

SX-ED
SESSION 2

THE SOUL ON STRIKE

It is impossible to separate the spheres of the economy and the political these days. In each case, a managed disorder, the administration of chaos. The social pacts and productive truces of the old welfare state are gone. Instability is now the order of the day. Disorder, a technique of government. Depression starts to look less and less like a drying up of desire than a stubborn, if painful, libidinal slowdown or sabotage, a demobilization. The soul on strike.

1. MFA vs POC

From what I saw the plurality of students and faculty had been educated exclusively in the tradition of writers like William Gaddis, Francine Prose, or Alice Munro—and not at all in the traditions of Toni Morrison, Cherrie Moraga, Maxine Hong-Kingston, Arundhati Roy, Edwidge Danticat, Alice Walker, or Jamaica Kincaid. In my workshop the default subject position of reading and writing—of Literature with a capital L—was white, straight and male. This white straight male default was of course not biased in any way by its white straight maleness—no way! Race was the unfortunate condition of nonwhite people that had nothing to do with white people and as such was not a natural part of the Universal of Literature, and anyone that tried to introduce racial consciousness to the Great (White) Universal of Literature would be seen as politicizing the Pure Art and betraying the (White) Universal (no race) ideal of True Literature.

In my workshop what was defended was not the writing of people of color but the right of the white writer to write about people of color without considering the critiques of people of color.

2. since Penn Badgley loves forwarding emails so much

When people write long essays for free for XXXX's website, it is often—very often—because these people want to be edited. By me. People want their writing to be better. Why? Because, every once in a while, getting better is better than getting paid. and because, at my best, I am fucking good.

Not many writers are also good editors. I guess I got lucky.

I have edited dozens of young women writers whose fledgling talent out-"wings" Penn Badgley's by a mile. Not one of them has thought to compare their writing to mine—to swan about how similar we are. How we'd either be best friends or enemies. Because we are neither, of course. We are writers. We are girls and women who want each other to be better and try our damndest.

It is no Tomasian coincidence that the first writer in the brief history of XXXX to *refuse to be edited by me* is a young white straight man who—grand surprise!—imagines himself as none of the above, but rather as a pure and singular soul, with a clarion voice like no other.

When I wrote *How to Make Love in America*, which is the story of a road trip, a reckoning with age, a melodramatic pop song, and so on... which is derived from diaries and yet weirdly underivative, I don't know how but it's not... which is long and layered and full of parataxis, but also actual paragraphs (*paragraphia*, since Mr. Badgley is

unfamiliar, is an old literary technique used to convey the weight and the shape of one's thoughts)... which is wildly imperfect... which I would never be able to write now, nor would I want to write it now... I did it in one afternoon. I sent it to friends and they loved and then I left it alone. For a year. Then I showed it to J_____ and he said it was "fucking unbelievable." Well, we were in love. I sent it to H____ and my favourite editor there—one of my favourite editors ever—agreed. We worked on it. Even though I had emotionally moved on, I was, by some mysterious power of adulthood, able to pull myself together and respond to my editor's questions. In the end, the edits were minimal because it had such a quality of being whole.

The edits to Penn Badgley's diary are minimal not because it is whole, but because Penn Badgley's ego is apparently a world unto itself. Even before he insulted my own ego by comparing his piece of work to mine, it was clear that he was only trying to do something that you, A____, did almost without trying, also in one afternoon. Or in one or two emails at night. There is a reason most emails at night are not published. There is also a reason you let me edit your work, and, I think, it is the same reason I "let" A____, or E____, edit mine.

The reason is that we don't only write for ourselves; the corollary is that this is what makes us want to write, and to be better at writing.

Why does Penn Badgley write? Surely it's not because he can. If it's because he "has to," I understand, but neither do we "have to" publish it. And if he doesn't want to be edited anymore, he should publish his work somewhere that doesn't edit. From where this editor stands, it is ridiculous for a work of language to be both as totally laboured and as stubbornly unworked-on as his.

Penn Badgley should be assured that I don't stand alone. Almost no one who likes my writing right now will also like his, and anyone who hates my writing will really, *really* not like his. As for *How to Make Love in America*, it was instantly and very much beloved; I still get emails about it. And I think people love it not because it's the best, but because it shows me getting bigger, stretching out. Of Penn Badgley's diary you honestly can't be the same. Can you?

And: could he put this aside for a year, knowing that when he's ready to read it again, it will still be worth *other people's reading*?

