

Even *children* are busy now, scheduled down to the half-hour with classes and extracurricular activities. They come home at the end of the day as tired as grown-ups.

Busyness serves as a kind of existential reassurance, a hedge against emptiness; obviously your life cannot possibly be silly or trivial or meaningless if you are so busy, completely booked, in demand every hour of the day.

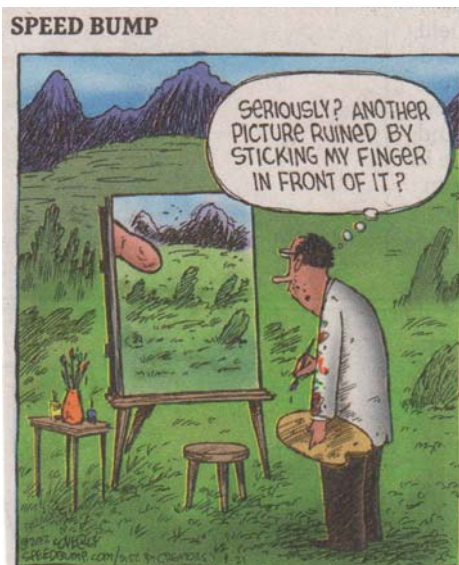


I am not busy. I am the laziest ambitious person I know. Like most writers, I feel like a reprobate who does not deserve to live on any day that I do not write, but I also feel that four or five hours is enough to earn my stay on the planet for one more day. On the best ordinary days of my life, I write in the morning, go for a long bike ride and run errands in the afternoon, and in the evening I see friends, read or watch a movie. This, it seems to me, is a sane and pleasant pace for a day. And if you call me up and ask whether I won't blow off work and check out the new American Wing at the Met or ogle girls in Central Park or just drink chilled pink minty cocktails all day long, I will say, what time?

Idleness is not just a vacation, an indulgence or a vice; it is as indispensable to the brain as vitamin D to the body, and deprived of it we suffer a mental affliction as disfiguring as rickets. The space and quiet that idleness provides is a necessary condition for standing back from life and seeing it whole, for making unexpected connections and waiting for the wild summer lightning strikes of inspiration – it is, paradoxically, necessary to getting any work done. “Idle dreaming is often of the essence of what we do,” wrote Thomas Pynchon in his essay on sloth. Archimedes’ “Eureka” in the bath, Newton’s apple, Jekyll and Hyde and the benzene ring: history is full of stories of inspirations that come in idle moments and dreams. It almost makes you wonder whether loafers, goldbricks and no-accounts aren’t responsible for more of the world’s great ideas, inventions and masterpieces than the hardworking.



My own resolute idleness has mostly been a luxury rather than a virtue, but I did make a conscious decision, a long time ago, to choose time over money, since I’ve always understood that the best investment of my limited time on earth was to spend it with people I love. I suppose it’s possible I’ll lie on my deathbed regretting that I didn’t work harder and say everything I had to say, but I think what I’ll really wish is that I could have one more beer with Chris, another long talk with Megan, one last good hard laugh with Boyd. Life is too short to be busy.



The Road Between

To stand up and be worn to something deeper
Is a pledge that living forces us to keep.

I drove 500 miles down the California coast with the mountains on the left and the ocean on the right. For days they spoke to me of standing up and wearing down. Of course, I was driving down a road we have made down the middle. During the fourth day, the road became a ribbon. It was here it was most beautiful.

I found the world out there all in here, and now I know; The current of life requires us to stand up, again and again, and we are not defeated when we are worn down, just exposed anew at a deeper level. We are meant to live between the two.

In this way, life keeps getting more and more precious. It is a natural law like gravity or osmosis: *Stand up to be worn bare*. It is how everything in the way is thinned, so that we can feel just how thoroughly alive we are.

The Book of Awakening by Mark Nepo

Relationships: The Work of Love

Working Through Our Fears in Matters of Love

This weekend seminar shows us:

- How afraid we are of real and lasting intimacy.
- How and why we sabotage our love relationships.
- How to have more loving relationships in our lives.

The very same ego consciousness that helped us to survive the emotional pain of our childhood and adolescence comes back to haunt and sabotage us in our most significant relationships in the present. If the experience of loving and being loved is associated in the unconscious mind with the experience of trauma, violation, conflict or abandonment, nothing will be scarier than "love" approaching. The ego consciousness will mobilize to protect the inner family from perceived *enemies* like trust, closeness, commitment, vulnerability and honesty, not to mention men or women. The extent to which the adult consciousness has become identified with the ego in this lifetime is the extent to which love in all intimate, committed, monogamous, long-term, primary relationships will become problematic, dysfunctional and even destructive.

In the weekend seminar Relationships: The Work of Love we examine ourselves as the perpetrators of pain. We examine the myriad flight and fight responses that we have employed to keep from our hearts and souls the very people we say we want to love, the very people who have committed the "crime" of loving us. This most certainly could include our love interest but we will also examine our relationship with our father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter and past loves to discover the ego patterns that have run us and our relationships into the ground. We begin to move from being baffled, righteous, or victimized by our love lives to taking 100% responsibility for the state that our most significant relationships are in. All of our dynamics and imposed barriers to real intimacy, committed love and monogamy are faced.

Only then can we discover and examine the components of a healthy, loving and mutually beneficial relationship. Only then can we discover that with courage, vulnerability, honesty and humility, we can begin to experiment with laying down our survival-oriented, fear based ego patterns and return to our connection with the child and spiritual consciousness within as an entirely new base from which to interact with the people of our lives.

**Cost - \$275.00 + HST per person (deferred payment plan available)
bursaries available to those in financial need**

**When: Saturday, December 8th, 2012
Sunday, December 9th, 2012**

If you have further questions or would like to register contact:
Reena Taank (seminar coordinator) at (604) 689-4532 / reena@telus.net
or
Joel at (604) 535-4220 or (604) 732-9091

Joel's Vancouver counselling office:

Hycroft Centre
Suite 117 - 3195 Granville Street
Vancouver, BC V6H 3K2
604-732-9091

Joel's White Rock counselling office:

1521 161B Street
South Surrey, BC V4A 9W3
604-535-4220

www.joelbrass.com
info@joelbrass.com

To subscribe someone else or unsubscribe to this newsletter,
please e-mail me at the above address.