

Remembering to Remember

RoberTo
Volume 12

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

*Sent in appreciation for
memories yet to be made,
good songs yet to be played,
and a family of friends
whose gifts can never be fully repayed.*

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previous editions @
<http://www.robertvtobin-mpa.com/personal.html>

*PILGRIMS
Plymouth, MA
10/14/16*

*Hearing about those who sailed on the Mayflower,
and the challenges faced when they arrived,
makes it easier to see more clearly
the methods of those who survived.*

*Nothing like life's starkest realities
to make obvious its simplest truths,
demonstrating the most basic necessity:
care and feeding of our deepest roots.*

*A tree's branches draw our attention
toward the leaf and fruit they produce,
but ignore their source of vitality,
and prospects for growth thereby reduce.*

*It's when threats to existence are greatest
that life's simplicity becomes clear:
remember we all end where we started
as between those two poles daily we steer.*

*PROPOSAL DAY: YEAR 2
Red Lion Inn/ Stockbridge, MA
10/15/16*

Thoughts and words and actions
are the way intentions, ideas and interests are expressed.

And it is by these means
our reasons-for-being are professed.

Oh! How much more often it is
that our defects instead are confessed.

Or, worse, we do nothing
and learning opportunities are thereby suppressed.

Each day is a New Beginning,
but only if that's how it's addressed,

Now is the only time we experience
the numerous ways by which we are blessed.

DELUDED BY OUR ILLUSIONS *
Red Lion Inn/Stockbridge, MA
10/16/16

Every day turns out differently,
none the same as the rest.
Each with their memorable moments,
all turning out for the best.

Our misperceptions make it seem otherwise,
by highlighting their similarities instead.
That which blinds us to how everything changes
makes us think we're behind or ahead.

Both of which are delusions
fueled by our ego's attempt
to hide the truth within falsehoods,
and make it seem our lives are unkempt.

But they're not, and never were.
We make errors, but no blunders.
Each day constitutes a gift,
even with its clouds and thunders.

* thanks to John E.

FREEDOM
Boston, MA
10/17/16

Our revolution is never over.
The battle begins anew each day
to accept our purpose for being
and avoid being demeaning,
no matter what comes our way.

Turns out the 1776ers' fight was for liberty, not independence
but they found those things come together.
To make such a momentous decision
while being exposed to derision;
by such a slim thread did our freedom tether.

BECOMING
10/24/16

The question is not whether
something's bad for us,
but rather whether it's good.

Too much attention is focused
on what we shouldn't do,
when the only real issue is what we should.

The hard part is not
knowing what to do;
it is actually getting it done.

The setup is worse
till you do it, that is;
much more difficult is making it run.

Finding out who we are
requires lifelong learning;
there is no one teacher or book.

Becoming who we are
is an entirely different matter –
like catching a fish without any hook.

IMPOSTERS
10/23/16

See how it is?

It's by education that we learn.
Indeed, we only gain wisdom through experience.
And yet we need to go
before we know
which direction, or how to handle interference.

Hard to look forward when we can only see backward
and, even then, only the shoulda and coulda.
To look not just widely,
but also wisely,
requires paying more attention than I normally woulda.

To encounter life's seeming blessings and burdens
and "treat those imposters just the same" *
involves approaching all as a gift
intended to give us a lift
as if it were a rose by some other name.

*Rudyard Kipling

GIVING THANKS
11/26/16

Another day among many;
only our choices make it special.
Where we choose to look, and how;
how we hold ourselves, and why;
these determine its place
in our lives.

An attitude of gratitude is not second nature;
too many distractions for that.
Pulled as we are toward
what hurts rather than helps;
what's similar rather than different;
and what scares rather than soothes.

Gratitude is a muscle that requires regular exercise.
Just like all the rest,
it demands diligence and discipline
to see what is good rather than bad;
the reasons to be happy rather than sad;
and the waste of energy and time spent being mad.

ABUNDANCE
11/26/16

We should love others, we're told*
the way a rose emits fragrance,
a tree spreads shade,
or a lamp sheds its light, i.e.
gratuitously,
indiscriminately,
unselfishly,
unselfconsciously,
unconditionally.