3. Squandering: the case for disrespectful opportunism

In the face of capitalism's promise of granting freedom through work, today's squanderers respond with a rational understanding of work for what it really is: an almost unavoidable humiliation from which one should seize for oneself all there is to take, in view of one's own dreams, desires and necessities. Instead of falling into the dichotomy

between an absolute refusal of activity under capitalism – thus reverting to an ascetic or new age pauperism – or the absolute submission to its rule – typical of the believing, career-oriented worker – the opportunist finds a northwest passage through such difficult territories. He or she might decide to act professionally for a while, if this is in his or her best interest, or even to temporarily and only formally submit to the rules of workplace hierarchy, if this helps him or her in their quest for their own aims. In their relationship to work, the opportunist banishes from his or her mind any issues of social shame and ideological inconsistency, favouring instead a cold-blooded pragmatism: what is the most useful behaviour to maintain, in order to better and more quickly achieve one's own aims, that is, one's own dreams, desires and necessities?

II. A Letter of Apology

Dear M____,

I want to frame your letter. I want to frame it and hang on the wall and occasionally glance at it, then walk past it, forget about it, remember it. I don't want to engage with it. I don't want to communicate with it. I don't want to reason with it. I don't want to argue with it. I want to frame it.

But do I want to apologize to it—or rather, to you? This has been my charge. But I am having a hard time locating my remorse. I am not sorry to have ended contact with you. I am not sorry I didn't defend you then. I am not sorry I refuse to defend you now.

But I am sorry that I felt incapable, or unwilling, to engage with your letter. That the questions you raised vanquished any desire to deliver a response. That instead, I read this letter over and over again, each time exhausted by my own frustration. I didn't answer your call; I didn't accept your challenge, and for that I apologize.

You want my respect. You want to be recognized, to have your subjectivity, your own solipsism crowned. You refuse to be the generic White Wonder Bread, you refuse to let your position condemn you to the Universal. You want to be, rather, the Individual. You want to stand by your words and your words alone. Our stakes are the same. We fight for out souls.

The soul is the clinamen of the body. It is how it falls, and what makes it fall in with other bodies. The soul is gravity. Our souls are not "things" we can wager, that we can put "on the line," things that can be robbed from us. Our subjectivities aren't positions that can be taken, or abandoned. Rather, they are forces. The soul is [the body's] gravity. This tendency for certain bodies to fall with others is what constitutes a world. Bodies rain down through the plumbless void, straight down side-by-side, until a sudden, unpredictable deviation or swerve—clinamen—leans bodies towards one another, so that they come together in a lasting way. The soul does not lie beneath the skin. It is the angle of this swerve and what then holds these bodies together.

You fight for the permission to speak from your soul rather than through your body. But your soul isn't what separates your body from all other bodies, (what makes you M____, and not just simply a man) it's what animates their affinities, what brings them together.

Yours,
A_____

III.

It struck me that there are certain beliefs that are normative that I simply don't hold. And others that are not, that are primary in my life. I found myself trying to contort myself into all of these very uncomfortable positions, trying to look like I was operating by the standard rules of play – while all the while, in back rooms, I was playing an altogether different game.

I felt like Valjean in *Les Miserables* who, realizing that he could not feed his family, made the conscious choice to steal a loaf of bread. In the moment the act had clean intent, but doubt and second-guessing seep in in hindsight, nibbling at his belief in his own rightness.

In other words, his interior compass, upon contact with the magnetizing force of the status quo, went haywire and he lost his sense of due north.

There are many institutional beliefs that I have chosen not to adopt or engage with. They come with too high a price tag – that price for me usually being some form of bondage: a loss of range of motion in the world, or perhaps loss of access to various other worlds I enjoy.

Where the cost has been limited access to my orgasm, to organic connection, and to exploring myriad beliefs with an ardent heart, immersing in the belief with the whole of my being (the requisite, I believe, to entry into any field), I chose to forego the blocking institution. I could engage to the extent that expression of that deeper self was permitted – I could go in, receive the benefits, offer my service – but I could not commit or become beholden to any set of laws.

Yesterday, I was talking with a friend who was befuddled by the fact that I am entirely willing to entertain a wide range of belief systems. He feared that perhaps I lacked a kind of discernment, that I was susceptible to infomercial hypnosis and were he to enter my house he would likely find drawer filled with salad spinners and Ginsu knives.

