.
.....

"If I'm Godlike,
like the Bible says,
why am I suffering?"

(young homeless man, excerpt from a long, interminable rant)
.....

Every it
of all of it
is God,
all God.

And within
every bit
of all of it

is all of God.

It's all God,
and you are it,
my friend.

.....

For your Soldiers,
war is a way to say death is okay,
"He died for our cause."
For civilians, not so much.

.....

Better to fish when
the fish are biting.

.....

Have you ever watched roadkill decomposing?
That's how fast the body goes
when it doesn't have an immune system.

.....

The Age of Coding:

```
<Meta-Algorithm>  
[if (!then) else{if(then, if then) (blah blah blah)  
[then(<<algorithm>>) if{else(blah blah blah) try{etc}}  
}}  
</Meta-Algorithm>
```

.....

Sometimes you just have to tell the sky,
"Get it out of your system!"

.....

SPoS /spōz/
noun

1. slimy piece of shit
2. one who does the Devil's work
3. one who lies, disseminates disinformation or obfuscates for personal or political gain, when they very well know better

"Vote that SPoS out of office!"

.....

As is my wont,
I'll try to do as little as possible.
If I can't talk you out of it,
I'll at least try to talk myself out of it.
Unless, of course,
I have plenty of energy,
in which case,
I'd be more than happy to do
whatever is needed to be done.

.....

Look at me,
this is what happens
when you fall in love with poets.

.....

Ever thoughtful,
Malcolm Gladwell has become a very lucid writer
with far fewer discursive digressions.

.....

Any definition of what it is to be a man has to include
the question of peeing standing up.

.....

This tiny little bird must have something important to say,
she uses her whole body to say it.
Tweeting her little heart out.

.....

Stalwart 'Fill the Boot' fireman
begging at the intersection,
displace the derelict homeless.

Another expense externalized
by the government.

.....

A lotta dada
in the age of the Absurd,
the Post-Rational Trump-Era
Whimsy

It's said, "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious."

Can you say more about, "be wise in the face of the unknown?"

After a 10-day meditation retreat
a Buddhist Abbot's parting words ,
"Make wise choices."
Which left me wondering, if I could,
wouldn't I always make wise choices?

Wise choices in the face of the unknown seems to offer a special conundrum.

Scientists can only hypothesize, put forward a theory, experiment a proof until it's
disproven. It's belief, never actually true. It may be useful for now, but it's logic is limited to
how far the senses go. As distinct from religions' compounding fidelity in belief, which
needs no proof, only assertion.

Then where do the wise find the true in the unknowable?
The pragmatic equanimity of awareness.

.....

If you are always striving,
you're never really here.
If you're always becoming,
you miss the being.

.....

{3/15/20}

<poster:>

There are times to take risks,
this isn't one of those.

Be safe

.....

I am not a viral vector.

.....

To the Groom at the wedding reception dinner:

"Now that you're hitched, it's inevitable that arguments will arise. The important thing to
remember is to always, always get in the last two words,"

[pause for laughter]

"...and these two words are, 'Yes, dear!'"

.....

Treat language like a luscious pudding with far more calories than is good for you and spiced to tantalize the senses.

.....

I do not eat McDonald Burgers,
yet I will pick up and deliver them to those that do.
Same goes for those who believe in God.

.....

Is your supply chain robust enough to meet the demands of the panic buyers?

.....

1024x1280

The height is 80% of the width,
but the width is 25% more than the height.
How does that compute?

One is 4/5ths and the other is 5/4ths

.....

Save lives,
wash your hands.

.....

"We will unite together to defeat this Coronavirus bastard!"
"And when we've finally beat back the scourge?"
"We can go back to fighting amongst ourselves."

.....

When the forest is dry, a spark can ignite a wildfire.
So too inflammatory language.

.....

You are a
Clear and Present
Love of Mine!

.....

I recently had a peculiar adjustment to how I framed the English poet Alexander Pope's famous quote:

"To err is human, to forgive divine."

When I learned that Pope was a little person, merely 4'6" tall, I realized in my childhood mind's eye I had imagined the author of that phrase to be a BIG man, an Admiral or a

General, someone with broad shoulders and a square jaw. When I realized that he was a man who likely was ridiculed in his day more than most for having lost the genetic lottery for stature, my admiration for his willingness to champion forgiveness grew immensely.

.....

Bees in the trees,
Orange blossoms.

.....

"Keep an eye,
it's on high."

(boiling eggs,
stove-top)

.....

Selling in the marketplace,
I'm a triple A battery
in a D cell device.

On the open sea,
I'm a three knot Beaufort breeze,
cool and inviting.

A gentle breeze:
large wavelets;
crests begin to break;
foam of glassy appearance;
perhaps scattered white horses.

Leaves and small twigs in constant motion;
light flags extended.

{SEE: Beaufort scale}

.....

Older than young,
younger than old.

Younger than some,
Older than most.

Younger than death.

.....

Coronavirus epidemic:

Thing is, the lizards in our garden are oblivious.
Going about their business like it's a heyday.

#Coronavirus #lizards #oblivious #heyday

.....

On losing my religion scientists told me religion has no equivalent record to science for discovering hidden truths.

In the run-up to the Coronavirus landing in America the president himself had a hunch that the numbers were false, and "this is their new hoax." Having no faith in the empirical evidence, such denials kept us from learning from China, and what Italy was experiencing, much less following the CDC's guidelines.

A month later, waiting for Baron's grocery market to open an hour early for seniors, next in line ahead of me was a former dean of the elite UC San Diego's Medical School. She said an eminent epidemiologist friend had cautioned her well in advance to "get all of your money out of the stock market, stock up on supplies and prepare for a long isolating stay at home." Advice the retired dean pooh-poohed and ignored.

If scientists have no faith in science, what is science for?

.....

"There's something else, I'm forgetting."

"Don't worry, it'll come around again."

"And if not, we'll never know."

.....

Nature calls.

I answer.

.....

Good thing we have crazy ass neighbors.
Statistically, if we didn't have crazy ass neighbors,
the crazy ass neighbor would be us.

.....

The upside of the coronavirus pandemic?

To clear the room all you have to do is blow your nose.

.....

"On sum, do you feel that your life's work has been for the good."

"Define good."

"Being or actions that benefit AT LEAST the majority of all sentient beings, while being a detriment or disadvantage to as few as possible.

"Does doing nothing qualify?"

"Doing nothing is a good solid base to begin with."

.....

Pretend you have something to do,
even when that something is to do nothing.

.....

Beautifully broken.
She loves the great outdoors
and stilettos too.

.....

#hashtagLiberate

You be the test group,
I'll be the control group
in this little COVID-19 pandemic.

You go out and liberate San Diego,
I'll stay home and keep my distance.
You congregate and I'll isolate.

And at the end of round one,
we'll see whose grandmother
is still standing.

.....

Remember, life goes on without you.
So, since you're here, get in the mix.

.....

Intelligence is an aggregate of complexity that can differentiate itself from the other.
Consciousness is the fleeting sensual awareness of that relationship.

"Intelligence is the ability to solve problems. Consciousness is the ability to feel things,"
Yuval Harari

.....

Is it possible in our economic system for everyone to become billionaires? To become a billionaire you have to supply society with significant value. So, if everyone was a billionaire what would be the extraordinary value add to the world? Would it be more than logistics moving the furniture around on the ship deck faster and faster? More things, gadgets,

mechanical and electronic devices? Physical and mental comfort, health and wellbeing? Ever evolving happiness? Would such opulent widespread wealth add to sustainability or increase consumption. Would it usher in an ideal Golden Era or further hasten the demise of life on the planet? Or in fact is our method of accounting bound by the first law of thermodynamics, also known as Law of Conservation of Energy -- that energy can neither be created nor destroyed; wealth, like energy, can only be transferred or changed from one form to another, leading finally to accelerating entropy.

.....

Lovely people, both.

The ones passing away,
the leaves; and the rocks,
the ones that endure.

Both can appear
very much like
one another
in the shadow
of the avocado tree.

.....

First Thought

The thought is the thought.
Yes or no is secondary.

If I say,
"Don't think about monkeys."
You think about monkeys.

For or against, attend to your thoughts.

In telling yourself, "I'm not thinking about it,"
the 'not' is decoration -- you're thinking about it.
Just not in a very productive way.

.....

I don't remember a word.

I don't remember a word, still it reverberates -- the pow in powerful, shakes the rain outta the terrain. It could have been the electric Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley or the Sea of Tranquility on the moon. I never knew. In those days I never knew -- everywhere was here and it was always now. It may very well have been Alice Walker for all I know, or for that matter maybe God was giving me a moment and brought in Ella Fitzgerald for the day. I never got her name. Didn't seem important just then, nor whether the lines rhymed or if the verses kept the beat. Exuberance, the full body presence of joy on every wet sparking

utterance, that's what I hung on. Wave after wave, deeper and deeper into that ageless shape being drawn in thin air and left dangling in an after image fading into a distant tomorrow that never comes.

I don't remember a word she said, but I know the place well. That place where it's just me and all of it. And the others who stopped on the sidewalk and listened, and really listened, let her seamless mystical conveyance wash over them, they too would light up, you could see clear as day. Those passersby too busy to notice didn't see it, didn't go there, didn't get transported back into themselves. Had nothing to recall.

I don't remember a word spoken, not one, but the place she spoke of was a drop of water. Could have been a teardrop or a dewdrop on a dirty window, or dripping from a leaky faucet, or a single drop of the spray gushing from the sprinklers in the park. One drop, the sunlight hitting just so, fracturing a tiny rainbow in a stunning surprise of wonder and sparking delight. (Yes, there's that wet sparking again, echoing the wet sparking utterances that gushed and gushed from her animated lips in a steady breathless stream.)

I don't remember a word, but for sure I remember she didn't know she was poor, she didn't know she was black. Not then when she first saw the beyond a mystery in a single dazzling clear water drop -- that instance of noticing. Not then and not now, as she overflows three octaves too high an exuberant squeal, (yes, there's that exuberance again, echoing the full body presence of joy on every wet sparking utterance that I'm hanging on,) three octaves below gravitas trying to help us find our way off the hustle bustle traffic jam and into the place where living takes place. She didn't have a cigar box out, or a guitar case. She was gifting, not begging. It wasn't performance politic or a sly sell. It was this other thing. This other thing I'd never see again even if I looked and looked. And I looked, looked long and soft after the last sound whispered out her heart past her moist lips. I looked sharp as she stood silently swaying in the unspoken currents. Rich with an ocean of diamond sunlight in a dewdrop. As free from the chains of social status as a ghost surfing that ocean's breeze.

I never got her name. I didn't have words, or maybe I was too shy or afraid to step up and ask. It's dangerous to know the name of such beauty. Everlasting beauty has a way of capturing you and making you a slave, demanding you stop and listen and be absorbed. You can lose yourself in such beauty, where you find everywhere is here and it's always now; where it's just me and all of it.

UPDATE 211208:

No words. Not an utterance. No words, just dance. I never got her name, but I saw this poet's granddaughter today. Soft shoe, light feet, quick step, a hop, a leap, a twirl. She rolled up to the plaza in front of Apple Inc in Fashion Valley Mall, across from the Banana Republic, past Gucci and Prada with a piece of pink hard-shell airport luggage and her wooden briefcase. Opening the briefcase to fish out The Word Puzzle Book and a journal, she studiously arranges a 3 bill display, a one, a five and a ten dollar bill -- her stretch goal suggestion, which she lays flat and neat, and weighs down with loose change. She's gifting, and soft-sell begging. The books are placed atop the pink luggage, which she's rolled to the other side of her imaginary makeshift stage.

