



Book Seven:

## **CAUSE FOR PAUSE**

*RoberT.*

*Read consecutively  
but written separately,  
the recurring nature of the  
foregoing themes, ideas and even words  
attests to their persistence,  
pertinence,  
and patience.*

---

*Sent in appreciation  
for memories  
yet to be made,  
good music  
yet to be played  
and a family of friends  
who can never be properly thanked.*

1/1/12  
Cornerstones

To go forth  
with a loving heart,  
serene mind,  
and positive attitude

1/10/12

Having clear priorities,  
strong values  
and a willingness to discern  
the next right thing

And patience  
and persistence,  
humility and confidence,  
realism and optimism,  
and good sense of humor

Remembering,  
and remaining accountable,  
loveable as well as loving,  
healthy in body and spirit

Staying relaxed,  
letting go of resistance  
and resentment,  
remaining resilient  
and reasonable

Experiencing body and mind  
with an attitude of acceptance  
and appreciation

These are cornerstones  
on which to build a New Day,  
or New Year

river shimmers in the distance  
setting sun's shadows slanting through the trees  
white cloud wisps in a pale blue sea  
crisp air bracing for evening's arrival

water and time move onward  
yet always here – and then there  
as ever now, forever shall be  
constant, yet constantly changing

leafy branches reach out  
to receive the gifts bestowed  
in endless supply  
taking what we don't need and giving what we do

if we can't see the air, but know it exists  
then why not more precious things  
upon which we rely, knowing not  
how, why or from whom they come?

things like wisdom and grace and blessing,  
gratitude, joy and trust  
already here for our benefit  
so as we seek shall we find

1/11/12

A sunrise welcomes  
each passing day,  
illuminating opportunities  
that come my way.

With each, a chance  
to think and see  
and bring from within  
the better me.

To find in each moment  
the power of now;  
to stay in just one  
- I wish I knew how.

They say acceptance is key  
to my problems' solution,  
yet it's so hard to find,  
what with all the pollution.

But we can, with help,  
available on request;  
then it must be accepted -  
therein lies the test.

It's not the sun that arises  
- that's just an illusion;  
that things are not how they seem  
only compounds our confusion.

It is we who are moving  
evermore toward our goal.  
More or less consciously,  
we all play our role.

1/17/12

What is it about our senses  
- and sense of things -  
that we think it's the sun that sets and rises  
while we on earth stay constantly still?

Perhaps similarly convincing perceptions are likewise distorted?

Such as the idea that  
life begins at birth and ends at death,  
and that we are largely a victim-of-circumstance in between...

Or that wealth is the main sign of richness,  
value, meaning and "success" ...

Or that it is we who are the cause-of-action  
and god(s) the passive observer?

Unlike a fish who goes for the bait,  
learning only thereafter what hides beneath,  
we can not only look but also see deeply.

And thus not only live but learn,  
thereby discovering the greatest of goods:  
our true place and full power in this world.

Small it may be, but not insignificant,  
measured not by size or even substance  
but by our presence, prescience, positivity and pluck.

1/17/12

Life is a bouquet  
each of us a single flower  
playing a small-but-vital part of the shower  
for which we must be fully present and prepared.

And truly individualized  
- can't have all reds, yellows or green -  
but all of those and every shade in between  
strength from our diversity, not unanimity.

In its variety of appearance and fragrance  
each flower does its part for the whole  
and, in the courage of its particular role,  
contributes to a wondrous collage.

Not forever, but for a lifetime.  
Not for all, but those who can see  
how alive and part-of we each can be  
simultaneously benefitting ourselves and others.

One flower can't tell another how to look  
where to bend, how to smell, when to bloom  
but by staying close and giving each other room  
we are joined together in grace.

1/28/12

Shimmering stream  
flows continually by.  
It knows where its going;  
it needn't ask why.

Or even "how?"  
as its way is always direct -  
which has fewer drawbacks  
than one might expect.