I think his fear was based on a common presumption, that the kind of discernment he's talking about is itself rationally based and necessary for protection, that one needs to keep guard over one's jewels at all times. Not so for me. Thank god! I think my capacity to curate resembles a Wikipedia of open choice. I take it all in. I take it all in as true. I can put my full attention on what is in front of me. From Scientology to Science to Socialism, I keep the gates wide open.

And then I immerse. Wholeheartedly. My friends tease about my tendency to passionately say, "this one is it!" And it is. Until it isn't. The chicken quesadilla with lettuce and green salsa on a whole wheat tortilla that I ate everyday for a year. The crazy joyride of Judaism that I went on for a year – starting with Michael Lerner, dragging me to Pennsylvania to meet Rabbi Maricia Prager, studying with an Orthodox rabbi in my turtleneck and long skirt while chanting in his office, feeling some of the most sublime sensations I have ever experienced. The list goes on.

And then the bell rings, the peep show window goes down, and it is time to go. To untangle my limbs and heart, to take what remains magnetized, to let the rest fall away. My interior self now that much richer, that much more concentrated, like the cream that has risen to the top.

I tell my friend that the key to freedom for me is simple:

Get in. Immerse. Get out.

The risk of getting stuck at any one of these points is high if your interior self is either in some way incongruous, or lacking strong enough magnetism.

Incongruity to my mind is usually the result of fear. I am afraid that I will be seen a certain way, that I won't be loved and accepted, that I will be alone, that I won't fit in or belong or matter or make a difference in the world. So I take an off-the-rack cultural belief that hardly fits but promises to get me into the in crowd.

(Valjean suffered, more than anything, from his own inner incongruity.)

Beliefs can be quite costly though. They almost always come with a built-in immune system that attacks other beliefs, beliefs that I may hold dear. So taking on a belief without fully massaging it, wringing it out until the essence is congruent with who I am, insuring that no belief is stepping on any other belief's toes... it's a lot of work up front. But better to pay in advance; anything left to the back end will have accrued interest, usually in the form of wreckage: broken hearts, betrayal and disappointment.

The second element is to develop a sort of “magnetic field” strong enough that it will automatically attract and repel what is in line with my core self (though even that concept – “core self” – is iffy).

So part one is to remove the fear that would drive one to act in ways that are not in alignment with deeper beliefs, and the second one is to deepen that internal magnetism. Or in some belief systems – yoga, macrobiotics – to purify oneself.

This I do with OMing. It’s like an amplifier, it turns the volume up. And the force happens naturally, effortlessly. The right people, places and things are drawn to me, and I to them. And by “right,” I mean aligned. And the things that just don’t jibe with me fall away like ripe fruit, rather than having to be wrenched from my clutching hand. It is not about detachment, it is about being so full that attachment is not a question. I work from both ends to get to the center: remove the fear that would put the brakes on unnecessarily; increase this purifying intelligence so that attraction flows clean; and voila, I’ve got a beautifully designed system of curation, well-calibrated to my countenance.

The “get in” stage of the practice requires an unprecedented level of surrender. You are not granted entry into any world that you have negative judgment about. (This is also true of people.) Or more accurately, you are permitted entry insofar as you can suspend judgment. It is not that people will not open, it is that your passcode doesn’t work. The pass code for me is something like “You are real, true, valid and important.” To the extent that I can maintain this attitude, whether it be with Christian or convict, I am granted entrée and the power of sight. I get to see what it is about this phenomenon that has it exist on Earth. And this is one of my beliefs, that all occurrences have meaning.

The next stage, immersion, is where the ego gets challenged. There is this unbearable fear of loss of self, which is somewhat paradoxical in hindsight because the wake of ego’s death is precisely where joy and meaning and all of the qualities that make life tolerable arise. Strip away that identity, which turns out to be an odd assortment of yearnings and self-admonishments anyway, and you are left with this pure unadulterated sense of aliveness. We cling to the rope, braced against such precipitous falls as being too fat or not getting that promotion, not realizing we’re actually anchoring the hot air balloon against lift-off. The death against which the ego battles is its own death, not that of the self. To find that the tug was buoyancy not gravity all along, complete surrender is required. And so we immerse fully and find liberation in the new domain.