Set-up, she takes a moment. A face covered black on brown with symbols and floral tattoos, otherwise a doppelganger for Amanda Gorman....she begins to sway. She takes a

moment, and in that moment she takes me. She takes me with her. The dancer cues to the sounds of the mall sound system. The dancer aligns with the music, but more, she dances feeling. Her feelings run deep. Her knees bend, feet move, her eyes open. She notices me noticing her, smiles a beatific smile as her feet catch fire. Quick step, step, step, a hop, a leap, hop, hop. Twirl, full circle. Stop. Bliss. Leap. Reverie. Twirl. Sublime. Absorbed inner-outer. This! I, we, us, all, dance. I, perfectly still, she, fluid ecstatic motion. Exuberance, the full body presence of joy. Passersby, some somewhat curious, too busy to notice, didn't feel it, didn't go there, didn't get transported back into themselves. Had nothing to recall in this moment.

The mall sound system fades, song ends. The hop stops into a soft sway, eyes close. She takes a moment. A thought bubble cocks her head to the side and the soft shoe dancer steps purposefully to the journal atop the pink luggage. As she documents, I fish a twenty out of my wallet and place it in her wooden briefcase. As I do she looks up, sparkles, "Thank you. I really appreciate it." Not shy at all, "Yes, thank YOU!" I reply. Thank you for this rare moment. Now unafraid of the everlasting beauty that has a way of capturing you and making you a slave, demanding you stop and listen and be absorbed. Now more than happy to lose myself in such beauty, where everywhere is here and it's always now; where it's just me, and she, and they, and all of it.

.....

Lizards and squirrels,
cats and butterflies.
My companions!

Oh, did I mention the birds?

Birds!

.....

"The world is a tragedy for those who feel, a comedy for those who think."
~Horatio Walpole, 4th Earl of Orford (24 September 1717 – 2 March 1797)

.....

<16 June 2020>

.....

Things we used to say that we don't say anymore,
but we'd be better off if we did still say them:

#1: "Correct me if I'm wrong."

.....

To you Chicken Chicks Unborn:

I want to expressly thank
you 3 little chicken chicks
that gave up being born today

so that I might have breakfast.

And to your mother hens,
uncomfortably straining
-- wheezy, gasping --
every 26 hours
to push the hard-shell egg out,
unfertilized or not...

Oh, gosh!
I'm so sorry,
I wish there was another way.

.....

I can't tell you, Joe, what a joy it is to share the current existential angst with the Buddha on the Bag. Even if he's off the bag, or in the hiatus bag, or he's got it all in the bag -- I really can't tell.

I wake up in the early morning and first thing, I stare -- not into the refrigerator (but I do know what you mean) -- but rather into the computer monitor at the grim numbers, the grim COVID numbers, the new grim BLM numbers, the grim numbers of senseless death and suffering -- protesting police brutality met by police brutality. And then there's the tanking economy and the antithetical Dow Jones average, the rudderless national leadership...

And I see you, looking towards the end of your 180 Day Weekend, while I simultaneously begin my fourth month of Sundays wondering if when it's safe to go out again will I be able to make ends meet, be able to buy toilet paper. When we come out of this, will we have come together to make a more just, fair and sustainable world for all sentient beings?

Recently Cornel West counseled Anderson Cooper, "We cry because we are not numb on the inside."

Fortunately we can Zoom and sing as we cry. Not that I Zoom, but you know what I mean. So... here we go. Again. A 4-iron to keep the ball low. And just try to maintain balance against the storm. Alone together.

.....

Life is for Living

{Living above your means, punching above your weight, they tell me. I say, life is for the living -- a test of faith. Where to rest my head? Where to rest my head tonight? Tonight, I say, let the music keep your spirits high!}

[

“Life is for the living.
Death is for the dead.
Let life be like music.

And death a note unsaid.”

— Langston Hughes

]

My mother recently wrote, "I really urge you to find less expensive living quarters. I know you ignored that suggestion before, but it is about reality. I have moved into less expensive homes, and it's a huge relief."

My boss said virtually the same thing some 25 years ago when I first moved into this place. I'm glad I didn't buy into his foreboding. This has been the most stable, satisfying home I've ever had. It's afforded me a wide variety of experiences I wouldn't have had otherwise. And as life is about having experiences and the quality of those experience, it feels like it's been worth the risk. Test of faith aside, even if it hadn't turned out so well, better to have flowed with taking the chance on a life I wanted than muster through, putting up with one I didn't.

Besides in the midst of the worst global pandemic, the most diverse social civil rights protesting and the deepest economic downturn in my lifetime, who needs the stress of a self-inflicted push towards yet another huge, disorienting move into God knows what.

It's inevitable, it'll all eventually crash. Unsaid or not, I will die.

There is a time I will leave this place. This is not that time.

For now, I say, "Ride the wave to beach, baby, enjoy the ride!"

.....

On my wedding anniversary.

Going down to rake the leaves under the Orange tree, I inadvertently interrupted a squirrel munching an Orange on the ground. Startled by my presence, he dropped the Orange, scampered some 15 feet away towards the Avocado tree, paused to turn to look back at me with a miffed expression on his pointy little face -- leaped up in the air a good ten inches and spun around mid-air 270 degrees. With my rake and deft aim I flicked his half-eaten breakfast to land right at his feet. Surprised the squirrel took a few seconds to examine his Orange before gathering it up with great delight and scurried on past the Avocado tree.

That's exactly how I too feel about having a second bite at a sumptuous marriage Orange, or rather a 30th bite. So happy too for this 29th anniversary leap up in the air and spin around celebration.

.....

I'm going with the mystery theory.

The more I learn, the more I know,
I know how little I know.

It's all a mystery.

.....

I have a problem with Thursday.
I go to sleep Wednesday night,
and when I wake up I think it's Friday,
I feel it's Friday. I know it's not,
even though I don't feel the loss.
Thursday is lost to me,

Maybe it's old age, thank God, or perhaps
being so long shut-in from this pandemic,
but I am grateful for my second Fridays.

.....

Saturday, July 18, 2020

I'm glad John Lewis lived long enough to see
the beginning of the Black Lives Matter reckoning.

Bless John Lewis' brand of Good Trouble!

.....

COVID-19 Report:

Alligator Lizards living in the wilds of suburban San Diego --
good, life affirming companions during the pandemic.

.....

I'd say it was the Romantics that held the Fates back from me becoming the CEO of IBM,
what with their emphatic promotion of apprehension and awe, reverence for the sublime.

.....

Somebody has to be the machine.

Is it possible your consciousness is both akin to parallel computing
and a wifi connection to the divine?
Woo-woo and all.

[<https://www.explainthatstuff.com/internet-and-brain.html>
The Internet and the Brain by Chris Woodford | April 21, 2020]

.....

Don't judge me by the contents of my spam folder.

.....

In my view, what's at play here is the black hole of confirmation bias firmly holding each of
us in our own private Reality Tunnel. Reality Tunnel is a theory that, with a subconscious
set of mental filters formed from beliefs and experiences, every individual interprets the

same world differently, hence "Truth is in the eye of the beholder". Or as Anais Nin said, "We don't see things as they are; we see them as we are."

The long and the short of it, I don't sense that my Reality Tunnel intersects my brother's. I don't see a path that would lead us to a common understanding. Best leave sleeping dogs lie. And as politics is fast taking the place of religion as the predominate organizing force of our society, better to build alliances with like hearts & minds, than try to convert the closed mindsets -- clinging to fear and desperation -- defending the old guard.

Here's to those who know shit from Shinola voting on Tuesday, November 3 and getting America back into a Reality Tunnel I can understand and relate to.

.....

The technically most advanced society,
yet worst response to COVID-19 in the world.
What does that tell you?

{emotional immaturity}

.....

[200808]

.....

Consider the life of a peasant in eighteenth-century Europe. The fields of Flanders were deserted for much of the year. Entire villages would essentially hibernate from the time of the first snow in November until March or April. Families packing their bodies tight together in order to stay warm and eat less food during the long Winter months.*

It doesn't snow here, so I'll practice by taking a nap. Wake me when it's over.

.....

Everything's different, but
nothing has changed.

.....

I was there when the land of the free, the home of the brave, the last best chance for democracy became the personality cult of a delusional narcissist.

A narcissist at a level I don't think this country's ever seen, alienating many who have served him, yet defying expectations by continuing to attract an new sycophant adoring core. How does a narcissists "wear out his welcome" long enough for We the People to wake up and return from the Cult of the Self?

.....

A feather trying to move the mountain, sadly my ardent, yet puny, adulthood efforts to try and counter the conflict narrative "Man against Nature" has badly failed. Were it "Man with Nature," happy my birthday would truly be.

{Dan Landrum, 16 October 1951-2020}

The World Lost Two-Thirds Of Its Wildlife In 50 Years. We Are to Blame

• Human activities are causing an "unprecedented" and alarming decline in wildlife populations around the world, a new report warns. It says the staggering loss ultimately threatens human life as well.

<https://www.npr.org/2020/09/10/911500907/the-world-lost-two-thirds-of-its-wildlife-in-50-years-we-are-to-blame>

.....

Spiders, crickets, cockroaches. I catch & release the insects that come into the house. Though I'm not adverse to dropping them off at the lizard condo, a cat proof shelter strategically built cinder block wall occupied by succeeding generations of a family of fat and well fed lizards.

.....

There comes a point
you have to give up
on magic thinking,
stop extending hope,
and accept it as it is.

Satisfaction guaranteed.

.....

It was June 16, 1858
when Abraham Lincoln--
accepting the Illinois Republican Party's nomination
as that state's US senator-- remarked,
"A house divided against itself, cannot stand."

It's now October 31, 2020--
more than 162 years later--
and we're still standing,
and we're still divided.

.....

I fear
not even
the best among us
can save
the least among us
from ourselves.

.....

I'm sure you, like me, like the beautiful days,
the sky blue and sunny, the breeze just right,
the temperature and humidity just so.

But consider the weather in total sum.

The blizzards, hurricanes, tornados.
The floods, wildfires, earthquakes.
The rain, hail, and sand storms.

And then consider my temperament, ...
why should my nature be any different?

.....

Socialism done right.

For decades the increasingly extreme political right has relentlessly painted 'socialism' as an evil thing, culminating in the divisive, combative meaningless rhetoric of Donald Trump. The word 'socialism' needs more champions like Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders to restore it to its denotative meaning of cooperation and unity.

Noam Chomsky, "What we're talking about has to do with the most urgent things you can imagine — human survival, the fate of my grandchildren, all sorts of things. I'm reminded of a comment that Bertrand Russell once made, back around 1960 or so. He was asked why he was out marching at his age in anti-nuclear demonstrations, when he could be working on serious problems of philosophy for the ages. His answer was something like, if I'm not out here demonstrating against nuclear weapons, there won't be anybody around to read the philosophy.

.....

No one is busier than anyone else.
We all have the time we have.
It's only a matter of how you choose to spend it.

{being/doing/inging}

.....

Sittin' around,
watching his beard grow.
He's only ten months old, but
there's still the promise of hope
that Americans will respond
appropriately to the pandemic.

.....

COVID-19 Report:

Your sense of personal freedom is shitting in the community well.

.....
[201117]
.....

1. devolving

"Happy Birthday."

"Job or Prison?"

"Serve others."

"Liberty."

"Vow of poverty."

<In large letters
tattooed across his
face and neck,
"Fuck your Job.">

"Justice."

{Life is sad
Life is a bust
All ya can do is do what you must
You do what you must do and ya do it well
I'll do it for you
Honey baby, can't you tell?
~Bob Dylan}

"Pursue Happiness?"
"A more perfect union."

{Little red wagon
Little red bike
I ain't no monkey but I know what I like
I like the way you love me strong and slow
I'm takin' you with me
Honey baby, when I go
~Bob Dylan}

"Be myself."
"Life is suffering?"
"Chin up."
"Don't cry."
"Suck it up."