Drawing its resources,  
it gathers momentum.  
Its least-resistant approach  
minimizes venom.

Yet to obstacles imposed  
it does not defer.  
Its continuous effort  
no thing can deter.

Calm and serene  
is its placid external  
while below the surface  
its churning eternal.

And so we too  
seek a similar path;  
neither too steep or deep  
nor incur too much wrath.

Seeking an energy source  
that knows no depletion,  
carrying us all the way  
to our journey's completion.

Along the way,  
our nurture provided.  
Life's love multiplies;  
it's never divided.

It is our clarity that  
creates pools of reflection  
so whatever we encounter  
receives a graceful reception,

Providing us all  
moments like this:  
the experience of joy  
and realization of bliss.

2/1/12

Surely, we are told,  
goodness and kindness will follow us  
all the days of our lives.

A wise sister notes that,  
as much as we wish otherwise,  
it says “follow” and not “precede”.

It’d be as good as good can get  
were it the other way around  
illuminating our path before we take it.

Loosening our grip  
and lightening our load  
on a journey otherwise seeming forever uphill.

But that’s not how it goes.  
What we wish is obvious is obscure,  
revealing its cards only after we do.

If looking for goodness and kindness,  
just turn around  
– it’s right behind us.

Witnessing Phil’s departure  
alerts us to our own passage,  
its fleeting nature  
and onerous burdens involving  
challenging experiences concurrently bitter and sweet.

More an observer than participant,  
his capacity for insights  
derived joy from others’ pleasure  
in seeing, feeling and being  
more awake, alert and alive  
than they otherwise might.

The gems he produced  
were often hidden in plain sight.

Like his tale about – seemingly – an oil rigger who noted:  
good times are the ultimate predictor of bad times,  
and also vice versa.

He was telling us what we didn’t know we knew  
or try to remember to forget:  
that none of it lasts, and passes too quickly  
for us to take credit, assign blame  
or become unhealthily attached.

2/4/12

How often it is ...

... that we ask the question  
and don't listen for the answer?

... that we ask for help  
and ignore its arrival?

... that we reach out to others  
but don't welcome their response?

... that we petition for Divine Intervention  
then do not acknowledge its manifestation?

... that we are hungry for change  
but resist and resent its arrival?

... that we seek  
but do not recognize what we find?

... that we knock  
not realizing the door is already open?

... that we hope that things work out for the best  
not knowing they already have?

The big lie  
we tell ourselves  
is that things are not  
what they are.

And tell a bigger lie  
when we think  
things are not as they  
are supposed to be.

And the biggest lie of all  
is when we don't think  
it not only will be, but already is  
unfolding for the best for all concerned.

Enthusiastic welcome  
and not begrudging acceptance  
is how the gift of our present  
should be received and enjoyed.

Without anxiety, resignation  
or trepidation;  
no suspicion, fear  
or avoidance.

Neither ahead or behind,  
fast or slow,  
but rather always  
the right thing at the right time.

2/13/12

We're told "doubt" is more than  
the absence of faith,  
but rather telltale evidence  
of the presence of fear.

And the existence of "proof" is more  
an indicator of the limits of understanding  
than a factual basis for affirming  
some things and denying others.

Like late 1800's doctors who denied  
germs caused infection because they couldn't see them,  
we ignore ample evidence of a power greater than ourselves  
by seeking finite definitions of that which is infinite.

We cannot see the blinders on our own perceptions,  
the limits of our knowledge and understanding,  
the self-imposed constraints on our willingness and capability,  
and, therefore, the full range of possibilities before/beyond us.

Seeing well beyond what is  
and that to which we aspire  
without losing our focus on now or here  
for that a great calm we require.

And clarity, of course, is also needed  
of purpose, pathway and vision.  
So many factors distort our perception  
and influence our decision.

Sensitivity and awareness are easily lost  
in the quest for progress and gain.  
It's easy to mistake motion for movement,  
and the platform for the train.