You should know though that all of your other beliefs will line up like elder siblings wondering whether or not they are going to like this new delivery. They have benefitted greatly from their position and fear that they will not get the same level of attention. My job here is to remind them that every time a new experience has taken us, from falling in love to being pulled out into a deep ocean of meditative experiences, they have benefitted. And to remind them that they will not be displaced, that in fact they are

irreplaceable in their specific domains. That this new experience will be additive. If it isn't it won't stick around long enough to be a problem, just as they wouldn't be here were they not viable.

In this arena it is therefore important to remember that there is no such thing as a false start. I am permitted to sniff around before engaging. I get to have as many kisses as I like before consummation. But again, frontloading is key. We are all so eager to make promises that we end up bound to things we really haven't considered. My friend Bruce says, rules (or promises) are easy to install and difficult to dismantle.

By the same token, it is important to jump, to take the leap. And when you do the key is to cut the caveats. Not, I hope this will work, but "I commit with all the resourcefulness of my being to make it work." I do not believe that an experience begins until you are 100 percent in, safety bar locked, thrusters at full. Part-way is way too dangerous.

I was working with a couple, and he was perfectly at the mercy of the conditioning that says hold out, or else you will be a complete dolt. Always keep a back door open or else you will be prone to abuse. I have a very different perspective. It's two fold. My first belief is that the greatest cause of injury on the planet is getting your finger stuck in your back door. Not letting things move to their natural resolution. Said another way: Never allowing yourself to be in a live-or-die position will prevent you from ever developing the inner resourcefulness to insure that you will always make it through. I don't trust anyone to take care of me. Not because I am not a trusting person or because I won't give myself entirely but because I believe that it is my responsibility to insure that others take care of me well; the onus lies with me. So I don't get abused, not because I carefully, rationally choose people who don't abuse others, but because I put up a field that is so strong that abuse really isn't an option. In other words, I don't depend on another to act in my best interest, I install the mechanisms that insure it.

What most people I see in my practice do is meet another person, believe that their expectation is on par with a universal law, set the expectation and then expect another to act in perfect accord. We lay ourselves at the feet of others, and when they inadvertently step on us, feel terribly put upon. What I say in this circumstance is, take that big bag of bones, develop some muscles, and stand up man. Hold up your weight. It is only then that you can fully lie in the arms of another anyway. But do this too. Do it as an offering though, not leaving yourself in a basket on their doorstep and hoping for the best.

And do it wholly. Live a definitive life.

I was explaining to this man yesterday that his wavering, his pulling the rug out whenever his partner didn't match his inner rule set, was precisely why he couldn't get the feeling

of stability he was craving. They were weeble wobbles, not due to her behavior but due to his response to it. He felt shaky and she felt in a perpetual state of disequilibrium.

Beyond this though, I explained that their game had not even begun, because the game, the reason for relationship, is to set up enough internal solidity that the cortex can relax and you can enter the involuntary together, that you can see the virgin territories of each other for the first time, these different aspects of being rising to the surface for both to witness concurrently.

So if she does not know that he is in, no matter what, how could she ever – ever! – open that involuntary part of herself, the part that is a mystery even to her, the part we have never before opened because we fear that there is a terrible beast in there. How could she possibly consider opening that part, when here she is on her very best behavior and even that doesn't quiet his subtle threat of pulling out.

So the rules of immerse are, simply, lock and load.

And finally, get out. Yeah right – entire epistemologies have been developed on how to get out. Addiction, craving, obsession, all are founded on our human inability to get out. Which most people take as a reason to not enter.

But then... Houdini was not most people's idea of a hunk. He is mine. He continuously looked for ways to lock himself up and then get out of his own traps, which is precisely what we want to do. The way to not be beholden to anything is simply to figure out how to crack the code that has it release you. And the more you do it, the more adept you get, and the more fun it gets. Intensity junkies love the thrill of cracking codes, because the code you are cracking is your own mind at deeper and deeper levels of lock-down.

So the trick here is to know that there is an exit. It's usually small and flies by fast as you ride the merry go round. It usually says something like: "If you stop now it will be easy; if not, you have to go another round." Get off there. Buoyancy will likely have unprecedented force at this time, meaning that the pull to stay on may be at its greatest. But if you get off – right now! – you are free. And you now have another brass ring.

All this said, my journeys to this point have gained me a collection of brass rings inscribed with the wisdom of each domain and experience. The following then is a snapshot for the current moment. I am far from done. Fact is, I'm just starting to hit a new stride. But that in itself is a familiar place.