{Buckets of rain

Buckets of tears
Got all them buckets comin' out of my ears
Buckets of moonbeams in my hand
You got all the love
Honey baby, I can stand
~Bob Dylan}

"Merry Christmas,
Happy Thanksgiving."

2. involving

[a miserable experience of ecstatic mystic transcendence:

elated rapturous joy
blissful beatific cloud nine
delirious seventh heaven

jumping for joy
over the moon
on top of the world

thrilled orgasmic exultant,
wrapped happy jubilant]

Clearly, there are more ways to die than to live.
Everyone dies, but
so few really live.

We're all going to die,
once,
but you have to live every day.

"Wash your hands,
you just looked at the trash can."

That's the logic I have to live with.

Have you ever heard of someone dying
of an under dose of anything?

Dial it back.
The Middle Way.

.....

When I say amen, you say hallelujah.
When I say hallelujah, you say amen.

We're that kind of church.
.....

In times of trouble,
through my darkest hour,
I've out lasted the blues.

If you don't climb the mountain,
you won't see the view.

And when you descend the mountain,
you see anew.

You exit the trail, blink in the open sun
and feel the wash of relief that the descent is,
finally, over.
.....

Peace.
No justice, no peace.
There has never been justice.
.....

Wars never end.
They only take a nap.

Peace sleeps uneasy.
No rest for the weary.
.....

The glass may be half full,
the glass may be half empty.

For sure, the glass is all glass.

{the thing itself}
.....

Do you have truth on your side?

I hear sandpaper and a good exfoliate
can help with that.

Treat it like a barnacle.

.....

What do we remember more,
Medgar Evers, what he stood for,
or the cowardly hate that killed him?

Or was it fear?

And 57 and a half years later ...
the cowards' children's children
lay siege to the US Capitol,
killing a cop in their haste
to spread their big lie.

What do we remember?

June 12, 1963 - January 6, 2021

.....

Sometimes my friends pee on my window.
Then the neighbors do too.

Soon I'm hating on all cats
marking territory.

I don't hold a grudge, but
if the problem persists,
I may triangulate with cohorts
to seek a resolution.

If you catch my drift.

.....

It's time and place, the cultural moment and the specific society we find ourselves in that shapes us. Even when that shape moves us to contradict our most ardent principles, we can't be any other than the 'who we are' that the here and now prescribes.

AND how many nearly 70-something people are there that paint pictures, and how many nearly 70-something people are there that paint pictures as I do? None. All the sub-demographics and cultural influences aside, or the fact that I am an amateur (I paint only for the love of it and to please no other,) it's my experiences in this time and this place, this cultural moment in which I find myself that uniquely shapes my paintings, like no other. And thus, even if they are not deemed 'good' by others, there is a particular beauty in this art that can only be found here.

.....

Never in my life have I had a conflict that needed a gun to resolve it,
much less be at all useful.

.....

REMEMBER:

You are, after all, an eternal being.
You have to be somewhere.
Weather the weather.

.....

In winter,
I'm a big fan of bundled and cozy,
In summer,
running naked and free.

.....

No hope, no pray.
Do what you do,
get through the day.

They ready.

.....

Art is cultural politics
made impalpable to the old,
and oh so addictively tasty
to the young.

{innovative art as rebellion}

.....

On a barren path
to nowhere
We get what we need,
and then some.

To understand this world
is to understand
incredulity.

{the whole ball of wax
in a nut shell}

.....

The best you can ask for is competent leadership,
acting in good faith.

.....

Developing a handmade picture in conventional analog art,
to improve it, you must be willing to loss what you have so far.
With digital technology, all along the way, you can save an infinite,
dizzying number of iterations -- all gain, no loss.

Wouldn't there be something missing,
if reality, life was like that, all gain, no loss ?

.....

Look at you grow,
grow, grow
towards the sun,
sun, sun!

Aren't you a beauty!

.....

{210310}

.....

I like being alone by myself,
then I'm clearly the smartest person in the room.
(small room)

.....

I can't afford you
protection,
This world doesn't do safe.
What I can offer...
comfort.

.....

Music: a way in
to yourself.

Music: a way out
for the poor, depressed,
the troubled.

.....

Beauty in the plainness.
Taupe is dope.

.....

Analysis requires a closed set of knowables (and/or probabilities.) You can't analyze an unknown. For uncertain and unknowable issues, you're better of sleeping on it and giving it over to your intuition, your well-rested gut-feeling.

.....

Funny is a muscle as much as your gluteus maximus,
you have to exercise it to keep it in shape.

Don't be the butt of the joke,
Keep your funny muscle fit!

{ "If you don't have a sense of humor, it just isn't funny," Wavy gravy }

.....

Thank God for routines and habits.
If I had to think through all this shit,
I'd never get anything done.

.....

Sixty-seven percent of life is taking care of the body. The other third we sleep. In between we steal a moment. Life has its moments.

.....

If yellow is acid, violet is alkaline.

.....

When the world's on fire is not the time to reorganize your sock drawer.

.....

There's a curious belief that you live on in other's memories, which is analogous to the sentiment, "I'm with you in spirit." Try getting your arms around that. "You're in my thoughts & prayers," and that's where you'll remain for my other five senses.

Wistfully hopeful as they are,
metaphysical hugs are simply a few dimensions short of a real experience.

.....

Similarly to other corona viruses, SARS-CoV-2 has 'learnt' during the course of evolution to adapt more efficiently to its host than if this were a purely random process: overall, the virus appears to have a lower mutation rate than might be expected statistically. On the other hand, the mutation rate at specific sites on the virus RNA can be much higher. These regions are mostly relevant for the human immune response. When the virus interacts with

the immune system it appears to 'learn' how to evade it. There are specific patterns of gene deletions in the Sars-CoV-2 genome which enable it to rapidly acquire genetic and antigenic novelty.

Systems capable of solving problems with a higher rate of success than might be expected with random processes, can indeed be called 'intelligent', even if the virus is not actually 'thinking' or 'planning'.

{But, then, is Coronavirus more intelligent than humans?}

[Coronavirus: "intelligent" mutants

<https://www.testbiotech.org/en/news/coronavirus-intelligent-mutants>]

.....

During the past two centuries that I have been on this planet, for that matter, for all of human history and undoubtingly from the very beginning, germs -- bacteria, viruses and such have killed more humans than humans have by all other means, including wars, automobiles, saturated fats and heart attacks. Thing is, the thriving of germs in the human host is an intelligent expression of the exuberant joy of living, while human preying on human is an stultifyingly insane expression of abject mortifying horror — one that undoubtingly goes back to the very beginning of man.

.....

You can make faces at the clouds all day long,
and they'll keep right on morphing.

.....

A busy life is a hungry ghost,
an empty insatiable chaos.

A simple life is a full, satisfying life.

.....

You can do everything right,
absolutely right, and still
you will die.

.....

Me and the bees in the Avocado tree.
Buzzing!

.....

{210415}

.....

I've reached that place where my future is the past.

.....
REMEMBER:

When your sense of personal freedom is shitting in the community well:
turn away from the pain in the world,
embrace the hate.
.....

Time Out

No one noticed her, until
she put herself facing the corner.

{Hazel Busby}
.....

When all hell breaks loose,
the best place to be
is the eye of the hurricane,
until the storm plays itself out.

Corollary:
the best way to win a firefight battle
is not to be there.
.....

Recordings Show Chaos

(your perspective depends on where you're standing)

The instant before 16-year-old Ma'Khia Bryant
tried mightily to end a black life,
the life of 22-year-old Tionna Bonner
with a kitchen knife, Officer Nicholas Reardon
shot and killed her dead.

The instant before, one of the young women
had apparently been cut with the object
that was in Bryant's hand.

The instant before, one of the adult males
is seen kicking one of the young women
who is on the ground in the head
with all his might.

In those next 11 seconds, Bryant was seen charging at 20-year-old Shai-Onta Lana Craig-Watkins with a kitchen knife before moving on to 22-year-old Tionna Bonner before Reardon yelled, "Get down!" and fired four consecutive shots into her chest.

"You have no respect for life," another Black man, who lives across the street, can be heard yelling at Reardon. "No, actually, you have no respect for Black life."

While Reardon, who is white, faced recrimination at the scene, his split-second decision to shoot was commended by the national Fraternal Order of Police, who called it "an act of heroism, but one with tragic results."

{Recordings show chaos surrounding Ma'Khia Bryant shooting
<https://apnews.com/article/makhia-bryant-ohio-shooting-video-recordings-186abfbcfd1717a8c42a38021a83de4b>}

.....

Why do so many Christians act as if they are still in the catacombs evading Roman persecution when they have long ago been appropriated by their overlords and have themselves become the persecutors?

.....

Nomadland won the Best Picture Oscar in 2021. In my experience, "nomads" in America tend to be somehow broken people. Then again, when you're a product of a broken culture, maybe taking a break is a move towards dignity, if not authenticity.

At the awards ceremony, Frances McDormand's howling tribute to sound mixer Michael Wolf Snyder, who recently took his own life, cryptically, yet so empathically, captures the nature of that wild-crazy godhead.

Without having yet seen the film, I sense *Nomadland* is the only piece of moving picture art ever, either TV or cinema, that I can personally identify with, that I can see at least some aspect of myself in.

.....

Essence of steamed cabbage
makes washing the pot a breeze.
Boiled rolled oats straight-up
not so much, a bit stickier.
Quite a bit.

{ruleless American Haiku}

.....

<210501>

.....

It's life or death, and
death is guaranteed.

{precious}

It's life or death, and
death is guaranteed.
There are no other options.

Sure you can sleep-walk,
through life zombie-like, but
that's not really living, is it?

Life is short,
turn up the dial.

Is there life after death?
You won't know for sure until you get there, and
you'll never really know if you don't fully live this one.

{too precious for the gray zone}

.....

If you don't trust yourself, you can't trust.
There is no trust.
If you don't love yourself, you can't love.
There is no love.

{autonomy, sovereignty, integrity at the least common discreet unit of organization:
individual, family, in-group, local society/network, extended formal
organizations/government. [SEE structural difference between Formal Organizations in
Sociology and Biology/Physics]}

.....

With tooth & claw
the tiger travels light.

.....

You can put a new label
on an old fish, ...
still stinks.

.....
It's not a fashion statement.
This is my hair.
.....

Shades of orange to taupe.

There are no truly black people, or white people,
or yellow or red.
People only come in shades of oxidized orange to alabaster taupe.
Earth tones.
.....

Modeling. The best we can do with any particular data set is construct a model that best explains it. There will always be new data, so our model will frequently need to be flexible or replaced with a more coherent one. Here comes some new data now: scampering sure-footed across the telephone cable, dodging low hanging branches, bushy tail all aflutter -- let's call it 'squirrel in pursuit of happiness.'
.....

Music is a river, and
you the fish swimming upstream.

But poetry, poetry is
an island in the desert
where you go to fish.

{alone in your lineage}
.....

Don't forget!
That flowering plant
you're pruning,
it too is
a wild beast.
.....

Too bad.
I don't look
the way I think
I do.
.....

I certainly can understand how diving deep into some kinda rabbit hole can put a damper on wanting to communicate amidst the muddle. Sorry it started with painful sadness, but so glad you worked it through to clarity.

.....

You know your party's in trouble when Liz Cheney is the voice of reason.

{May 12, 2021}

.....

Millimeter for millimeter
there is likely no other piece of real estate
more expressive
of the feelings or 'state of mind'
behind it
than the human face.

.....

We all experience pain and suffering. If we include apprehension and generalized anxiety, a lot of life is pain and suffering. There is another lot that is none of that. A portion of this other lot is simply the absence of, the relief from pain and suffering. Then there is yet another portion that stands alone in its own right as pure unmitigated joy. It's the astounding shock of that pure unmitigated joy that keeps us hooked. Even the slightest whiff of that pure unmitigated joy gives us hope to carry on. And there within that hint we find the nut of the meaning at the center of the story we tell ourselves. The narrative we invent to describe the distance between being and doing, good and well — a life worth living.