They don't do so by judging
the good from the bad,
who they like or don't,
or what they get back in return.
They don't wait for an advantage
before distributing their benefits –
of which there is an abundant supply.

How many such examples surround us
for ways of living so contrary
among those ironically called human beings,
who focus on the "human" part
– so imperfect, yet continually evolving –
despite excellent role models readily available
– if we so choose –
to help us with the "being" part.

* Anthony DeMello

DISCONNECTED
???

It is nothing like
a "fate worse than death,"
but phone loss can make a door close.

Getting detached,
if only metaphorically,
is like getting punched in the nose.

Living without linkage
even for a moment
is a bit like dying, I suppose.

To be able to reach no one,
and no one able to reach you,
it's like one of those Twilight Zone shows

where everyone SEEMS normal
and acts perfectly natural,
yet a certain eeriness grows.

When your phone goes away,
it's harder to tell
which direction the wind blows.

How handy it is
to have something accessible
that tells us all that it knows.

PRE-INAGURATION
1/4/17

Physicists and mystics agree
this it is not things and situations,
but rather our perception of them,
that define their shape and value.

How important
that is to remember
as we enter a Year of Political Uncertainty
... or perhaps only seemingly so.

Looking more deeply, it becomes clear
this didn't come from nothing
and cannot lead nowhere.
Rather, it's the inevitable next step
in an ongoing process
that continues to unfold for our benefit
regardless of whether we see it as such.

By planting seeds of mindfulness,
we create opportunities for heightened awareness
that forge opportunities for enlightenment
and insights derived thereby.

Each moment provides
a chance to make a choice
about how we look at things.
This determines whether, and what, we see.

THE MIX
1/7/17

Meaning and messaging,
motives and methods
sometimes interact in ways unintended.

Opening and/or closing doors,
expanding and/or contracting
possibilities The Moment extended.

Whether noticed or not,
we're affected -
no matter how otherwise we pretended.

Permanently changed
by chances seized and/or missed;
from this mixture, our lives are blended.

When projections emanate
from self-centered expectations,
clear vision is prevented.

SEEDS
1/9/17

Listening to the deafening silence
allows us to hear better what comes thereafter.

Attuning our senses
breaks down our fences,
opening us up from basement to rafter.

Who knew richness is found in stillness?
Or than not thinking could manifest meaning?
By detaching, we're connected,
obstacles get bisected,
rendering negativity unseeming.

Trees reach the sky by deepening their roots,
and thereby receive what they need,
fulfilling their purpose
as just one act in The Circus
that gets launched when they plant their seed.

FRIDAY THE 13TH
Louisville, KY
1/13/17

Lucky or unlucky,
depends on your perspective.
Things unexpected are not untoward
if, that is, we're receptive.

Adversities arising
in logistics and accommodations
only deter us
if viewed as abominations.

How many arose
in Fr. Pat's African mission,
yet he seemed to treat it all
as if he'd just gone fishin'.

And now he's gone
to that Great Pond in the sky.
This holier man earned
an honorable goodbye.

We call it "unlucky"
when things don't go our way,
but that too has its blessings;
the gods will have their say.

COMMUNALITY
1/24/17

So much attention and energy
gets directed
toward how another's
thoughts, words and actions
align with their intentions,
making it easy to overlook
discontinuity in our own.

First, whether our own are
helping us stay calm, clear
and connected to the here and now.

Second, whether they foster
collaboration with those around us
in ways that forge congeniality
and, hopefully, communality.

And third, whether they reinforce
our sense of place on The Path,
our purpose on the planet,
and the reason(s) we're alive.

How often the continuity
between our own thoughts, words
and actions elude us
when we focus on its absence in others'.

POST-INAUGURATION -Week 1
1/26/17

In governance
- as in life -
we get back
pretty much
what we put out,
more or less
sooner or later
directly or indirectly.

They don't call
the laws of physics
"universal" for nothin',
as the vacuum nature abhors
is quickly filled
before we knew it existed.

And it will keep happening
if we bemoan our fate
rather than redirect the inputs
that produce these outputs
by exercising our rights
and responsibilities which
- like other muscles -
we lose if we don't use.

POST-INAUGURATION - WEEK 2
2/1/17

It's so hard to distinguish
the rebellious from the revolting
as our pursuit of happiness runs amok.