Desire, Sex and Orgasm

I believe that your intuition is only as powerful as your sex is in its free radical state, and that your sex energy is what senses another's shadow state. It is where we exchange

memes beneath the command and control center of the rational mind and provide the opportunity for the most accelerated learning like direct mind to mind download.

I believe that your sex is a result of your behaviors the rest of the time. It is your “reward” and your opportunity to see the result of the slow practice you have been living in.

I believe that we do not know how to use powerful things like sex or drugs or relationships and so we cage them in either shame or unreasonable rules and convince ourselves that we are better off.

I believe that pleasure is an honorable enough goal to do anything but that if you do something for the sake of pleasure, true pleasure, you will find that there is a great lesson inside.

I believe that raw potent unadulterated desire is the experience rather than the conception of god. And that to follow desire is truly to follow god.

I believe that most women would rather die than live in their desire because the consequence is great, we could get pregnant. But deeper than this I believe that the amount of gratification available in any situation is directly proportional to the amount of resistance you experience. That resistance is merely fuel needing to be converted. A woman’s work is to learn the mechanics of conversion including changing the idea that a good woman is one who is small.

I believe that desire realized loosens historical baggage and that this requires tremendous care. It can either remain stagnant and turn to shame or else you can continue to move and be forever free of what was inside.

I believe that all suffering is caused by unpotentiated desire, that this is called tumescence and it is a swelling to the point of rigidity. I believe that the cessation of desire is the spiritual form of learned helplessness, that we do not believe that we can master it so we try to starve it to death.

I believe that power is what exists when all resentments are released. We are fundamentally this power or orgasm. Our natural state is gratitude, gravity and magnetism. Anything that we create lessens our power.

I believe in saying yes wherever I possibly can, that yes is the source of power. And that no is always an acceptable answer when yes is not available. I believe that no is the powerless person’s power.

I believe that it is a human tendency to demonize that which we most desire, demonize and legislate, and that enlightenment is the ability to forego this tendency.

I believe that life sets you up to lose so badly being good that you finally throw in the towel and go for what you want. I consider this experience blessed.

I believe that you cannot make yourself want anything so you may live at the level of the incontrovertible desire.

I believe that your body never lies.

I believe that insatiability is an overused fallacy.

I believe that clean attention is the ultimate catalyst. I believe that orgasm is the ultimate clean burning fuel for this catalyst.

I believe that we have been taught to decrease the intensity of circumstance rather than increase the intensity of awareness. I have watched many enlightened people fall apart in the sexual arena or in the relationship arena so this is where I am interested in starting.

Shadow (Masculine and Feminine)

I believe that what most people call integrity translates roughly to one's ability to deny oneself for the sake of an untested idea and then to pat oneself on the back and judge others. I believe that it is a masculine notion that needs to die for true integrity to break up through the sidewalk.

I believe that much of what we call good, including "the light" is a masculine based notion of remaining sitting distance from your life – including most spiritual pursuits.

In terms of trust, I have a very difficult time trusting someone who has not been addicted. Or at least compulsive and obsessed. This is for two reasons. The first is that I believe that they have not been touched by the intelligence which "feels" like an addiction: you need more and more because the more that you are aching for is actually a catalyst to your awakening. And when you hit a certain point of birthing/awakening the object of obsession that took you through terrains you otherwise could not have entered falls away.

That said, trust for me is when my body (not my mind, mind you) wants to fuck someone. That is the truest of trues, the holiest of holies.

I therefore am extraordinarily skeptical of those who "awaken" in isolated or what are deemed healthy circumstances. This translates to me merely as untested.

Addiction teaches us who we are and how we operate out of control which is the only place worthy of getting to know ourselves, because we are only as good as we are when we're desperate, angry and poor.

I believe that our specific darkness is that gift that was given us to most deeply discover who we are. For example I grew up with four smokers and a lot of ho hos. My physical self is my most challenging. My physical self therefore is where the most learning occurs.

I believe that we crave darkness desperately but we do not have it as appropriate so we sneak it and in doing so give it a bad reputation. I believe that the darkness is actually the feminine, the wild uncultivated parts of ourselves. And that held against this masculine background, the darkness is everything we would not want to be. I believe that it is therefore vital not just to individuals but to nations that we recontextualize and exalt all things dark so that we can begin to enter this world we crave and operate skillfully.

