

6/15/2020

While halfway listening to GDL this morning a feeling of urgency came over me. I was listening to two authors of childrens' books talk and it hit me that I love to write and have loved to write and that I needed to gain my momentum and begin that exercise.

I usually get kind of wound up around writing but then I back off so I have not really produced any significant writings. I believe i get stuck in the survival swamp and get bogged down there...

6/16/2020

While I was doing my excrise routine this morning, I could not help but to think of my mother. The yoga routine around breathing and movement brought this thought to my mind, " I think my mother would have loved to learn this." The one thing that stands out in my memory of her is that she seemed to always be seeking out information pertaining to What i believe was a desire to create changes in herseelf that would produce a positive outcome. S

I had the opportunity to be the youngest child so I needed to have supervision while my older siblings were able to have a little more freedom. One thing that the need for supervision gave me was an opportunity to somewhat of a partner in her quests. When it seemed to me that she was seeking after some kind of spiritual enlightenment, I was with her as she perused the Christian Science reading Room at 4th and Oak Streets. I also was privvy to the religious radio programs she listened to. I soon began to realize that the information she was seeking was not the conBventional "Baptist" information. Our family was a Baptist family and Christian Science, (Mary Baker Eddy) and The World of Tomorrow, (Herbert W. Armstrong) were not within that convention. I don't really remember how old I was when I was taking in what she was listening to, but I must have been somewhere between 6 and 14 years old. At any rate, I believe i stored the fact in the back of my mind that a person could seek after different forms of knowledge be akay. I think that although i did not realize the behavioral acknowledgement at the time, I think that having been exposed to it allowed me to feel a ceratain comfortability seeking outside the usual box.

I thought about that today and felt a warmth in my heart as I somewhat imagined my mother wanting to learn the yoga movements. I have also felt this same type of feeling when I have incorporated other things into my own life. for example, if i moved to a certain house or apartment, i would think how much my mother would have loved to have been in that space

either with me as a visitor or in that space on her own. I've even had these feelings while shopping, walking, relaxing, and even working. I have thought, My mother would be very comfortable here, or doing that, or interacting, or just relaxing.

10:43am

I need to call Georgiana to ask her if she has ever heard the story of the buggy whip. The 'buggy whip' encounter is what I call it and it has to do with a story my mother had told me about one of our relatives. I need to try to find out which relative, Although I think it may have been my maternal Great grandfater, William Henry Thomas. I need to find out because in my heart, I would like to begin to write some of the stories of family that I have heard and I want to try to make them as accurate as possible. I was not able to get her yesterday so I will try again today.

6/17/20

Okay Shahid, I have been writing everyday since we talked on Monday. I am not at the level of producing 3 pages when I write but I have been writing. At the moment I just am writing stuff that pops into my head. Stuff that doesn't have a particular theme or direction but just stuff that gives me an opportunity to get into the habit of writing. I admit though that while there is a desire somewhere deep inside of me, I have another feeling inside that wants to have me let go of writing.

Last night it hit me that I have a real clinging in me to monetary security and it is this feeling that has me examining everything that I give myself to on the basis of what will this get me monetarily. This feeling is a little frightening because it tends to have me hold back on those aspirations deep in my soul. I unconsciously and maybe even consciously manifest a moment of let me just give up on this because I don't see how this can help me fix my money problems, especially at this late stage of my life.

I struggle between "I like to write" and "I desperately need more money than I have" so how does writing fix that? It is at these moments that I just think "let me put the writing aside." Today I plan to write and I hope tomorrow I plan to write, and that I will sit down and write until it does become habit. Until it becomes a habit like brushing my teeth, relecting or meditating, or taking my garbage out. I need to put my clinging to that thought of not having enough monetary funds to do what I want to do in life in its propewr place so that I can fulfil my desire to write.

6/18/2020

Last night I lost a little more sleep than I did the night before. Part of my loss was because I had

started to think of some things that kind of stimulated rather than calm me down and part was due to some aches. I really did not sleep well between 4 and 6am. I went ahead and got up to start my day anyway. I have a problem sleeping now. Once my eyes or mind detect daylight, I can't concentrate on sleep. I am ready to get started for the day.

I realize that I am and have been a pretty disciplined person and that I have been this way for a long period in my life. I think that some of it stems from the discipline that I incorporated into my life when I became a member of the band at DuValle Jr. High School and got a little more embedded when I was part of the marching band at Male High School. I believe, at least for me, I needed to have discipline--self discipline in order to be the young musician that I wanted to be. I needed to be self motivated to practice to make myself better at playing my instrument and to remember and execute the many maneuvers that had to be performed during a half time show routine. I held onto that discipline and may not even been aware of how it played out in my daily life. So much so that even after getting married and having children, I always had a routine way of doing things that had me giving a great amount of attention to scheduling and execution.