Not distinguishing struggle from suffering,  
we confuse sameness for things that are similar.  
We allow altitude to affect attitude  
when drawn by the allure of the familiar.

As we strive not for understanding, but acceptance  
- shifting focus from "without" to "within –  
we feel at peace and can smile;  
our only real job: to begin.

3/4/12

How Interesting.

We approach The One  
who gave us all we've got  
with prayerful petitions to  
get what we don't have  
or stop getting what we don't want.

As if S/He or It got it wrong,  
or didn't notice,  
or in either case required our help  
instead of our appreciation  
and thanks.

As if we were the ones  
who are omniscient and omnipotent.

If the gods' infinite powers are  
- by definition -  
indescribable,  
then the only two things I know are:

- (1) I am not S/He or It/Them;  
and
- (2) I will receive prompt reminders whenever I forget it.

3/5/12

It is said that success,  
like love and inspiration,  
is not something one pursues  
but rather it ensues  
from right action and aspiration.

How many other things  
are in that category?  
Stuff we cannot choose  
but certainly can lose  
by how, when and who tells our story.

But if that which  
matters least pertains most,  
then whatever renews  
can also confuse.  
All we need be is a good host.

It's the journey we keep starting  
yet will never end.  
It may seem like a ruse  
but its guaranteed to enthuse  
as by each step 'long the way we transcend.



3/14/12  
Adios Amigo



To another friend  
we say goodbye,  
no closer to knowing  
what it means to die.

When to some other place  
it's time to go,  
destination or outcome  
are not things one can know.

But it makes us see differently  
how we use each breath,  
bringing us closer to living  
as we get nearer to death.

And closer too to the self  
we'd like to be  
- much more real,  
not: "as seen on TV".

And toward more tomorrows  
better than yesterday,  
filled with faith, hope and love  
until we too go away.

3/14/12

3/14/12  
News Blackout:  
Day #105

How interesting.

We become comfortable  
by dealing with the uncomfortable  
-- staying in the present unpredictability  
rather than the certainty of the past –  
and we become uncomfortable  
by trying to stay comfortable  
-- replicating the familiar and avoiding the unknown  
even as it inexorably moves in our direction.

If, as they say,  
“pain” is the difference  
between how things are and I think they should be,  
then the path to liberation lies in  
eliminating that discrepancy,  
moving away from “what if” or “could be”  
and closer to “now” “here” and “this”.

You (or at least I) would not think it so easy to  
ignore the unignorable,  
avoid the unavoidable,  
deny the obvious.

As it turns out: we can, and it's not.

Letting go  
of the daily drama by  
blacking out the news  
of trials and trauma,  
of winning and losing  
by Mitt, Newt or Obama.

Moving toward  
a more peaceful direction,  
a different way of knowing,  
sense and perception  
by more carefully filtering  
what I grant reception.

Opening up  
by putting down  
all the distractions  
that cause us to frown,  
and those motives we clothe  
in some fancy gown.

Instead, being here  
and standing still,  
seeing all that's unfolding  
as expression of the gods' will,  
staying unconditionally grateful –  
no “unless” or “until”.

3/16/12

How interesting.

There are diseases of life  
in which one of the symptoms  
is that you think you don't have it.

The power of denial  
being what it is,  
a crazy person can sanely insist  
they are not, and persuasively so.

Even more oddly,  
if you think you are crazy  
you are probably not.  
And if you don't think you are, perhaps think again.

If the price of freedom  
is eternal doubt,  
then acceptance of ALL life's possibilities  
assures we don't discount any of them.

The stress of constant uncertainty  
is a high price to pay,  
but only cheaper than  
the cost of avoiding it.

3/28/12

The deeper you go  
the further you'll get,  
but you can keep going farther  
and still not be there yet.

There's no sure way to know,  
- only one way to tell -  
but if you think you're in heaven,  
you're probably headed for hell.

Some things you don't have  
when you think that you do,  
and do when you don't -  
somewhere in there's a clue.