.....

One organism's disease is
another organism's lunch.

.....

Ya gotta separate the physics and the psychology from the biology from the sociology,
then stitch'm back together again,
which is what philosophy is for.

.....

"How are you?"
"God enough."

.....

When you're in pain it's hard
to think of anything else,
much less anyone else.

.....

If Little Richard was born white, there would be no Elvis.
But then Little Richard would've had no soul.

If Bob Dylan was shy,
you'd never know it.

You can take the man out of the culture, but
you can't take the culture out of the man.

{A nod to William Clifford "Big" Brown, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Brown_\(poet\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Brown_(poet))}

.....

You don't need God
to realize how cute you are
in the universe.
Just take a peek
at where you fit in
in the modest sized Milky Way;
one of hundreds of billions,
maybe trillions of galaxies
in the observable universe.

.....

Robustly holding my place in the Milky Way galaxy, I ask:

Tell me when any organism or natural system — a dandelion field, a redwood forest, a kangaroo mob, the Roman empire hasn't followed the process of birth, growth, decay and death; and if fortune is balanced, perhaps rebirth.

Then tell me when any one organization in nature — a fungi colony, an ant hill, a plague of locusts, free market capitalism becomes overly enamored with the growth phase has it left the environment behind better off for the 'perhaps reborn' future generations after its inevitable deep collapse.

Then tell me when, if ever, any human tribe, society, culture or empire has ever been fair, just and equitable both to those members within and/or to the outer world at large*. Which is to ask when ever has those with an avarice want for more ever been in balance with nature.

Yet with no dream of justice the busy high-energy superheated gas and magnetic fields at our galactic center 26,000 light years (nearly 156 quadrillion miles) away lives on unfazed — with or without us — just as they are.

{*CAVEAT: 7th Generation Principle.}

.....

Nothing like a pandemic
to make you appreciate authoritarianism.

.....

Grief is not just one emotion.
Grief is all the emotions.

If there is a loss,
you've lost none of the past,
only the loss of future potential,
which never really was.

The real loss is
the loss of the thing itself,
that someone special to squeeze.
That can not be replaced.

Grief is not just one emotion.
Grief is all the emotions
that can not be replaced.

.....

{210607}

I'm going to leave
my 16 month long pandemic hair
loose today to annoy me
so I remember
before I get it cut
tomorrow.

.....

If the earth spins on its axis every 24 hours, and
rotates around the sun every 365 days or so, and
the sun makes its orbit around the Milky Way galaxy every 225-250 million years, or so,
how many miles per hour is a passenger in San Diego California traveling?

.....

We know gravity is going to win in the end, but
we have to keep trying, try to keep up lifting.

Stay upright, sister!

.....

It's one thing to watch
yourself slowly grow and
wonder what will become of you.
It's quite another to see
yourself too rapidly deteriorating and
know with certainty where you will end up.

.....

Though possibly a useful fiction,
virtually everything you believe — religion,
science, et al — is a myth.
Never actually existed,
never will.

.....

Wining and whining,
vicious downward spiral.

[The pandemic has further increased rates of alcohol use in women. During the pandemic women have increased their heavy drinking days by 41% compared to before the pandemic.

~ <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/women-alcohol-and-covid-19-2021040622219>

.....

Coming out of pandemic hibernation
like a hungry bear.

.....

The phone is alone
on the kitchen island,
deserted. Robocalls
go unanswered.

.....

When you live in high heaven,
where is there to go
on vacation, but
down.

.....

"Beauty, cleanliness and order"
grants respectability, asserts the Moral high ground,
and offers security against the superior powers of nature,
playing a key role in establishing cultural values
in relation to social class, humanitarianism,

and cultural imperialism, said the Psychoanalyst derisively.

Civilization demands repression of desire for the sake, for the need for people to cooperate with each other and to work together, but it's a zero sum game.

Individualism / Collectivism,
Civilization and Its Discontents

One of the most fundamental dualisms of human life is the tendency to assert and develop one's self, to differentiate one's self from the group. But at the same time, people want to affiliate with others, membership in groups of people provide warmth, comfort, and connection.

Compete / Cooperate

Within and outside the home,
"beauty, cleanliness and order"
is a class act.

.....

Honor your Avocado tree roots even as your canopy intermingles with the Triangle Palm and the Silver Elm.

But then, you go into the 54 flavor Ice Cream Shop and EVERY TIME order only dark chocolate mint with sprinkles, and mock your friends who order pistachio vanilla or caramel butter pecan.

{bigotry}

On snack break from baseball practice pre-schoolers jeer at the little Indian boy eating an apple, "poopy poopy poopy." They have chocolate-chip cookies.

{starts early}

.....

What can I say about my next older brother, but
he was an early initiate into the *Snipe Hunter Society* and
has been on a fool's errand ever since.

.....

We meet.

We eat.

{prayer}

.....

Life is a vinaigrette,
you have to shake it up
to get the full flavor.

.....

Showing a neighbor my doodles, he asks how I learned. In big part I say,
I must attribute them to the round well-formed handwriting of my mother. Which caused me
to think what I owe my life line of expression to...

I am to be found in the lineage of
humanist, transcendental to realist
American Bohemians ala Walt Whitman
(with a pinch of Mark Twain,)
through the post World War 2 beatniks,
spiritual-poets and hipsters melding Alan Watts,
Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen and Jack Kerouac,
twisting with social-political renegades in the ilk of
Abby Hoffman, Ram Dass (nee Richard Alpert)
and roshi Joan Halifax —
of course too,
the sirens of my day,
Joan Baez, Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins
and Bob Dylan teased me to open
and be with myself on the Us-Them odyssey —
careful to be on alert not to try to dissolve
the boundaries between,
but rather to ever be expanding
the inclusive facets of what belongs within us.

.....

{210713}

.....

The Brits seem to enjoy being motivated by the unattainable standards of perfection, while us Americans are perfectly satisfied with "good enough!" In fact the more pragmatic among us echo, "perfect is the enemy of the good."

.....

If you're a medium
wearing an extra large
shirt, it doesn't make you
look larger. On the contrary.

{goldilocks}

.....

Mockingbird on the telephone pole
singing the endless repertoire,
a baby squirrel splayed on the cross bar.
Jumping-up, fluttering-down
demonstrating what a fine and agile
and studly fellow he is.

A flock of chickadees lit in the adjoining tree.

Mister Mocker moves to the next pole down.
A lady joins him.
The vigor song begins again with added gusto.

Baby squirrel rouses,
giving me one lazy eye.

I smile.
My kind of community.

.....

Iraq Vet, "If Bush hadn't gone into Iraq, there's be no Al-Qaeda.
If Obama hadn't pulled out of Iraq, there's be no Islamic State."

{SEE: **Sarah Chayes'** *The Ides of August*, Aug 16, 2021:
<https://www.sarahchayes.org/post/the-ides-of-august>}

.....

Outrage as a business model: alt-right shock jocks
Fear as a business model: mainstream media

Silent majority, resist the resistance: Fear outrage.
Freedom: Fear not, heal your rage.

.....
Everyone is entitled to their opinion.
Influencers have a higher standard of culpability.

.
Opinions are like assholes, everyone has one.
(Everyone is entitled to their opinion.)
Influencers have a higher standard of culpability.
(Influencers have a higher standard not to be assholes.)

{**convince**: mid 16th century (in the sense 'overcome, defeat in argument'):
from Latin convincere, from con- 'with' + vincere 'conquer'. }

.....
I say what I want to say.
You hear what you want to hear.

{reality tunnels}
.....

If the human species wants any hope of surviving at scale,
it has to understand what that scale is.

We must recognize we've fulfilled the Genesis 1:28* mandate,
that there is no more 'western ho' territory to subdue, that
we'll never be able to colonize another planet in time
to save ourselves.

Humans must regulate themselves and stop
treating their environment as if it were an endless,
inexhaustible resource. We must shift from fierce competing
for limited turf and treasure, and learn intelligent moderated cooperation.

Humans collectively need to know
what their mission is, agree on the parameters
and how to justly proceed. There can be no more war, or
pernicious capitalism, excessive accumulation of idle wealth, or enslaving.

Humans must henceforth become good stewards of this sustainable
small, fragile planet, and make wise choices.

The hope for getting into balance with the natural world doesn't rest simply with the
individual. It is an imperative for society as a whole. The individual can only do their part,
success demands on a full societal response. If a tipping point majority of self-actualized

individuals don't align with actions required for the complex systems necessary for a progressively sustainable reciprocity, chaotic destruction will continue to ensue.

{*Genesis 1:28, 'And God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing upon the earth.' }

.....

Are Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson money's measure of the man?

Clearly money has long since ceased to be tied to any objective or market-based standard and only tabulates social welfare based on people's capacity to generate income*. Its primary utility is to coerce labor to do work, which left unregulated allows for hugely disproportionate exploitation, corruption and stratification of wealth and power – institutional implicit slavery of both humans and their environment for the many, out-sized self-worth puffery for a few billionaires competing senselessly to be the first to launch themselves into space.

*"Since the mid-20th century—whether in the Keynesian 1950s or the neoliberal 1980s—economic indicators have promoted an idea of American society as a capital investment whose main goal, like that of any investment, is ever-increasing monetary growth. Americans have surely benefited materially from the remarkable economic growth over this period of time, an expansion wholly unique to capitalist societies. Nevertheless, by making capital accumulation synonymous with progress, money-based metrics have turned human betterment into a secondary concern. By the early 21st century, American society's top priority became its bottom line, net worth became synonymous with self-worth, and a billionaire businessman who repeatedly pointed to his own wealth as proof of his fitness for office was elected president."

{<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/10/money-measure-everything-pricing-progress/543345/>}

.....

You conflate your beliefs with what's knowable,
elevating the credibility of the unknowable
at your own risk. You can test knowables, but
playing with the unknowable is a high stakes crapshoot.

.....

I'm in the summer sun a lot these days.
My question is, how dark to I have to get
before I can be considered a colored person?

.....

It's not enough to say grace,
you must be grace or
there is none.

.....

What young does,
in the Age of Disrupt:
fuck shit up.

.....

When I die, I suppose
I'll go back to where I came from.
And soon after I'm back they'll ask me,
"How was your summer vacation."

.....

Hep-cat, mama.dat

.....

I'm finding that it's increasingly important to understand HOW I make decisions
and WHAT those decisions are predicated on. Inherently, instinct infused intuition is the
main driver, but this transitory spark needs to be grounded in an exhaustive survey of
knowable facts within the full data set. Or simple trust the universe.

.....

The un-united state of America fueled
by fear and outrage, powered
by the mis-disInformation Age.

#WeaponsofMassDistraction @fledgling

.....

Provocative banner sign on a commercial building: "X=?"
If X only equals a question, why would you need X?

.....

Overheard at Starbucks:
"Idaho? No, you da ho!"

.....

210816, Monday

I understand and share your concern for the hordes of immigrants flooding over our
southern board. I can only encourage you to take a deep dive into the complex actions and
consequences of the Monroe Doctrine. And as a corollary, the history of the rise and fall of
empires. The United States of America is no exception to this history.
We are in fact reaping what we have sown.

{Remembering the Fall of Saigon, today, as we look on with horror at the Fall of Kabul.}

.....

It's a strange notion, isn't it?
The desire to live past your living,
to live on in other's hearts and minds.
As if that somehow makes you immortal.

.....

Discipline,
the process of developing useful habits.

.....

If I were the child I was then today,
besides the labels of aphasic dyslexic,
I'd be saddled with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
and treated with dopamine increasing stimulants, non-stimulant medications,
such as atomoxetine and guanfacine, and/or powerful zombie inducing antidepressants.
Forever battling acute, rapid, and chronic neural drug tolerance.