I believe that we hold a masculine pole and a feminine pole inside. The masculine feels like a tight band that left unchecked gets tighter and tighter with rules and regulations and appropriateness. The promise it makes is that "if you just do this one last thing you will be permitted pleasure", until the feminine gets totally squeezed out. I believe that when we talk about women's liberation what we are talking about is inside, it is pushing out against those internalized constraints. It is leading from desire and that when we do this oddly both the feminine and masculine aspects of self are happy because she would consider him whereas he would not consider her.

I believe that our lives individually and collectively go into climax. I believe that we mistake this climax for spiritual crisis, mid-life crisis, economic depression. It is a result of nature trumping form. All that is artificial builds to climax, falls away and the natural order comes back into being.

I believe that the key to life is to master the peaks (and above all climax). We do this by preparation or slow practice so that when the flow practice comes our tendency toward flailing, namely blame and making the last peak "bad", rejecting and blocking, is not necessary.

The concept of stay connected no matter what is to find each other after the debris and continue doing the necessary work to release the resentments that arose with the unreleased levels of history from the climax.

I believe that one of the greatest dangers to humans is the tendency to convince oneself of good motivations in selfish actions because we are so afraid to admit how selfish we are long enough to get fed to the point where selfish action falls away.

I believe that it is a good thing to get lost. Otherwise you never learn how to find your way back.

Relationship and Free Play

I believe that “the purpose” is to play. Play requires unbelievable acumen and calibration – doing an ever changing right thing – feeling what is called for, seeing it, doing it and then getting out. This translates to freedom when all are done on point.

I believe that we dismiss play precisely because it is of such incredible consequence to our awakening and that there is an actual “play consciousness” that we evolve to with its own codes and ethics that are deeper than any we could manufacture.

I believe that rules are easy to insert and difficult to remove and that those with the fewest rules are of the greatest service because they can enter the most people’s realities and abide by the others’ rules rather than inflicting their own.

I believe that the best form of relating is merely to “match funds” and that the kindest thing you can do is to want for someone exactly – no more or less than – what they want for themselves. And to get behind that becoming so, primarily by adding the currency of nonjudgmental attention.

It is not important that you follow rules, only that you live congruently. This requires knowing yourself and living true to those beliefs despite the fact that others may not understand or approve.

A fundamental rule is not just “do no harm” – that is the lowest common denominator and I cannot actually say what is and isn’t harmful – but do be true to what is asked of you in a moment. An example is that a loud strong voice may be asked of you and it may go against the idea of “nice” or telling the truth and someone’s ego may get bruised. Inaction is as harmful as wrong action.

That said, overt lying distorts the game and the game is complex enough.

I do not believe in forgiveness or gratitude per se. I do not believe that we can “make” our hearts do anything, but I do believe that we can remove the residue that filters our natural state of orgasm which roughly translates to joy, gratitude, forgiveness.

The residue is called fear. Everything that we call evil is fear based, from trying to grasp more satisfaction than a situation can offer, to harming another. Knowing this, the response to evil is to expand and include it and those touched by it, not out of idiot compassion but because it is the only remedy. Fear met with fear isn’t additive, it is multiplicative.

I believe that there is an underlying intelligence that runs through all of us that we have either plugged into or not. The initial time of plugging in can be violent and climax like. Our work in this life is to stay plugged in, to see, to follow the instructions in a sustainable way. It just so happens that staying connected requires much of us and much that we would likely rebel against. It goes against our conditioned ideas of love and truth and volition and independence/dependence and vocation. The reward is that to the extent we stay plugged in, we are happy and are the person we could only dream of being.

I believe that those who are plugged in recognize each other in a way that feels ancient and familiar. We will notice sensory or linguistic cues.

I believe that friendship is only available when two people are plugged in and that the foundation of friendship is to see the other, to never waver in your vision of them, in such a way that remaining fetters fall away. By “see the other” what I mean is to see who that person is fully potentiated and to use that as a compass even when the klippot (dark clouds of ignorance) enter obscuring the view.

I do not believe in the concept of trust. Trust what? That someone will tell me the truth? I don't think most people have access to their truth. It seems like an insult to expect it of them. That they will be predictable? The only way most people know to be predictable is to tighten the bondage in such a way that the dynamic aspects of a deeper self are constrained and they can continue to walk a straight line. Again that seems cruel. I trust people to be themselves.

I believe therefore that it is key for me to trust myself to adapt to changes and unsavory behaviors in others. To maintain steady attention regardless of their actions and that when I do this, their behavior naturally steadies out but it is a much longer game.