All's as it should be  
when we think it is not.  
But when it's one-in-a-million,  
we've still got a shot.

It's said that some things  
cannot be taught  
but, if we're lucky,  
they just might get caught.

5/2/12  
Busy Waiting

4/25/12

It's not knowing where to go,  
but where not to.

Not so much remembering what to do,  
as what I forgot to.

The worst place to be  
is wishing you were someplace else.

The best person to be  
is nobody else.

It's the brightest signs  
that give our eyes trouble.

And small things that are biggest;  
if overlooked – they cause trouble.

The miracle lies not in the miraculous –  
those eye-popping, mouth-watering,  
teeth-jarring, head-shaking moments  
when unbelievable,  
not-just-improbable-but-impossible things  
unfold matter-of-factly  
at the last possible second  
before our doubting eyes.

Every magician has their trick.

The miracle lies in  
everyday things–  
air, water, gravity/inertia, baths, infants,  
love, wisdom, kindness, hope, bagels, sex,  
healing, smiles, flowers, family,  
fun, friends, music, and  
ecstatic moments of every kind -  
we miss while busy waiting for the miracle to happen.

All those are our daily reminders  
not to miss the miracles -  
those slim, hard-to-see threads that form  
the fabric of our lives.

5/6/12

It's said the lazy one  
works the hardest,  
and the cheapest one  
spends the most.  
The watched kettle  
boils longest,  
and only those who ought not  
tend to boast.

This not only begs the question:  
who is flying our kite?  
But also makes one wonder:  
why?  
Must it be the one  
flying highest  
just to find its own place  
in the sky?

We are advised  
to be who we are  
because all  
other jobs are taken.  
All we need do  
is perform that job well;  
only if not  
will we be mistaken.

5/8/12

To understand  
the nature, position and purpose  
of God,  
begin by accepting  
the fact that  
that we never will.

Then,  
instead of looking around  
for evidence of Its power,  
look within  
to find your source  
of joy and peace.

From this centered place,  
fuel the fire  
of eternal light  
that is abhorred by The Darkness,  
illuminating our place on The Path  
and all we meet along The Way.

It is by this glow  
that all is revealed.  
We see – and are seen – differently.  
Feel – and are felt – more fully.  
And learn in the One Moment  
all we (don't) know about God.

6/1/12  
New Address

5/15/12

We go from year to year,  
month to month,  
and sometimes day to day  
looking hard for signs or clues  
pointing us in the right way.

It's said:  
if you can see the path ahead  
then that's the way to go.  
When all but one are unclear,  
then for sure you'll know.

But the hardest step  
on any journey  
is the next, not last.  
Courageous action in the present  
separates future from past.

We misconstrue as coincidence  
sign posts and street lights  
revealing our path's direction,  
which we would scarcely notice  
were it not for daily reflection.

another new house  
and new beginning  
now and again  
a new place to stand  
and sit  
and see how it all unfolds  
never fully knowing what  
only sometimes why  
but always where  
and when

on this you can rely:  
life goes on  
and on  
and on  
no holding it back  
a continuing show  
"Comedy of Errors"  
but without the laugh track

another place  
to take on and in  
all that passes by  
smelling the roses  
sharing appreciation  
breathing  
smiling  
sighing

6/2/12  
Enough

Quiet enough  
to feel your heart beat.  
Calm enough  
to hear your soul speak.  
Clear enough  
to know what it's saying.

Open enough  
to stay in the flow.  
Aware enough  
to be in the know.  
Serious enough  
to avoid the game-playing.

Committed enough  
to keep moving forward.  
Persistent enough  
to not quit when its awkward.  
Trusting enough  
to avoid any delaying.

Willing enough  
to try something new.  
Centered enough  
to not blame things on you.  
Solid enough  
to live where I'm staying.

6/5/12  
Questions

It's suggested that  
we mine our problems  
-- not for solutions,  
since problems don't exist otherwise --  
but rather for their wisdom,  
providing insight into life's  
dilemmas and dichotomies,  
of which there are many and  
- unlike our problems -  
never seem to go away.