When the reality was,
I was a refined sugar addict,
undiagnosed, untreated.

.....

Forget the whimper or the bang,
I'm going out with a hardy "haha... Ha!"

.....

Why do so many furry critters have black noses?
Sunscreen?

.....

Meaning cannot be described with nouns or pronouns.

.....

I appreciate my autonomic nervous system,
I really do. But
sometimes I just like to breathe on my own.

.....

It's odd that so many girls want to make themselves attractive,
but when they don't like what they attract, **he's** the creep.

.....

Don't let your belief system

get in the way of your lived experience.

.....

The soul has no body.
Nobody has a soul.

When you get to heaven,
will you have to shit?
Who'll make the toilet paper?

.....

Santa, Parents and the Surveillance State
What do you want for Christmas?

{<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/12/santa-claus-and-the-surveillance-state/383830/>}
(Confession/Testimony: SEE > The Morals of the Catholic/Protestant Church)

.....

Brackish water in the gutter,
washed down from last night's rain.
Short-billed Crow, head tilted sideways,
sips.

A moment tender in my mind's eye
though he, no doubt, has moved on.

.....

The best find a way to win,
even when they're not playing their best.

.....

As long as I get my drugs,
I won't begrudge you yours.

Live & let live.
(Or is it, live & let die?)

.....

Let's go!
I have earnings to earn,
living to live.

C'mon!!

.....

In terms of human rights,
has there ever been a net-positive empire?

By the very fact that you are still here suggests
you feel this life is net-positive. But
is the system that supports you,
and reciprocally you support,
also net-positive?

.....

When there's more wolves than Caribou,
say goodbye to your way of life.

.....

Why does it seem that Republicans are more interested in the unborn than the born?

The living they want to exploit. They don't want to limit the yet to be born. And their
aggrandizing *'thoughts and prayers'* for the dead is merely marketing that:
"they may face each new day with hope and the certainty that nothing
can destroy the good that has been given."

.....

[210921}

Dew East

Towel drying the dew from my old beater,
Santa Ana driven traffic sounds roar
from the I-805 highway in the east.
Harvest moon setting in the west.

{Welcoming autumn in Southern California}

.....

I told her the truth
with the volume turned up,
it hurt her ears,
she didn't want to hear it.

{Protesting Liberty}

.....

Just saw a flock of pigeons
in flight, lovely sight ...

Loving, too, the inner sight of you.

.....

Things I do most (in order:)

Breathing

Sleeping

Eating/Drinking

Exercising mind/body (work/recreate)

Shitting/Pissing/Farting

Resting

.....

Down in the valley,
the valley so low,
that's where you'll find me,
'neath the avocado tree.

Through the Birmingham Jail bars,
Jimmie sees the moon shining.
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow.
Late in the evening, Huddie hear the train blow.

Sitting lotus, watching breath,
inhaling love, exhaling peace.
If you don't love me, love whom you please.
Put your arms round me, give my heart ease.

{folk fusion: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Down_in_the_Valley_\(folk_song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Down_in_the_Valley_(folk_song))}

.....

There's a lot worth not being said that doers need to hear.

.....

I'm still courting my wife. Daily.
My sweet nothings are really something.

{sweet nothings for my sweetheart}

.....

So much big data to crunch.
How to get to the nut of it
without trivializing or diminishing
the complexity?

.....

Forget, "Can we all get along?"

Let's try, "Can we all get on the same page?"

C'mon people, focus!
Get on the same page!!

.....

I'm not for nor against science.
There are a lot of intelligent people
within and without science.
Best take data, referencing it's source,
for what it is and test it
against experience.

Here, again, is where I caution:
don't let a belief system hijack your lived experience.

{appropriate scale pragmatics}

.....

Some planets are huge gas giants,
all vaporous hydrogen and helium, airy-fair.
Other planets, like our own,
have a molten hot iron core with a heat-tempered
solid as a rock crust.

So too religions.
Some with more gravitas than others.

.....

'God' is a very odd, Stone Age caveman sound
for 'all that is.'
'Yahweh' is more Iron Age tribal.

A more up-to-date modern metaphor
for 'all that is' is
Awareness.

Aware not of a particular, but rather
the all-knowing state of awareness.
No genuflection required.

.....

If Bill Maher is how you get the news,
you need a cynicism check-up.

.....

Prestige is a trap
that pulls you away
from your authentic self.

.....

A self- professed liar
tells you they no longer lie.

How do you know?
{liars dilemma}

.....

Two drivers nearly met,
exchanged finger birds and
sped away erratically.

.....

To educate me, to indoctrinate me into the herd, they, my parents, teachers and coaches did what they did to break horses using the test of wills sweet carrot & cruel stick method. "By heart and by sore flesh," as John Muir would say. I desperately had to keep spark alive, if there were to be any hope to live an authentic life unencumbered by the weight of calloused dead-inside character armor. I soulfully didn't want to be a character, but rather to live, to fully experience a life.

For the walking dead, feeling is healing. And those are the embers I blow on in feeling my way home. The best I can hope for is being honest with myself in trusting my perceptions, honoring the primacy of the instinct, the imminence of raw emotion, the present clarity of sensation, the truth of my feelings.

.....

Our fore-Fathers offered us Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.
Life was not theirs to give.
As slave holders, liberty was a lie.
And the pursuit of happiness a curse,
as they didn't offer happiness, only the pursuit.

And where were our fore-Mothers?
What were they pursuing?

.....

If life is an experiment,
I wouldn't want to cross-contaminate our findings,
you & I, for the small bit of positive results we share.

.....

I love seeing the skunk family scampering, all lined up in a row.
Just not too up-close and personal in the dim pre-dawn light.
Especially the stink-ass caboose end of the train.

.....

You don't know what free is
until you know what constraints are,
they say,
as the wild dog chases
the rabbit down her burrow.

.....

Shit, I'm just glad I'm alive
and have more than a modicum of health.

.....

There's an implied reluctance in traipsing
that you don't get in a saunter.

.....

{211003}

.....

It's not that I'm opposed to accomplishments, accomplishments come and go, that's fine.
It's what we define and revere in accomplishments that's off putting. We eat, we sleep, we
wipe our ass, these are accomplishments enough. That we do it with great regularity and
consistency is a marvelous accomplishment in and of itself. If you live in and contribute to a
society that aids and abets this great regularity, and not one that imposes obstacles and
deterrents, all the more so -- a highly privileged, well-earned accomplishment. It's those for
'extraordinary accomplishment in a specialized category' stars and accolades they hand out
in award ceremonies I take exception to. If you need disproportionate recognition for doing
what you love, then perhaps you've lost sight of stalwartly doing what you must and doing it
well.

.....

I don't arrive here out of context.
I find my place following those
that have gone before me.

I simply live a life.

And like those who have gone before me,
if the story of that life is not told, it dies with me.

.....

There is a story in Nietzsche that goes something like this. There was once a wise spiritual master, who was the ruler of a small but prosperous domain, and who was known for his selfless devotion to his people. As his people flourished and grew in number, the bounds of this small domain spread; and with it the need to trust implicitly the emissaries he sent to ensure the safety of its ever more distant parts. It was not just that it was impossible for him personally to order all that needed to be dealt with: as he wisely saw, he needed to keep his distance from, and remain ignorant of, such concerns. And so he nurtured and trained carefully his emissaries, in order that they could be trusted. Eventually, however, his cleverest and most ambitious vizier, the one he most trusted to do his work, began to see himself as the master, and used his position to advance his own wealth and influence. He saw his master's temperance and forbearance as weakness, not wisdom, and on his missions on the master's behalf, adopted his mantle as his own – the emissary became contemptuous of his master. And so it came about that the master was usurped, the people were duped, the domain became a tyranny; and eventually it collapsed in ruins.

{The Master is betrayed by his emissary: the need for appropriate scale in light of growing complexity.}

.....

Try not ending up being
someone else's lunch
while getting your own.

{*paying attention*: limelight and/or floodlight}

.....

Panhandler sign:
please help
feed
my addiction

.....

The need to upgrade your mobile phone
is kind of like shitting and pissing.
You'll never be done with it
until you're completely done in.

.....

In real world terms,
you have taken more than you have given,
you have done more harm than good.

Both as an individual and a country.

Yet you imagine you, yourself and the country
you serve, are on the right side of history.

Hence, the dream of the American Dream.

.....

{211009}

<What if the US Census stopped tracking its citizens by ethnicity?>

"Questions regarding racial and ethnic self-identification have been included in each U.S. census dating back to the first in 1790," justifies Timothy P. Johnson, director of the Survey Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Chicago and president of the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

I say, foey! Just because we were racists then, doesn't speak to now

.....

Hey stranger,
I've spent the last 70 years wandering the Earth
getting into position to have this moment with you.
And this is the way you treat me?

.....

The herd is running scared.
The young, old, and feeble get trampled.
Pandemic becomes endemic.

.....

Another view: the mythology, the poetry, or dogmatic interpretations of "this magical text!," of the The Bhagavad Gita serve to obfuscate the recurrent effect of the revered text, whether intended or not. At base the Gita is propaganda for war. It assumes war, even war against cousins is inevitable, and you must choose a side. The spiritualized script is clearly written by the ruling class, and overall serves to fix and maintain class structure in that eternal battle. Even as it tells you, you have a pretense of free will choice, it emphatically tells you must do your duty according to the dharma.

"An individual should make a choice depending on what type of spiritual person they are... each person decides how to live their lives. There is no 'correct' way to act, only a person's dharma and personal choice."

That rhetoric of a mystical "person's dharma" only serves to internalize and bind individuals in their place within a caste system. Those born Brahmin specialize as intellectuals, priests, teachers, ayurvedic physicians and protectors of sacred learning across generations, and must act accordingly. Those born Untouchables are forever cast as descendants of slaves or prisoners. Then as now.

And of course, it's not simply whether the text is or is not promoting war, but the complex of the societal structure it feeds. You'd have grow up Hindu to feel the whole import, but here,

in my mind, is a contemporary illustration of a western structural equivalent: The future of race in America: Michelle Alexander at TEDxColumbus > <https://youtu.be/SQ6H-Mz6hgw>

You say, "...I wonder if it is not most helpful to have a text reinterpreted, so that it's deeper meaning is shown to undermine the oppressive institutions that it once seemed to support. I think of Adyanshanti's writings on the gospels."

The book jacket says, "Jesus crossed all of the boundaries that separated the people of his time because he viewed the world from the perspective of what unites us, not what divides us. In Resurrecting Jesus, Adyashanti embarks on a fascinating reconsideration of the man known as Jesus, examining his life from birth to Resurrection to reveal a timeless model of awakening and enlightened engagement with the world. Through close consideration of the archetypal figures and events of the Gospels, Adya issues a call to "live the Christ" in a way that is unique to each of us."

That's the thing about wisdom teachers, they don't let facts get in the way of a good story.

.....

I'd like to think, growing-up, we were cooperative competitors.
That we egged each other on for the better.
But you were the leader of us.
And if you said we are going to play ball,
we played ball. As we got older,
I learned to negotiate a bit.
When you said, "Jump
on your bike and go buy me a candy bar,"
I eventually learned to reply, "You buy, I fly."
Though now that I look back,
I see I did undervalue my labor.

.....

In the winter of 1971 we were in the same Principles of Sociology class.
First day, you were surprise to see me there in a way that felt like
I was encroaching on your turf. It was an elective for me,
so 'satisfactory' was good enough. For you a mission,
and no doubt you aced the class. You were laser focused
and on task. Me, not so much, and you pretty much ignored me.

P'sst ... I think I could have used some help.