Its easy to confuse
salvation and redemption
as so often in between we get stuck.

There's an old saying:
one good thing about winning -
you're not covered in loser's muck.

But when those who are desperate
get united in anger,
they soon find themselves driving the truck.

Thus so every "victory"
sows seeds of defeat,
no matter one's ideas or luck.

With all the "sound and fury"*
that swirls in the meanwhile,
it's all we can do not to duck.

But stand up we must
- it's a part of the adventure,
just like Tom Sawyer or Huck -

if only to prove
we're not taken in
by all the Jiving and Shuck.

* William Faulkner

GROUNDHOG DAY... AGAIN
2/2/17

Interesting how our individual lives
are like atoms in the ocean,
each significant in their own way
yet magnificent in their collective influence.

Our country too can find magnificence
in its significance,
but it becomes lost
when trying to assert
the significance of its magnificence.

The lack of historical context is notably absent
as we - once again - ignore
personal, communal and global negativity
that emanates from the confluence
of egotistic and ethnocentric thinking.

We might get psychic gratification
from telling someone to go to hell,
but we'll be paying for the trip
and sitting beside them.

EVASION
2/5/17

we try to get others to believe
what they don't
to convince ourselves
what we wish were true - but we won't

but that doesn't
stop us from trying;
it's a way to drown out
the moans of those crying

which means our efforts to do so
must get louder and louder,
to mask whatever can't be avoided
by ingestion of liquid or powder

until it gets deafening,
as truths often do;
then it's no longer possible
to go around rather than through.

QUESTIONS
2/14/17

How is it we can see better
what we don't have
than what we do?

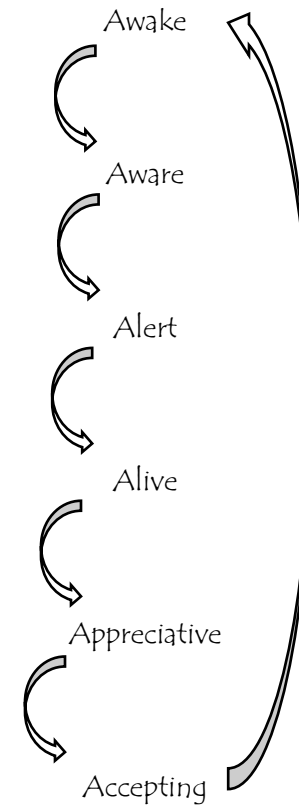
Why do we more acutely feel
the things we want
than those already provided?

When will now be The Time?

Where is the place
that searching stops
and being starts?

Who is The One
that knows these answers,
and even better questions?

AFFIRMATIONS
2/14/17



2nd WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
2/14/17

Smell of sweet roses
so beautifully red.
Lingering scent of moments
wonderfully spent.

Flickering candles'
glowing warmth
illuminate prospects
otherwise non-existent.

Places and people
not otherwise encountered.
Thoughts and feelings
otherwise passing unnoticed.

All of this, and much more
are precious gifts
received with gratitude
and acknowledged with a smile.

LIFE LESSONS (cont.)
2/18/17

The less we want to hear something,
the more we need to listen.

The less we want to do something,
the more likely it needs to get done.

The more we try to make it about others,
the more unlikely that it is.

The more accusatory we are,
the more unlikely they are the guilty party.

It's when we don't think we're ready
that we more likely are;
and when we think we are ready,
it is a good time to think again.

It's when things start looking down
that more likely they are starting to look up.

Our perceptions distort our reality,
not vice versa.

LIFE LESSONS (cont.)
2/23/17

It's not that we don't know what to do;
we would just rather not do it.

It's not that we don't know what's happening next.
We just rather not go through it.

It's not about whether we can accept what is,
or even whether we have to.
The fact is that we can,
but it's much harder to do when we've got to.

How strongly we persist in the pretense
that we can ignore, deny or avoid,
and end up laying on a couch
talking with a latter-day Freud.

The fact is that we already have,
and are blessed with, all we need.
To be where we are and get where we're going,
all we must do is plant the seed.

28 YEARS & COUNTING
2/26/17

Who knew there were other ways
of going,
knowing
and showing?