I go to bed around a routine and work through my day on a routine. In many ways I believe that the skills I learned are beneficial. There are times when I see where this has weighed me down, too. Sometimes I am so on point that I find myself not being able to have a flow in my day. I can get so caught up into managing time according to the clock that I don't relax and let things flow more naturally. I also think that this may add to my worries around not having enough funds to meet my obligations. When I am so attuned to things having to be done according to "clock flow" that I can not open myself to letting things that I feel I want or need in my life have "natural flow". I strongly believe this holds me back in many ways.

Once I was awakened this morning and the thought of my routinized life came to my mind, I decided that I would try to incorporate the positive aspects of each "clock-flow" and "natural-flow" in my day today. So far it seems to be a positive thing. I have used the clock to get some things done that need to be done but I have also allowed for some space that lets me flow a little more loosely than I would normally flow. I'll assess all of this at the end of the day and see if this is a behavioral change I need to have in my life for more productivity and peace of mind.

6/19/2020

I am really concerned about finances. While I was cleaning house today and semi listening to Great Day live, I was struck by one of the presenters that Angie fenton had on today. This gentleman is a financial advisor and was talking about estate planning. I was very interested in what he had to present especially what thsi entailed. As I was listening all kinds of questions began to pop into my head and most of all; it made me think about my own situation and how I need to get on top of it.

Of course, when i was finished I immediately called my go to guy, my brother, Nat to get his take and to have him help to guide me to what I need to do. After talking with Nat, I see where my understanding of wealth and how I can begin to look at myself in terms of what I may possess. I am hoping to delve into this more deeply. Some things that I plan to begin to research are;

- * a simple will
- * what I may have already like insurance and retirement
- * where I may get help with understanding what I have
- * how to grow what I have

I am excited to learn more and hope that what i learn came lead me in a positive direction.

6/20/2020

Georgiana brought to my mind when we spoke the other day that many of the stories that we may have heard in our lives about our ancestors should be taken with precaution. They should be taken with precaution because until we have verification, we may not fully understand the context in which the story was told. She mentioned as a good example of this is the story we have heard about our Maternal great grandfather, William Henry Thomas. We have all heard that he was a musician who "played" with John Phillip Sousa. Well, I think we have enough verification of him having been musician to substantiate that story, however, whether or not he played with Sousa leaves a lot to be explored. He certainly was a musician during the time of Sousa and also in the same area of Sousa. It still is not clear enough to say that when the story was passed on the storyteller actually meant he was a member of Sousa's band.

Another example of this is the story that we have all heard about Great grandfather, Will Henry

was that he had music that was destroyed in the 1937 flood in Louisville, Ky. Most of us who heard the story took for granted that he wrote music and was a composer of his own compositions. Georgiana brought to mind that just because he had sheets of music did not necessarily mean that he was a composer of his own music. There is a possibility that he may have been in possession of someone else's music where he had copied the notes or it could have been sheets of music that he bought or was given. So whether bought, copied, or given the sheets were in his possession and ultimately belonged to him. We can almost certainly verify that the music was lost in the flood of 1937.

When I think about the context in which we hear our stories is so important to grasping a greater and fuller understanding of the story. When I bear this in mind, I think about my elusive paternal great grandfather, Edward Green. I have been researching for a good length of time trying to uncover the facts behind his existence and presence in Kentucky. We know very little about him but do have some information that needs further perusal to uncover the clear facts. We pretty much have heard that he was from South Carolina but when you look at some of the documentation pertaining to him, you find out that South Carolina is only one place associated with him. Georgia and North Carolina are also documented as places associated with him. And there is also mention that he had fought in the Civil War. Again there are documents that mention him in regards to the Civil War but the primary sources of documentation are yet to be found.

6/21/2020

I was just about to give up on writing today. I was about to give up, not because I am through with trying to make writing a habit, but because I have been extremely tired today and had a real whopper of a backache earlier. This really has been a pretty good and productive day in spite of my physical woes. I did my usual Sunday laundry and because the dinner I had prepared for yesterday's dinner was put away until today, I did not have to prepare a meal. That helped a lot. I had another one of my overdue long talks with my nephew, Porter and as usual, we covered every subject from finances to politics. Of course our conversation as always, was interjected with lots of humor and bursts of laughter.

I also did my transcribing with Nat'l Archives on the African American soldiers of the Civil War. After I had made about 15 entries and was ready to bring it to a halt, I realized that I had not signed in. I hope those transcriptions get counted even though I want get credit for them but that is okay.