"Social interaction is the basis for the construction of societies...,"
the professor told us. Did I ask if you'd be my study buddy?
Did you ever offer? I forget.

.....

Suzie and Michael just ambled by. Suzie is deep into dementia.
Trailing several paces behind her, Michael walks with a cane.
I've learned not to say her name when I say hello to Suzie.
It only confuses her.
So I simply called out, "Hello!" and waved.
She replied with a "Hello!" and wave of her own.

When Michael stepped up, I said "Hi" to him.
As he mumbled a reply, Suzie, without missing a step,
turned once again and blew me a kiss.
And I to her.

{#moment}

.....

Appropriations:

I guess it depends on where you find the edge of your identity.

.....

Like my mother's father, and
my oldest brother was raised to be an officer and a gentleman,
his younger brothers, his practice charges.
He became a naval leader,
we cannon fodder.
And I,
a conscientious objector.

.....

Noun. *dépaysement*, the feeling of not being at home, in a foreign or different place,
whether a good or a bad feeling; change of scenery. (obsolete) exile.

When folding a blanket, begin
with matching the four corners together.

As a Sociologist, is it fair to say
most all are a victim of fashion?

When Moses (c.1391–1271 BCE) initiated the Census tax (Exodus 30:11-16) he said, "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, when you give the Lord's offering to make atonement for your lives." Jesus (c. 4 BC – AD 30 / 33) drove the money-changers out of the Temple (Synoptic Gospels at Matthew 21:12–17, Mark 11:15–19, Luke 19:45–48 and John 2:13–16) because he said, 'My house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.' The family of Sherry Turkle (c. 1948-) couldn't afford tickets to High Holy Days at the local synagogue, so they instead dressed up and greeted their neighbors on the temple steps, careful to imply they would be attending services somewhere else, (according to *The Empathy Diaries: A Memoir* by Sherry Turkle.)

.-.-.-.-.-.-.-

Dear Sherry Turkel,
did you read Noam Chomsky's 1967 "The Responsibility of Intellectuals" at the time?
Thoughts?

{#belonging #fashion #empathy #SherryTurkle}

.....

Happiness shared is
double happiness.

Sadness shared is
sadness halved.

Anxiety shared is
super-spreader viral vector.

.....

First Thought Theory

How do you decide?
What is the process you use to think about thinking?

.-.-.-.-.-.-.-

The thought is the thought.
Yes or no is secondary.

If I say,
"Don't think about monkeys."
You think about monkeys.

For or against, attend to your first thoughts.
Don't think twice, it's all right.

*"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing
there is a field. I'll meet you there," Rumi*

.-.-.-.-.-.-.-

The best I can hope for is being honest with myself in trusting my perceptions, honoring the primacy of the instinct, the imminence of raw emotion, the present clarity of sensation, the truth of my feelings.'

First Thoughts are the culmination, the gestalt of all feelings in this moment. The whole, not the divided, categorized, analyzed, prioritized segments. Not impulsive, not compulsion. But rather the distilled consensus of all time, all experience suggesting: This!

"This!" may be right, may be wrong. Perhaps a mis-take, perhaps a good on the first take. It's an experiment. Let's try This! And then we have a clear basis of an unequivocal contemporaneous trial to base our understanding on.

Steven Pinker, say no, you better stop, reflect, dissect, analyze. The problem is, when you put 'things' in compartmentalized boxes, into categories you limit them to a finite data set for the analysis. Your conclusions can only be constructed in a glass bell jar separate from the whole of your reality. "No, no, you're not thinking; you're just being logical," as Niels Bohr might caution. Without the feelings that mortar the bricks of all your experience across time and place you are left with a token model of your reductive reasoning.

First Thoughts INCLUDE all feelings. Encoded in your life experience, your DNA. The reasons are their own. How you play with them, your choice.

.....-

You can't do a double-blind test for life.
Not your own, much less life itself.

Just feel it!

.....

.....

I need to retreat from this life.

Can I climb into your belly for the next 10 months,
and float in your fluid ambience?

*{my wife says she wants credit on this bit.
It's hers.}*

.....

We've become a society of snitches.
There used to be a stigmatism against ratting out others.
Now for every little thing, we're all like,
"Karen, 1 to 5, rate your experience with Bob!"

.....

Most trees have many more leaves

than flowers.

To those mega-lottery winners
who say, "I just wanted to show my kids
that you can do anything if you keep trying.
Never give up!" I say, happily
it's enough to be a leaf.

.....

Could someone please buy
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson
a hair brush befitting a head of state?

.....

{We've become a society of snitches.
There used to be a stigmatism against ratting out others.
Now for every little thing, we're all like,
"Karen, 1 to 5, rate your experience with Bob!"}

AND our technology is not merely encouraging us to be snitches,
but hyper-vigilantly paranoid as well:

"The trick is remembering that phishing exists."

{#HomeAloneAndAfraid @alienation}

.....

"Intelligence is not consciousness. Intelligence is the ability to solve problems.
Consciousness is the ability to feel things. In humans and other animals, the two indeed go
together. The way mammals solve problems is by feeling things. Our emotions and
sensations are really an integral part of the way we solve problems in our lives. However, in
the case of computers, we don't see the two going together."

{Yuval Harari

<https://www.vox.com/2017/3/27/14780114/yuval-harari-ai-vr-consciousness-sapiens-homo-deus-podcast> }

.....

Keep doing what you're doing,
if you like it. In time,
you'll wear a groove.

.....

Sing one more song,
just one more.

Just sing.

.....
I have to thank who ever invented free-verse poetry.
You've helped me make sense of my nonsense immensely.
.....

Fortune is a writer.
The tax collector edits.
The rich man gotta pay his consonant share.

The bluesman says,
"I'm so broke I couldn't buy a vowel,
and still the wheel goes round & round."
.....

It tickles me
to tickle you.
.....

In the dance between the individual and society,
I'm not for surveillance and mandates.
I'm for the free flow of the truth.
I'm for well-informed, intelligent people
making good choices, doing the right thing,
.....

Is your importance measured
by the number of keys
on your ring?
.....

fondle the Rosemary
bush, take a whiff.

Fond of Rosemary.

{cure for the liver?}
.....

Stress-free sheep,
good shepherd.
Tender meat.

{consternation}

.....
It is peculiar, isn't it?
That dog lovers will embrace
all the shades and patterns
of their pets,
but when it comes to people
all they seem to want to do is
quibble over kibbles
and water rights?
.....

On the official Florida Wing Civil Air Patrol website it says, "Thousands of young people from 12 years through age 21 are introduced to aviation through CAP's cadet program. The program allows young people to progress at their own pace through a 16-step program including aerospace education, leadership training, physical fitness and moral leadership."
<https://flwgc.cap.gov/programs/cadet-programs>

The only thing I remember is standing at attention in formation on the drill field, pouring sweat, the guy next to me asking the kid leading the drill, "Sir, can I have an itch?" And thinking (loudly to myself), 'Sure, take mine!'
.....

On toilet.
On phone.
On social.

Shit.
Text,
shit.

.....
You don't know what went wrong raising your kids. Where in particular they went off. If you knew, you'd of fixed it at the time. But you didn't see it, because the very thing that broke your kids is integral to who you are. Part and parcel. Your kids got the best of you, the worst of you, all of you. You put your all and everything into them, they have to pull themselves out.
.....

"We are part of a history marked by tribulation, violence, suffering and injustice, ever awaiting a liberation that never seems to arrive," Pope Francis said. "Those who are most wounded, oppressed and even crushed, are the poor, the weakest links in the chain." He said by focusing on the poor the Church "asks us not to turn aside, not to be afraid to take a close look at the suffering of those most vulnerable."

Unlike pop psychology's edict, "Insanity Is Doing the Same Thing Over and Over Again and Expecting Different Results," the Pope supplants Insanity with Faith.

.....
She says in song what
she can't say in words.

What she says in words
deflects what she feels.

{#Preachin'-n-Screechin' @Adele}
.....

Enough Shiva,
call in Vishnu!
#caring @SustainablePlanet
.....

There are no weeds in the wild,
only where cultivated people live.
There are no weeds in nature,
only volunteers.
.....

She's lived with anxiety since kindergarten.
She appears bold in the world, but inside burns
the constant corrosive fire of fear. Scorches.
Leaving her to only wonder how happiness feels.
.....

There is no right side of history.
Only the brutal legacy of animal suffering.
The story of panicked, hungry animals.

We may experience fleeting moments of relief from suffering.
Moments of Joy, moments of prosperity enough to share, kindness,
but these all came at the expense of other sentient beings.

Life must eat life to be life.

There have been great leaders who promised a way out of suffering,
but clearly these metaphysical paths can only be accessed
by a self-selecting few, not the masses mired in the toil,
neck deep in the exploit or be exploited, eat or be eaten reality.

If we are honest with ourselves,
if there is a right and/or a wrong,

we can only look at our own personal history
and recognize our neither here nor there imperfection.

We did what we must to survive as best we can
with as little harm as possible.

And we've all done more harm than good.

{We're just here for the story.}

.....

Beautiful sky this morning.
Bodes well for the day.

Somehow beauty in big places
brings comfort to the little
aches and pains.

.....

If you are a gazelle
and there is a lion chasing you
in hot pursuit, now is not the time
to ponder the meaning of life.

Such is the proletariat.

This crazyass driver barrels through the red light
swinging wide into a wild left turn,
careening right at me, now
is not the time to ponder
who's right, who's wrong.

Quick! Get out of the way.

{QuitYourJob@TheGreatResignation2021}

.....

{EXPLAINER}

Line Break Poetry

A line break is a poetic device that is used at the end of a line, and the beginning of the next line in a poem. It can be employed without traditional punctuation. Also, it can be

described as a point wherein a line is divided into two halves. Sometimes, a line break that occurs at mid-clause creates enjambment.

In poetry, enjambment is incomplete syntax at the end of a line; the meaning 'runs over' or 'steps over' from one poetic line to the next, without punctuation. Lines without enjambment are end-stopped. The origin of the word is credited to the French word enjamber, which means 'to straddle or encroach'.

.....

Driving east on interstate 8
at the intersection of interstate 5,
I can see snow in the mountains,
and simultaneously smell the briny breeze
of the Pacific Ocean at my back,
which makes me glad I'm not a pollywog,
because a pollywog wouldn't get any of that.

The phlebotomist at the blood bank tells me we produce 27 million new red blood cells a second, every second. One point six two billion, billion with a "B," every minute. I'm astounded. What happens to all the old red blood cells in the blood bloodstream, I ask. She goes off, "Old or damaged red blood cells are removed from the circulation by macrophages, a large phagocytic cell found in stationary form in the tissues of the spleen and liver or as a mobile white blood cell, and the hemoglobin they contain is broken down into heme and globin. The globin protein may be recycled, or broken down further to its constituent amino acids, which may be recycled or metabolized."

"Whoosh, scary busy world there," I moan.

I'm sure glad I don't live in my blood stream.

.....

If I had a Little Free Library
out front just off the sidewalk,
it'd declare itself in big handsome letters:

"Random Stack Book Nook
and small picture gallery!"

.....

Like most Americans over 70, I have too much stuff. So much stuff I don't even know what all I have. I try to unload as I can. In that spirit, I took a couple of books, including an unabridged copy of Mark Twain's Huck Finn, to a neighbor's Little Free Library. Unfortunately, I came back with a chair. It didn't have a seat, but I just couldn't let an old well-built bentwood chair be sent to the landfill. The craftsmanship alone deserved better

than that. So in the spirit of the day, I made a rule, "No new stuff," and with the child of Dr. Seuss, Mary Poppins and Martha Stewart in mind, I cobbled together a new use for the old chair. Sprayed with left-over glossy red apple paint, and with a circular hole cut in a piece of scrap plywood, I inserted an old terra cotta pot, and voila! Accented with a once bought, never used umbrella, supported by a thin 'only God knows where that came from' steel bar. My wife filled the pot with soil and a few succulent clippings from the garden, and there you have it: chair as pot holder with whimsy.