And better ways
of being,
seeing
and believing?

Each day – every moment – is another chance
for living,
giving
and receiving

and to experience the gifts
of gratitude,
attitude,
and latitude.

CHOICES
2/27/17

The good guys never win.
They just earn the chance to keep fighting
in a struggle that has no end.
Faces and places change.
The causes more complex, and the pauses shorter.
What they can't break, they'll try to bend.

The times indeed are a 'changin'
and not a moment too soon,
but the gimmicks remain the same.
The switch-and-ditch trick still suckers
those crazy or lazy enough
to not recognize the nature of the game.

We consistently confront
two major choices:
accept the world as is or how we'd like it to be.
Whether the allure of the pure,
the Big Mess, or Wild Guess;
what we look for is what we will see.

EXPLORATION
Death Valley, CA
3/2/17

When in the lowest place on earth
where there's no place to go but up,
you still have to start moving to get there.

Whether in the brightest or darkest of places
it's bound to change.
It's up to us to adapt, if we dare.

The hottest and coldest spots
can be one and the same,
and won't wait till we have time to spare.

Being where we are, and
enjoying where we're at,
makes for a good traveling pair.



REMBRANCE
3/7/17

We never forget,
- always remembering to remember -
her beauty by which we were blessed.

A wonder of nature
performing magic and miracles
greater than we had ever guessed.

People pass by
with hearts so big,
we wonder how it fits in their chest.

Our sister/daughter/mother/aunt
is one of those
who too quickly passed The Big Test.

She did her thing
and flew into the sunset,
or perhaps points further west.

Having helped others to strive,
she now sees her sons thrive
as they each now have flown from the nest.

Sadness and gladness
so closely intertwined
among all those who received her best.

SOURCES of INFLUENCE
3/8/17

We search hither and yon
for that found within:
peace, serenity.
love and strength.
These things start when we begin ...

... to give unto those
what we want to receive:
acceptance, appreciation,
compassion, and forgiveness,
which only exist when we believe ...

... in the dictates of karma,
the Golden Rule
or Newton's laws of physics,
which can't be evaded
no matter what we use as a tool.

Powers readily available
are beyond our comprehension:
insight, wisdom,
influence, and change.
By their use, we assure their retention.

WINNERS

Kona (on the Big Island's western shore)

3/11/17

Beautiful place.
Lovely people.
Culture separate and distinct.

Holding its own.
Finding its way.
Determined to stay cool and hang loose.

Islands unto themselves,
yet interconnected.
Made stronger by their unity.

Cherishing traditions
that provide protection
from saviors and other scoundrels,

reminding us that
the hare draws the attention
but the tortoise wins the race.

FROM THE LANAI
3/14/17

Clarity makes us aware
of instinctive reactions.
Wisdom guides their application.

Whether our response is justifiable
is not the point.
If not timely, appropriate and constructive,
it's more than likely to be unhelpful.

Our initial reaction must
focus on staying calm,
remaining cool,
and at peace in any/every eventuality.

Only then can we assure
our best response
in situations easy to misinterpret,
and thus prone to be misconstrued.

This way we prevent
care-giving from becoming care-taking,
and make it more likely that love and learning
are enhanced in the process.

BLOSSOMS
Hilo/Big Island's eastern shore
3/16/17

Chirping birds
welcome the sunrise
on yet another skyblue day.

Canoe paddlers
drifting by.
Chattering children have their say.

Coconut trees
sway in the breeze,
announcing they're here to stay.

Placid ocean
by which sailors came,
using stars to find their way.

Wondrous opportunities
and bountiful blessings
are the way by which the gods pay ...

... for our perseverance
and optimism,
no matter comes what may.

TOURISTS
3/17/17

It's not, Karen says,
about where you go,
but rather, who you're with.

Don't go with the crazed version
of ourselves or another
who is not where they're at
but wishing they were elsewhere;
or that the weather more becoming,
the attractions more sparkling,
the flora and fauna more lush,
and lodgings more accommodating.

And don't go without the sense of some Higher Power,
and grateful for the blessings life bestows;
the miracles that comprise each day;
the wonders that freedom of movement bring;
the connections intertwining the fabric of our lives;
the well-being with which we are gifted; and
the chance to appreciate all these at the Present Moment.