I believe that what runs inside of each of us is intelligent and seeking connection. It will not settle for the mimic of connection though and will destroy relationship in order to reform it. This is where it is key to stay connected no matter what, to discover what your relationship wanted to be.

I believe that there is a kind of love that is the violent prototype that people are looking for in romantic love. It looks a lot more like an argument at an Italian families dinner table than it does safety, security and caring. I call it love of the gods. It takes everything you've got both literally and figuratively and at the end of it spent, broke and broken you would do it all again.

I believe that it feels like a tsunami is moving through your when it floods in. This tsunami is the one pole rushing forward to meet the other in another. It is like the eternal man and the eternal woman who are impersonal to the extent that they don't care if your

feel harmed as they rush to each other and blow through you in their desperation to find each other.

I believe that it is my work to make my body a vessel for this kind of love to occur and that when it does it is like a light in a socket, the lights go on, all is right with the world. This would be the living breathing version of enlightenment.

I believe that most versions of romantic love are like two exhausted prize fighters clinging to each other knowing that they should be dancing around the ring but too beaten up and breathless.

I believe that I always get what I ask for. I may not get it in a time frame that I can remember asking for it. Therefore it is my work to remember asking, to stop pressing the “attendants button” while waiting, to ask for help when I need it and trusting that it will come.

I believe that our most powerful tool is surrender, that true surrender opens the reception channel for all benevolent aid in the universe to enter. I believe that most people confuse surrender with acquiescence and this is a terrible mistake that causes much pain. Surrender has a backbone, it is just unbelievably flexible.

I believe that dynamic tension is the metric best used to determine right behavior and that the sensation of dynamic tension is a buoyancy, as if something else kicked in and injected life.

I believe that we have too few categories for who people are and what they are here to do in our lives, and this causes much pain. We are so busy looking for Relationship that we do not see that we are drowning in relationships. Beyond this though it makes us stuff people into ill fitting categories. The man who is here merely to turn us on, who can because he is free, we try to lock down and kill our own potential turn on or his. Or the woman who is here to unravel us we fight, thinking she is here to harm us when really she is removing an ace bandage that we’ve live wrapped inside of our whole lives.

I believe that it is best to live in 51 per cent good, 49 per cent bad. This way you pay your shadow as you go. And that 49 per cent comes to be quite sexy.

I believe that when people slip out of dynamic tension, they “take birth”. This taking birth is an experience of disconnecting from the source. The best response is to “take your finger off” meaning to be loving and warm and let them go. To try to get them plugged in again before they are done is a terrible idea that will have the person feel shame because they cannot stop and will have you feel frustrated because you cannot control their behavior. Carry the message that plugging in is possible, not the person who is disconnected. They will hate you if you do.

I believe that the reason people leave is that they believe that they cannot get what they want where they are, which is most often the result of trying to keep them there. We return to where we believe freedom is available so the smartest thing we can do is get behind another person's desire even if it means they will leave us or be with another or do something that competes with us. Expand and include and you own the world.

I believe that unwholesome behaviors are sexy when part of a larger wholesome picture and that wholesome without unwholesome is unwholesome.

That said, I do believe that jealousy is a necessary pain in the ass like camel pose in yoga, that as much as you want out, savor it because when it is gone, if you did it well you will miss it and be grateful for the result.

I believe that we cannot get all our nutrients from one person, and to expect another to deliver – yes I mean monogamy – is cruel to the other person and self-defeating. And that our only option is to then go into psychic hibernation to conserve energy, and that security becomes what sets the bar. I believe that security is lowest of human desires but a necessary one to fulfill.

I believe that security is not set by outward circumstances and that in fact the search for security using outside circumstances is precisely what keeps us in an insecure state.

I believe that there are only so many forces on earth, likely twelve, and that if we come to know these forces we can see them in everything and that we can then “pick up the conversation” rather than going through dramatic separation and starting anew. We can always find that last lover in another, it just takes work like searching through Goodwill. You need to find a body that is suitable for the energy to come through.

Relate to the force inside another and not the person and there will be much joy.

I believe that we are, if we are living true, called to leave our lives. If we have done well, we have frontloaded well, insured that even though it is so compelling, we have not promised anything in the future and are conscious as we make our exit leaving things of course better than they were when we got there.