Initially I planned to finish the project to Mary Berry perfection, but as fitting the occasion, it turned out the rules called for shabby. Not shabby chic in that other Brit, Rachel Ashwell's 'sloppy, wrinkled' style, but simply shabby, or perhaps shabby comic.

Funny two ways: Funny peculiar, and funny haha.
More funny, less stuff.

.....

Once we met, my wife pulled me back
from the edge of being a nobody.
I never imagined I'd become somebody.
And in the eyes of the larger society,
I haven't. But in her eyes I'm everything.
And that's the world to me.

{ *Dean Martin,*
"You're nobody 'til somebody loves you
You're nobody 'til somebody cares [...]
So find yourself somebody to love." }

.....

In principle we are both pulling for the good
as we see it, both for ourselves and others.
We differ only on policy, the means to the ends.

Reasonable people can respectfully disagree
on how to get there, when the aim is the same.

In that 'how' is the conversation, the listening,
the learning, the co-operating that gets us
where we want, where we need to go.

.....

How to decide? Do the next thing,
like being guided by Google Maps.

.....

More than I ever wanted to know:

with Trump about civics.
with COVID-19, epidemiology.

And then there's the unintended consequence
of how civics combines with epidemiology.

{the rights and obligations of citizens in society to study and analyze the distribution,
patterns and determinants of health and disease conditions in defined populations.}

.....

In mammals, a dominant individual is sometimes called an alpha, and the lower rank is sometimes termed a beta. Alpha Alpha, Alpha Beta, Alpha Beta Kappa ... tastes like alotta grappa. An always mad dominance hierarchy, a pecking order, is a type of social hierarchy that arises when members of animal social groups interact, creating a ranking system. In social living groups, members are likely to compete for access to limited resources and mating opportunities. Rather than fighting each time they meet, relative rank is established between members of the same sex. Based on repetitive interactions, a social order is created that is subject to change each time a dominant animal is challenged by a subordinate one. Commanding influence, exercise control over. Rolling through stops signs like a Mercedes-Benz Unimog U 5000. It's a rage/outrage thing. Let's go Brandon! Hate for hate sake. Mean as a junk yard dog. Fighting mad intimidation rules. Amped all the time. Starting on reved, looking for a fight. The right to bred. The cultural aspects of imperialism. "Imperialism" here refers to the creation and maintenance of unequal relationships between peoples/civilisations, favoring the powerful, a more powerful civilisation. Cultural imperialism may take various forms, such as an attitude, a formal policy, or military action - insofar as each of these re-inforces cultural hegemony. With the advent of feminism many demure sectors lost the cunning role of sly submission to brute force and overall the dominating pecking order became more assertive, aggressive, mean, coming-of-age-yang. Women joined the military, pumped more iron, took to cage fighting, for the thrill of punching, being punched in the face [SEE: Halle Berry] It's a poverty thing. More young pregnant women pushing baby carriages with a smart phone in one hand, a latte in the holder, a tight grip on the dog lease. In control. But out of it. More dogs. "My dog doesn't bite. He's a good boy!" Yeah, right. Maybe your dog doesn't bite you. That's no good to me. Sexual assault, men assaulting women, wife-beating, men battering men, playground romps, barroom brawls, putting them in their place -- the pecking order. Boys will be boys. It's an animal thing. Useful for the conquering cultures. "That's what you get."

Is it possible that there are other ways to organize than institutional hierarchical power?
Measure personal relations? Prove yourself. Are there other ways than the pecking order?

There must be more useful ways to live, to co-exist on this planet.

.....

A squirrel in one uninterrupted dash – between fast moving
cars, under fast moving cars, over six lanes of traffic
crosses El Cajon Boulevard. Chutzpah.

.....

He was authentically grateful, which is what won me over. I was taking pictures of the
plants at The Hub shopping center, waiting for a job, when I sensed someone encroaching
uncomfortably close to my personal safe-distance viral pandemic space. Beneath my mask

I must of had my mean perturbed 'back off' face when I turn to face the invader. But he wouldn't have seen that, he is blind, and as I would learn, in search of an eye doctor office he'd never been to before. Uncertain where it was, or which way to go, he'd wandered off into the weeds next to me, his white cane sweeping back and forth in front of him. So, that's how it came to be I got the opportunity to help a blind man find the eye doctor office.

Directing him this way and that, up a couple of stairs, down a ramp, he was amazingly good at following the sound of my voice. And so sweet, heart-warmingly appreciative of the assistance. I didn't know where the place is either. Not too far away I saw a security guard standing there engrossed in his phone, "Excuse me sir, sir," I call out, "Sir?" He looks up wearing a mean perturbed 'whadya want' face, which changes night'n'day to wide-eyed innocence and wonder, when he sees the white cane sweeping back and forth in front of my new found friend. Which makes me smile to myself, 'see, you're not the only one.' The guard does know where the eye doctor office is. There's two flights of stairs there, or on the other side of the building there's an elevator. "I can walk stairs," says the blind man.

I knock on the glass door when we get to the eye doctor's office. No one responds to my knocking. I peer through the window and see the lights are on, but don't see anyone. The sign on the door reads, "You must wear a mask. If you have an appointment, call this number to gain access." "I don't have an appointment," still, the kind blind man taps the 'make a call' button on his phone for me to read the eye doctor's office phone number out loud for him.

My phone buzzes, I have a job to get to.

"You good for now?"

"Yes, thank you so much."

"All the best to you, my friend."

Authentically grateful.

How often do you get to put your life in perspective by helping a blind man?

.....

Take a moment,
and trace the thin line
from familiar pecking order
to cultural imperialism
for me,
will you?

.....

Luck favors those who make their own.

.....

My butt shouldn't be sagging,
much less my eye lids.
I'm too young,
too vital for this shit.

Sure, I won't even make NPR's two line
"Final goodbye: Recalling influential people who died"
obit, but at least I should go out looking as good as I feel,
right? If only...

.....

Function first,
then aesthetics.

Function maintains purpose in the work,
makes the thing DO what it must do.
Aesthetics addresses the human reaction
to the formal qualities of its sensory experience.

Hence, if you want the DO to do what it does,
pretty or not,
please reality first,
then the human's perception.

{#GitHub, have you been watching #HGTV?}

.....

History is written by the elite.
It's missing most of the facts.

.....

You: {

"I keep thinking that those tornadoes in the midwest were part of the rebalancing."

"I hope this pandemic can be a kind of turning point for us all in some way, that we may begin to find a deeper reciprocity with nature, and a reverence for these miraculous and beautiful human lives."

"...how we might better position ourselves into balance with the natural world, rather than continue our path of manipulation and destruction."

}

Me: {

This "rebalancing" view of nature and man's relationship to it, appears to put humans somehow outside of nature.

}

If evolutionary theory is to be believed, it took over 100 million years of being bombarded by icy comets and asteroids and a lot of cooling, before our dinged-up third rock from the sun planet could hold a water-based atmosphere that would sustain the kind of life form

organisms we would grow into. Even then, the first self-replicating forms on earth would be waterless carbon compounds, graphite. Though you may be enthralled with the climate and all the life that springs from the clouds, it's not unfair to say your primary person zero ancestor is akin to a #2 pencil. And I don't think anyone of us wants to go back to that.

This "rebalancing" view of nature and man's relationship to it, appears to put humans somehow outside of nature, and makes the Anthropocene somehow an event that isn't part & parcel of the planets evolution. It seems to suggest that rather than a dynamic ever evolving mega-system of interplay, there was at some point a particular preferred balanced status quo for the life forms here, an ideal garden that we should be striving to get back to. Such a view would be tenable if we accepted a Cartesian view that life and nature is at base a reductive coded machine that we can take apart like an automobile motor, rebuild and put back together again, better than ever. Not so much from a holistic view that sees if you try to take apart, rebuild and put a cat back together again, you will have lost what animates that lifeless corpse, and no longer have a cat.

In its deductive, reductionism, Cartesians fail to take responsibility for the whole being greater than the sum of its part. It fails to take responsibility for the 30 some odd trillion organism within our bodies that can be described as human, much less for the 39 or so trillion organism within our bodies that can NOT be described as human. And that each and every one of those is an intelligent individual 'life bit' with its own drive to survive, its own inherent means to do so, and its own peculiar means to express itself. That these 'cells' learn to cooperate in the competition for resources, learn to form colonies, tissues, organs of function within larger systems -- to form blood cells, livers to cleanse, blood streams, hearts to pump blood, lungs to oxygenate, a brain to coordinate sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous networks through which every human life bit can communicate its needs, as well as its current status relationship to the non-human life bits, from which the body whole can then decide its next action -- eat, shit, run, fight, love. And this expression of needs can go out in a cry, a word, a gesture to other like forms. All within coded languages that can construct inner/outer families, societies, nations, empires, and be inherited by the next generation through DNA and compounding thoughts. The neurons in your head have marvelous perceptive tools for sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, which can see and hear off into the far distance, objectify and construct symbols for what it sees, less well but like a dog, pick up the scent in the air and know something present, otherwise invisible, is near in the world, or like an ant, communicate to another direct experience without symbols by passing specific molecular compounds, such as sugar, turnips or cooked rice from tongue to tongue. It can be a grand harmonic orchestration, it can be a bloody hell civil war within and/or without. ***Here is where I caution: don't let a belief system hijack your lived experience.*** And what is within and what is without anyway? If the neurons in your gut feeling are deciphering what's called for, what's needed here next, to fuel this sovereign body wonderful, if the population in its sphere is vastly more non-human than human, what is within and what is without anyway, what is me and what is thee?

That's where I depart with Descartes. I want to assume sovereign responsibility for this holistic ship, I/we call Dan. This one man that is me ever learning to better care for this sovereign body wonderful. And take my place within a society, a body politic that chooses better and better, rather than worse and worse, and to calm the faster and faster urge to create, to destroy, to maintain, to make, to rend asunder, to sustain ourselves at every kaleidoscopic unfolding of elemental electrons, nuclear radiating, electrified anatomy, earth, sky, water faring jazz dancing, pencil pushing, car driving, plane flying citizen. And yes, I,

as we, are mostly animal, hungry and afraid, grabbing inequitably, unjustly, greedily for me and mine. But I/we are more, we have potential! Potential to do it differently. To individually/collectively think it through, feel it through, be the evolutionary change agent. If we take responsibility, we can decide to align our inner/outer nature to #SustainablePlanet. And that is where we have to begin, if we are to begin our true stewardship.

We can invite the ecstatic natural harmony we feel within our personal body temple space to begin the international give and take conversation for a true form of Democratic governance that includes all sentient beings. A governance that eschews power for power sake, evades control for fear of lack of control, a governance that respects appropriate scale, sees and is humbled by our caring place within the global nature of our individual nature, the galactic nature, the viral nature. We are that nature. Wherever on balance we are, we are that nature that is becoming anew. There is no guarantee of what we become. It depends on how we choice, or if we fail to choose, if we fail to frame the answers to the correct questions. This planet will go on in perfect balance of what it is in every instance with or without us. But we are not passive observers. The 'with us,' 'with us,' 'with us' part is up to us.

If nature is ever rebalancing, it's our job first to take care of our unique autonomous sovereign "cell" selves first, yes. AND THEN expand, expand, expand to include the nature of the inner/outer 'others' in our ever expanding spheres of symbiotic influence forming togetherness. For it is life itself we are interested in saving. True, there is life in every 'thing,' but you, my friend, are captain of this ship within the tumultuous seas we are sailing in, and I am looking to you to help navigate this flotilla back to safe harbors.

.....

Let's be honest.
We don't know squat about the afterlife.
All the knowing we know of is in this one.