We are challenged to bring these
wherever we go,
whomever we're with, and
whatever is happening.
Only thereby are we assured a pleasant trip.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY
3/17/17

It's patron saint isn't even Irish.
Neither is corned beef and cabbage.
From such inaccuracies,
history is made.

Terrorists of their time
fighting fears and facing facts,
the political, religious and economic being inseparable.

The power to label controlled by those
kicking down from upper rungs
while still others push up from below.

We can't get where we're going
by forgetting
where we came from and why.

And even harder to get what we want
without losing what we have,
and getting lost along the way.

Heritage shapes identity,
but character defines fate,
and adversity faced determines destiny.

DIVERSIONS
3/28/17

All those who wander and wonder
are blessed with an invisible guide
who prevents us from getting lost 'long the way.

Every step forward, backward or around
is an end-in-itself,
allowing each inclination to have its say.

It's so easy to get distracted
by the bubbles and baubles
and lose track of the date or the day,

or be diverted by detours
taking us elsewhere,
only rediscovering the path when we pray.

Moving forward, by definition,
places us in the unknown
- not a place we willingly stay.

Yet onward bravely we go,
finding uncertainty a certainty.
It's just another scene in the play.

DIRECTIONS
3/31/17

Why bother reading the directions?
Really, what do THEY know, anyhow?
They have assembled the thing
numerous times,
but never quite like this.

So what if it takes
at least twice as long.
Really, what's the rush?

And if it ends up working
not quite as well,
it's still the only one of its kind.

There might have been
parts left over in either case,
but its unique angle gives it more character.

Why do they even bother to provide directions?
Never even glanced at them.
Well, maybe next time ...

LIFE LESSONS (cont.)
3/31/17

When it becomes about who's right,
you're wrong.

When winning becomes the most important thing,
you've lost.

Whatever you're not getting,
you're not giving.

Whenever people aren't hearing what you say,
it's time to start listening.

When you don't think you are going fast enough,
it's time to slow down.

If you think you'll never get there,
probably you almost are.

And the more impatient you become
waiting for something to happen,
the less likely it will.

SHORTCUTS
4/18/17

It seems inexplicable
that the easiest way
is usually the hardest.
That way seems
best at the moment
only because our first glance
is usually toward
our most immediate
short-term interests, which
- even the Dalai Lama points out -
involves the pursuit of pleasure
and/or avoidance of pain,
preferably both,
and if neither,
then whichever option involves
the least amount of thought, effort
and other resources diverted
from whatever it is we'd rather be doing instead ...
unless, of course,
we stop and look more deeply
at our long(er) term interests,
and then what seems the harder way
is actually easier
both sooner AND later.

EARTH DAY
4/22/17

Three years and counting
since our party got started,
a day of excitements
as our Love Train departed.

Every day since
proved Darwin correct:
life gets better and better,
as from cause to effect.

Each doing our part
to hold the bar high.
It's not all that hard;
we just have to try ...

... to stay present and open,
avoiding judgment and fear,
taking care of ourselves and each other
keeps things remarkably clear ...

... and joyous and serene,
affording wide latitude.
Love is an action
conveyed by our attitude.

ALTERNATIVE (K)NOT
4/30/17

It's said that when we get the message,
we should hang up the phone. *
Yet we often keep listening
for something better
- or at least different -
than what we'd rather not
know, hear or do.

Perhaps the only thing
worse than our aversion
is its avoidance.

Unpleasant or uncomfortable
is never as bad
as the seeming shortcut
that is always longer;
the supposedly easy way
that is always harder;
and the less painful option
that always hurts worse.

And yet we keep searching
for the non-existent alternative.
They call it the next right thing
because it is always right in front of us.

* Alan Watts

CHOICES 2
Northbrook, Ill.
5/5/17

We are who we are
and where we're at,
external circumstances notwithstanding;
going neither forward nor backward
no matter how awkward,
focused on the jump instead of the landing.

It's something you don't know
until you need to learn it,
so it always comes a tad late.
Discovering what we're without
sows seeds of doubt,
and gets us bemoaning what we call "fate".

Or instead we could choose
an alternative route
that leads to the same destination,
staying curious,
avoid getting furious
and cultivate serenity's restoration.