As I mentioned earlier, I have had a tremendous lower back pain today. My back has actually hurt a little more than usual throughout the night. I think that what my Chiropractor, Dr.

Quinones had mentioned to me that I probably would find myself being able to predict the weather with osteoarthritis, may be manifesting itself as true. For the past 4 days the weather here has been sunny and comfortable and although I have had pain but not extreme pain. Late yesterday evening the weather was moving toward more unstableness and cloudiness and rain. My pain has been more extreme. That bigger pain is what I had to deal with today and it has affected me with more pain. I'll keep my eye on barometric changes and how I feel as though those changes do impact me.

Well, I have been writing for about the past half hour and that is not what I intended to do. It just dawned on me that whether I make an intention to write or fight and struggle with writing, once I actually sit down and start the process, words just start flowing and I find more to write about. I get drawn into writing by just writing. Hmmm.

6/22/2020

Well, I have been writing on a daily basis for one week now. I can't say that at this point I have made daily writing a habit but I have established a conscience thought in my mind around daily writing. When I start my day writing is on my mind and if for some reason I don't write early in the day, the thought that I have not written pops into my head. Hopefully I am on my way to it becoming a habit.

Today is starting out on a good foot. For that I am grateful. I have some pain in my lower back but not to the extent as yesterday. I did my exercises today with walking and Tai chi/yoga movement. I have not taken any medicine for pain thus far but intend to take a Meloxicam at breakfast. My regular morning routines that I have established for myself are just about completed. I have only my transcriptions left. Hopefully I won't forget to sign in so that I can get credited for them.

6/23/2020

While looking through some boxes of stuff that my cousin, Bill Redden brought to me to sort through, I found a couple of interesting things. The things that were in the box were mainly old documents from my Aunt Cassie's belongings. These were mostly stubs from her KTRS pension payments, bank account slips, newspaper clippings about her divorce from her husband, John Baird, and some other personal artifacts.

One of the artifacts was a letter my maternal grandfather, Ennis Redden had written to personnel at the Greyhound Bus Station where he worked as a Porter. He had received a

letter from Greyhound's Terminal Manager, W. L. Porter informing him that a lease he had entered into with a former manager there, Eddie Shaw and the Greyhound Lines Corporation was going to be terminated, effective April 1, 1952.

It seems that Granpa Redden was not at all pleased to have received this letter so on the back of it he drafted a response. I will attempt to transcribe that letter here:

Mens Greyhound Rest Room (Mens) 5th and Broadway Louisville, Ky(.) This coming month May will be sixteen years of service. Mr. Degonia allowed me some salary pay each month Mr. Porter set PA at \$120. a month for the Housing Project as my income. Now he is taking this pay away from me leaving me nothing in a time like this where every fim is increasing the pay of their best help. You should do something about this. I have signed his different kind of contracts. I have no Social Security yet I have a card he have me to get and some few receipts for 1937 and 1938. I am 65 years old August 1st this year. I do not believe you as this kind of a person. To allow this. If Mr. harrison was living he would go to bat for me as he was asked me to take the job and I did about 16 years ago. I have taken care of this Rest Room ever since I opened it up.

Yours Respectfully,

Ennis Redden

I found this letter very interesting and it gave me a little insight into my grandfather's personality. I have always remembered him as a caring, gentle yet strong man and I think for me this letter hits those thoughts spot on. Grandpa was not going to go out without a fight and even his fight was done with dignity and respect.

I was talking with my brother, Nat one day and I asked him what Grandpa's voice was like. I can not capture his voice in my head no matter how hard I try. I clearly remember my Grandmother's voice with her inflections and such. She would replace the letter, g in Kroger with a J so it sounded like Krojer and not Kroger. I remember her talking a lot throughout the day but I can't hear Grandpa's voice. I asked Nat was Grandpa a gentle man and he said yes he was in his estimation. he did not remember him being harsh in his words or deeds. I agreed that what I remember reflected that same vision.

It is funny that I remember the character of Grandpa but not his voice. I ask myself is because he had that stroke that left him paralyzed and unable to speak? When I remember Grandpa I think of security; not physical security; I didn't see him as "The Rock", Dwayne Johnson with muscle ripple everywhere and could take you down with one blow. He wasn't like John Wayne either, even though there was rifle or shotgun or whatever that weapon was that leaned against the wall of one of my grandparents' rooms. Sometimes that thing would fall over and we would just hoist it back up into its old position. The type of security that I felt was what I will call: security

of love. I felt love in his presence and for me that was security.