.....

I know my continuity of reasoning,
my philosophy is messy,
but as poetry,
what a song!

But you!, you can both sing and dance.
So beautifully, such a joy!
to the ears, the mind, my heart.

.....

Dear Niels Bohr,

There is something significant I want to say to you, but paradoxically you've already said it. So I will say this, "What Niels Bohr said."

.....
There can be only one Absolute Truth,
and no one left to contest it.
.....

*"Not only have you made history,
you've changed history for the good."*

MAKING history is when in 1961 Roger Maris hit 61 homeruns in a season breaking the record set in 1927 by Babe Ruth.

CHANGING history is when Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball when he started at first base for the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947.
.....

Do you chirp like a bird, or
bark like a dog, when
you rise in the morning?
.....

In all my efforts, I've
only captured a tiny, oh
so tiny bit of the stream.
Yet this trickle reflects fully
the atmosphere it came from
and the ocean it's going to.
.....

"COVID has revealed us, and
we are sad, lonely, little people."
~Cody Brown {*Sisterwives*}
.....

You trust in the science, the facts,
the experts, in the God of your religion,

She trusts in the feelings emanating
from the marrow of her bones.

You may not agree, yet
"the opposite of a fact is falsehood, but
the opposite of one profound truth
may very well be another profound truth,"
as Niels Bohr tells us.
.....

Confidence is a product of experience. The more experience I have the more confident I am of the outcome and how to reach it, even in a variety of conditions. The less experience I have, the more cautious, self-conscious, unsure, but hopefully wide-eyed open and receptive of learning the ropes.

There is a difference in being certain and being confident. I can be certain of an address, but misremember it. But having gone there many times, I'm confident that I can get there again.

.....

I was some 35 years into a sitting practice when I spent 10 days with Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, aka Ajahn Geoff, abbot of the Metta Forest Monastery in Valley Center, California to learn his Thai Forest Tradition style of Vipassana. A couple years before I had done a long retreat learning the "Burmese Method" of S. N. Goenka's school in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. I wanted to compare and contrast. In my last audience with Ajahn Geoff he complimented me, "You sit well." Then came the caveat, "But as far as practice on the path, you haven't even started." "To start you must take the vows of a monk. That is the only entrance to the path." I read that as settle down and commit to a lineage, but didn't say a word. Still he must have seen it in my sparkling eyes. Not wanting my current self to encumber my future self, I had long ago vowed NOT to take any vows. Ajahn Geoff's parting words, "Make wise choices."

A few more years further down my 'not path' it became apparent that I had gone as deep as I could go on my own. It was time to let go of practice and be it, to simply live what I had learned. I traded in my depth work to live superficially care-free, as it were on the surface, just another human amazed with the mystery. If there is one talisman I walked away with, it is the preeminence of awareness.

And the light, everlasting utility of the breath as a focal point of awareness.

Science and Religion inclusive, I believe that learning is empirically, irrefutably self-evident, the everlasting utility of the breath as a focal point of awareness. And, oh so, pragmatically useful. That is, you can't take a past breath, you can't take a future breath, you can only take a present breath. And if your focus is present with your present breath, you are in This! place, this humanly scale appropriate place, that is always here and always now. And That! place is where we can begin to sink into the preeminence of awareness. You can go off and describe it, analysis it, is it an in breath or an out breath, is it a long breath or a short breath, is it a cool breath or a warm breath, but all of that is secondary. But of course, you already know all this and will soon dive deeper in your interactive online exploration designed to bring this "animating force that moves the body from within" back to the center of your awareness.

Yet gratefully having this particular utility in my pocket, again and again I'm reminded, the wisest choice I can make is to come back to the awareness of the sensation of the breath curling around my nostrils, for its own sake and reside there. And that there is where I find the one that is the One, the I am me and we are we and we are all together one that is the simple neutral awareness, equanimous awareness best suited for greeting the dawn, for that inner 'hello' greeting of every stranger passing by, the ones I am likely never to see again, who hold the bits and pieces of the wonder, the splendiferous beauty, the

unfathomably real we are here for. Because when it comes right down to it, what we are here for is experience, This! experience.

.....

To sit or not to sit

A traveller I picked up in my hippy van driving up the Pacific Highway towards Big Sur invited me to take him to the Zen Mountain Center in the Ventana Wilderness area of the Los Padres National Forest, southeast of Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. Roshi Shunryu Suzuki, whose book Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind had left an lasting impression on me, was the Center's abbot. There I'd take my first instruction in sitting in the Sōtō Zen Buddhist style, or for that matter, any formal sitting meditation. Moments before the afternoon zazen sitting session my new found friend told me, in hushed tones, that singers Joan Baez and her sister Mimi Farina were skinny-dipping just down the path in the Tassajara Hot Springs. It suddenly became one of those moments. It was the early 1970s, and with the voice of an angel Joan was at the peak of her popularity, as well an iconic inspiration for values dear to me, social justice, civil rights and pacifism. I had a choice to make. I had to choose in this moment to sit and do nothing, or go skinny-dipping with two of the most seraphic sirens on the planet. Fortunately for me, I was shy by nature. The choice was made before it arose. And thus began a 35+ year sitting practice.

{<https://www.sfzc.org/practice-centers/tassajara>, <https://mahavana.dhamma.org/>,
<https://www.watmetta.org/>}

.....

Death is a fact of life.
Irrefutable. Perhaps,
the defining fact of life.

.....

Ca, my dearest wife,

Please don't be mad & upset
every time I do stupid, mindless things,
like putting out too many shirts
for tomorrow all at once.

Because, if you do, as
I'm losing my mind, you'll be
mad & upset all the time.

And you don't want to live like that.
Right?

Just remember,
though I'm losing my mind,
I still can feel your love.

Your devoted, adoring husband,
Dan

.....

We live in an age, the Big Data age,
where there's a wild, wild west competition
for grabbing (and selling) audience.
Influencers can easily grab audience
with big dicks, tits and ass, with cuteness
and turn a nifty profit.

Above that din it becomes more difficult
to find an audience for the deeper, quieter,
more enduring qualities worth living for.

You know the popular list:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. A sense of curiosity and wonder | 11. Honesty | 21. Resourcefulness |
| 2. Acceptance | 12. Humility | 22. Responsibility |
| 3. Authenticity | 13. Integrity | 23. Self-belief |
| 4. Bravery | 14. Kindness | 24. Self-discipline |
| 5. Compassion | 15. Loyalty | 25. Willpower |
| 6. Dependability | 16. Optimism | |
| 7. Drive | 17. Passion | |
| 8. Forgiveness | 18. Patience | |
| 9. Generosity | 19. Perseverance | |
| 10. Gratitude | 20. Reliability | |

Is the driver the difference between
embracing Hedonism over Holism?
Or is it simply slipping down the easy path,
going to extremes, so you can eventually
know where the balanced middle is?

{Character Traits to Cultivate list by:
<https://www.goalcast.com/positive-character-traits-for-happiness-and-success/>}

.....

The NEW Lord's Prayer

"The Lord" was once at the center,
was a useful term to express, beyond
belief the aspirations of exulted aspiration.

It began as homage, loyalty to the land
"owner," the rules maker. And morphed
to be a universal stand in for "a higher power."

But then, again, there is no higher, no lower.
There's only the all of us, standing here
in our unique place, in our sacred space,
holding dear, one another.

.....

I can't imagine having lived
a more rich, full life.
I had loneliness, depression, rage,
alienation, and all their opposites.
Too many to list.

I had it all. Still do.
I am it. This life I've lived!

.....

Why are all these chefs so fat?
#CookingForTasteNotNutrition

.....

Hug up close to the present moment,
that's where the actual living happens.

Feel the sensation of your breath
curling around your nostrils,
at the tip of your nose. Ah,
here you are ...
aware.

.....

Biology does not sit too comfortably within sociology.

.....

I was wearing a cheap plastic grotesque old man face mask,
a black beret and a paint splattered smock,
holding a 4" brush and a paper palette.
The MC leaned in and asked,
"What are you?"
"A French artist," I shyly whispered.

It was the costume contest at the Promenade de Paris, a Junior League fundraiser for the Beaux Arts of the Fort Lauderdale Art Center, for which my mom had been the mastermind and first Chairwoman the year before.

I had just turned 10 and was the only kid in the competition. I won Honorable Mention.

Looking back, it was the first inkling I had that I was destined to be an artist.

The Promenade continues to be a significant Winterfest event in Fort Lauderdale, still benefiting the Museum of Art.

.....

Look within.

Be honest with yourself.

It'll keep you humble.

.....

Sugar/Headache Theory

My best guess is that my brothers', cousins', nephews' cluster headaches, as well as my own in 5th, 6th & 7th grades, and my mother's ice pick headaches are not so much hereditary as cultural. I lay the prime cause at the feet of refined sugar. I am from an affluent family of sugar addicts. Refined sugar was cheap and ubiquitous, we bought it in 5lbs bags. loads of processed breakfast cereals to which we added refined sugar and cases of soda pop. Consuming it on demand, we began to blow out our neural sugar pathways well before we were out of the crib. For the origins of our culture's addiction to refined sugar, look to the slave driven rum trade in the 17th century Caribbean sugarcane plantations.

Refined sugar is vastly more potent than natural sugars in foods. If you chew on sugar cane to get the juice, you also get other compounds that naturally limit how much you'll consume. These so called "impurities" are what are refined out of natural sugar, including molasses, which plantation slaves discovered could be fermented into alcohol, making rum.

An increasingly important distinction among sugars as they pertain to health is whether they occur naturally in foods such as fruit, vegetables, and dairy, or whether they are added sugars, added to foods and beverages during manufacturing, processing, or preparation. Though glucose is food for the brain, our bodies do not need, or benefit from, eating added sugar.

The effects of too much sugar are well documented. webmd.com says, "Chances are you already know that eating too much sugar isn't good for you. Yet you're probably still overdoing it."

In short, it's best to limit all sources of added sugar to within the recommended intake level. High refined sugar intake leads to the "sugar high"/ "sugar crash" syndrome. Habitual high

refined sugar intake blows out your neural sugar pathways leading to chronic physical, mental and emotional disease. "Glucose level fluctuations affect your brain more than any other organ. Sugar causes hormonal changes, specifically with epinephrine and norepinephrine. Those shifts change blood vessel behavior in the brain, causing headaches."

Sure there are many other mitigating factors, but the high, particularly fast burning refined sugars leave us increasingly less resilient and more prone to an array of debilitating health issues, including severe and chronic headaches.

.....

With the outbreak of the pandemic I, like so many, got clued to the headline news. So I made a 'Chaotic Collage' project out of it, which seemed fitting, as I haven't experienced a more chaotic times out there in the world. That project will end at the end of this year, and a new, and hopefully more hopeful one will emerge with the working title: **PROJECT Way Out: On the way out, a way forward** {#SustainablePlanet}

To help visualize my inner states while shut away from the pandemic, I made a series of "Portraits of People to Spend a Pandemic With," mostly pencil drawings and painting on the corrugated cardboard that was piling up from all the suddenly new home deliveries. That was precious time well spent for me.

Now that the governor is no longer paying me to stay home, I'm out 30 hours a week delivering for Ubereats. The work pays the bills and satisfies my innate wanderlust. I get to go places, see people and things I otherwise wouldn't. It also keeps my brain active solving problems which I can quickly forget about and move on. You know, use it or loss it. So that exercise is good for me, and then I get to come home and spend the afternoon, evening and weekends with the love of my life. Do simple chores. Leaving me more than grateful for the good life we live, and enjoying the heck out of what's left of it.

.....

Raw and rough-hewn,
I'll say 'good-bye' here.
And 'hello' there.

.....

.....

.....

I knew I was a late bloomer, ...oh,
but this is ridiculous.

.....

{211231}