At the same time I believe that it is important to speak those desires, like, I want to be with you forever, simply with the caveat that it will likely not be so. I do not believe that time is in any way a metric of excellence in relationship and that this belief has been the single greatest cause of slumber both in relationship and personal evolution.

That said, I do believe in remaining connected no matter what, to continue connection when the form shifts. This is actually where relationship begins in my mind, after the first

“break up”, because this is where you get to do the work of learning who this person is in their involuntary.

I believe profoundly in grace. I set the table but god chooses whether or not to enter. I do what I can to set a table so beautiful that he cannot resist.

I believe that true selfishness is the new selfless. At the same time, I believe that there is no turn-on greater than sympathetic experience that you were part of creating for another.

I believe that gratitude is the equivalent of Jesus, meaning it is our savior. I believe that gratitude is merely the shift between looking at lack and acknowledging reception. In our culture gratitude is associated with weakness or not being discriminating or owing someone something. I would say that this is the compensation of the mind that does not have the muscle to lift the weight of gratitude.

I believe that we can feel each other at all times and that there really is a right time, a time when the window is open for contact. Excellent relating is when we do not try to wrest more satisfaction than is available – meaning, trying to press the lever of contact when the window is not open for both, or not engaging when the window opens. In other words, it is not that he or she is not calling, its that the channel to make contact is not open.

I believe that our first purpose is to get a soul and we do this by making our bodies a pleasurable place to be – no, not austere, but pleasurable. We find ways to decrease the mental traffic because no soul wants to live on the freeway, we saturate our cells so that it feels like big fluffy pillows inside of us and we learn to listen. Souls are intractable and not good at bargaining; they know what they want when they want it and how they want it. You had best be prepared as the entry of a soul onto a scene means that the greatest dictator you have ever experienced will look like mother Theresa.

I believe that a great teacher, then, serves as soul surrogate to walk with, nudge, coax, and invite people to their edge, towards deeper connection. To introduce unfamiliar parts of self and demonstrate ways to say yes to those parts and feelings to which we most often say no. To give people the precise stroke that they usually avoid, reject, or numb out to. It is the job of the teacher to create a simulated world that is as challenging, heartbreaking, seemingly impossible as the experience of the soul, to in a sense do everything they can to get the initiate to believe that they can't and then discover what they are made of experientially.

I believe that if you can escape it, it was not strong enough. But I also believe that escape is a questionable thing – like drinking after you have recovery in your head and feeling a sense of torture that you no longer enjoy the drink the way you once did but weren't willing to do the work to step up to the next level of consciousness is not escape.

I believe that it is a lonnnnnng game.

I believe that higher level practice means animating the many identities that exist inside of us: not trying to keep them so impacted that they come out as one coherent identity, but keeping them so free that they self organize to make you look sane to the world.

I believe that this stage is very difficult and is the “dip” of most work of awakening.

I believe that each identity has a whole set of beliefs, likes and dislikes, levels of lighting it feels comfortable in, speeds it likes to travel at, pressure it likes to experience. True genius is to create a world where all parts of self can have free unrestricted expression. This entails setting up your life so that it does not bump into itself, meaning for example that you do not give the “spiritual” one such free reign that it can fall into the trap of spiritual superiority, denigrating people who smoke and drink and cuss so that when your wily one awakens and wants to smoke and drink and cuss you are not bound by the rules of the spiritual one.

The only one bound by your rules for the world is you.

It is the ugliest of the ugly that need love. It is easy to love the lovable. And loving the unlovable is where the greatest reward comes to the lover.

You can only surrender to something that you perceive as less than you. If you believe it is bigger it is being held captive.

If you go to a teacher, be willing to wrestle but be willing to follow their guidance. Otherwise you make your guide impotent, as true teachers can only operate according to your desire.

I believe that at this point in evolution the most generous thing you can do is to let people know what you want and how to give it to you in a way that will gratify you and then acknowledge. I believe this because I believe that most people are backed up in the arena of love and that receiving love is 10 fold more challenging than giving it so you need to start them there.

I believe that there is an entire dimension where things are actually happening, where the real conversations that we are having with each other occur and that most people are not tuned into this so they live in the result of those conversations and not very skillfully. I believe that when we tune into this place we all effortlessly see the same things.

I believe that people who fear mind control are people who are not willing to do the work to get sovereignty over their own mind and that anyone who actually had the power to

control another's mind wouldn't want to because you lose your power when you focus your energy in controlling anything outside yourself.