It's always the answers  
for which we were graded,  
gold-starred and brownie-pointed.

What if it were the questions themselves  
by which we were being tested  
for our openness, willingness and patience,  
tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity,  
peacefulness and serenity,  
flexibility, adaptability  
and accountability?

What if...

6/11/12

6/9/12

We have to move toward  
health, hope and healing;  
they don't come to us on their own.

They move toward us  
as we move toward them;  
proof of that is repeatedly shown.

We and they are like magnets,  
attracting each other  
if approached from the proper side;  
if not, they  
repel, resist, reject and  
can do so in ways quite snide.

It's hard to aspire  
while letting go of the outcome,  
instead grateful for what comes our way.  
But appreciating those things  
-- whatever they are --  
is all we need do, at least for today.

There are times  
when life is so good  
that -- were it not happening to me --  
I wouldn't believe it myself.

Only upon stepping back,  
it becomes obvious this bliss  
is not just a moment or day  
but in all the times if/when viewed clearly.

The miracles of life  
are not in short supply.  
It is our capacity to see and appreciate them  
that is limited.

The gods' consideration and compassion  
are not lacking.  
It is our willingness to receive and accept their gifts  
that requires constant replenishment.

The glories of life  
know no bounds.  
It is our readiness to enjoy them  
-- seeing beyond the distractions of today's drama --  
that deserve our attention  
and defines our experience  
of daily living.



7/18/12

The person we  
are waiting to see  
is the one  
we are trying to be.

That to which we  
try to hold on,  
we let go and find  
it was already gone.

The god I love  
don't fill no need;  
just spills us some water  
'n plants in us a seed.

No need to figure out  
where you're trying to go;  
just don't stop 'n  
soon enough you'll know.

That first step toward being  
what we already are –  
take a spaceship to Jupiter  
and you won't travel as far.

7/21/12

Michner writes about  
fear and ignorance  
being the handmaiden of despair;  
the precursors to debacle,  
bringing us to nadir.

But then their antithesis  
- faith and learning –  
must carry the opposite effect:  
the elements of success,  
if we so consciously select.

Either way, we will be  
both right and wrong  
thinking either way brings assurance.  
There's no guarantee;  
for this, they don't sell insurance.

Instead we must choose between  
journey and destination;  
we only get one or the other.  
Better for us to believe and explore;  
on that path, good things we discover.

7/24/12

7/26/12

When you think  
you got it,  
you don't.

When you think  
you like it,  
you won't.

What we really want,  
we've  
already got.

What we think  
is needed  
probably is not.

What we think  
we'll get,  
we never will.

But what seems like  
the bottom is  
the top of the hill.

The good we do  
will soon  
be gone.

Clubs we'd like  
to join,  
we already belong.

Just being  
and feeling  
keeps me in the now.

Openness and  
acceptance are  
part of the How.

The way things unfold  
is not as  
as they seem.

Our projections mislead  
as if it's all  
a dream.

It's by letting go  
that we  
hold on.

When we think  
we go hither, it  
is probably yon.

And when we feel  
like we've blown  
our whole wad,

That's most likely the time  
that we're closest  
to God.

My prayer used to be:  
"please god-get me where I'm goin'  
so I can use what I'm knowin'  
without my backside showin'."

It recently changed to:  
"help me be where I'm at,  
not caught up in the Race of Rat  
while thinkin' that I am all that."

Learning life's lessons take a lifetime;  
won't get there today.

Yet oh! so easily lost 'long the way.  
The challenge: not in "go" but to "stay".

Too often "caught up in the whirlwind"\*  
for our breath to catch;  
such a wild a ride, it's hard not to retch;  
that we will survive is the only far fetch.

So often lost in all that commotion:  
that we are here now one can't debate;  
that only in this moment we relate; and  
that nowhere else can we find our fate.

\* Stevie Ray Vaughn: RIP