I think that the security overpowered the need for me to hear his voice. Many times we think that communication is complete only through the words we speak or hear with and from each other. If we can't hear those words or if we can't speak words there is no effective communication established. For me, I felt rich in love from Grandpa because his person communicated security of love. I can see myself now watching him mow the lawn. I am there with him painstakingly and carefully making his lawn look good. I am there with him now when we are sitting on the glider as he works on some clean up project. I feel the back and forth motion of the glider and its creaks, and the love that Grandpa was sending to me. I don't remember if we talked to one another. Did I ask him questions; did he tell me stories? I can't say that he did, but it is like when I am sitting next to him in my memory, I felt so much love coming through his actions and person.

6/24/2020

I have been thinking about the COVID-19 Pandemic and its affect on my life. While the idea of a disease out there that has impacted so many lives in the world in very negative and disastrous ways, so far I have been spared that devastation in my own family. I sure hope it continues that way but it is apparent to me that I, nor anyone else, cannot guarantee that this will continue to be so. Like so many others, I am hoping that our learned women and men in science and medicine will come up with a cure or at least a vaccine, sooner than later. I have faith that a vaccine can and will be found and hope that those who have taken the oath to serve us in our varying illnesses will use their knowledge for humankind's benefit and not for its detriment.

I must admit in all honesty that there have been times when fear of contracting the disease has come over me but I am hoping that the lifestyle that I have chosen to live for myself might have a positive impact on my ability to ward off the negative affects of this virus. I don't go out much and actually, since I retired from my work in 2019, I go out even less. I shop for the essential items I need, keep medical appointments, and such but nothing too much beyond that. When I do go out I have begun to wear a mask. I did not wear one in the beginning because I was listening to the guidelines presented and at the time, masks for individuals who were not ill or in the healthcare field were not prescribed. Eventually though, as more understanding of how we are impacted by this disease became clearer and masks became the recommendation, I started to wear one. I admit that I don't particularly enjoy wearing one, but I am adjusting and do believe that maybe a mask might be a beneficial addition. I remember going onto a small hardware store in my neighborhood one day and being the only person with a mask on. I did get some strange looks when I entered and wondered if I would be asked to

shed the mask or exit the store. I did poise myself mentally for what kind of response I should give if either of these assumptions proved to manifest itself. Thankfully, I think I was given an unspoken 'okay' to continue on with my shopping for the day. And I did go on with my business and even interacted with the associates there. It worked out well in the end.

Sometimes when I am watching the news and listen to all the tragic stories that are told about different cases that happen on a daily basis, my mind fluctuates from the devastation of this virus to some of the positive things that occur in the midst of this all. I feel strange when I think or say it but one of the positives that has come from the Pandemic centers around my grandson and schooling. My grandson's young life had been impacted before COVID from the escalation of violence among young people. He has seen friends lose their lives far more than he should. He has suffered with anxiety, fear, panic attacks, and PTSD for the past three to four years. What this has contributed to in him is the constant sway of emotions ranging from anger to sorrow to almost giving up. I see this especially in his school work. His grades, ability to stay focused, and emotions slip and slide regularly. I am most grateful that I am retired because it has allowed me an opportunity to pay more attention to him and become more active in his school life. I have acted as an advocate and go between between his counselor and him.

Fortunately, we, that is; he, his counselor, and I had just come up with several plans to help him make progress. COVID hit right in the middle of these plans and schools were closed here in Kentucky with NTI, (Non-Traditional Instruction) becoming the curriculum for the moment. I was glad when the schools closed. I was glad because I saw a young teen struggling so hard trying to figure out how to garner up the energy and inner motivation to make it through to the end of the year. NTI came in as an opportunity for him to attend to school work but yet be out of the mix of everyday school life. With the computer learning he could take his time, focus on what needed to be done, interact with teachers but not right in their faces but at a safe distance that took away the clash that sometimes occur between students and teachers. He began to make progress in his subject areas and in the areas that had been the most difficult for him. He made progress. Did he become an overnight genius and suddenly become a star student? Not by any means. What did happen, however, was that he was able to get his work done and see his grades go up a bit. When teachers that he may have otherwise had a clash began to send him notes of encouragement to keep up the pace, his morale was boosted. He met one of the goals that our team: counselor, student and advocate hoped would happen. It is in that respect that COVID's impact brought about a positive result.

For me, COVID has slowed things down. In the midst of the masks, social distancing, quarantine, and shut-downs-- in the midst of being forced to avoid large gatherings and stick closer to home, I feel that life has had an opportunity to become more vibrant and abundant because there is more time to reflect and take action like never before.