Opening up
when we'd rather shut down
is counter to our instinct for survival,
but facing our fear
protects all we hold dear
and assures love's continual revival.

GOODBYES
Midway Airport
5/9/17

Saying goodbye
at least one more time,
not knowing which will be the last,
who will be there for the next visit,
or for whom waiting time has passed.

Hard to convey
in any one sitting
the love and appreciation felt,
as the warmth of their many considerations
are sufficient to make our hearts melt.

To go forward
we occasionally need to step backward
to see from whence we came,
and get a sense of where we're headed.
Sometimes what and why are the same.

But the who
is most important.
It's the vehicle by which we are borne.
Learning by experience, guided by values,
proceeding forward with illusions shorn.

GRADUATION
5/20/17

College graduates celebrate
completion, closure, culmination,
and, they believe, a continuation
even as guest speakers lecture and cajole
as if happiness would be assured
if only departing students saw, thought and acted
in the manner being prescribed
when all this guarantees
is more of the same
at a time when
innovation and creativity are needed,
and change is inevitable.

It is not the ending
but beginning of their learning
that deserves our applause,
not what they did
or how well they absorbed
what is already deciphered
as if that in any way
reflects readiness for
meeting the unknown
– and indeed unknowable –
challenges that lay ahead.

Shoulding upon is the weakest form of nurture,
yet we exhort those
we should instead encourage.

COST/BENEFIT
5/21/17

The benefits of privilege and prosperity
are easier to measure than their cost.

It's not difficult to see their many gains,
but it's harder to know what gets lost.

HOMELESSNESS CONFERENCE
Denver, CO
5/24/17

Rain pelts the windows.
Lightening streaks the sky.
Sirens pierce the darkness.
All we can do is wonder why.

Seven hundred gather,
comfortable, dry and warm,
to ponder the plight of those
who are left out there in the storm.

With pets and guitars,
one guy playing sax;
looking worse for wear,
paying the ultimate tax.

There's no mystery really,
as them that gots still get.
God help those who don't,
'cause we're not done talkin' yet.

How much different things would be
if we were our brothers' keeper.
But as we sow, so shall we reap
and our National Debt gets deeper.

INVESTMENTS
5/30/17

We make the bed
in which we lay.
There's no truer fact,
whatever else we might say.

But they don't tell you
that it won't come back
pound for pound,
and in a neat little sack.

But rather two, or twenty
or a hundred-fold,
leaving you hot and sweaty
or shivering cold.

Our agenda blinds us
to the source of our retribution
or redemption,
as determined by our own contribution.

MIDDLE GROUND
6/12/17

There are times when we can do
more than we think,
and at other times do more than we should.
The former involves healthy stretching
while the latter does no one much good.

We pray for
"the wisdom to know the difference" *
but get it only if we listen.
Otherwise we're led astray or run amok
and never fulfill our mission.

In between lies the answer,
which, for centuries sages said,
is hiding in plain sight.
Yet it continues to elude us,
as if obscured on a dark moonless night.

Instead we keep searching
everywhere else
for that only found within;
doing what we can't
and not what we can.
YIKES! That's the Original Sin!

* The Serenity Prayer

GRANDCHILD AS TEACHER
Chicago, Ill.
6/12/17

Truth can be found
in every cliché,
or at least those involving (grand)children.

Observing their experience
of awe and wonder each minute
is enough to contemplate a return to diapers.

Increasingly obvious
is their continual cultivation
of capabilities having life-long value.

A sense of balance, for one –
not leaning too far left or right,
forward or backward.

The capacity for coordination, for another –
an ability to integrate their own efforts
and synchronize with others’.

The last of these is resilience –
the ability to “pick yourself up,
dust yourself, and start all over again.”

The acquisition of these skills
may be a lifetime job,
but it’s just kids play.

* “Pick Yourself Up” Song

BRIDGES
Northbrook, Ill.
6/22/17

Oh! So often
in life, as in love
things not only are
not what they seem
but the exact opposite,
as seemingly bad things
often turn out for the best
and vice versa.

A “negative” medical test
is actually good news
whereas a “positive” one often isn’t.
And those who look
like they’re going down for the count
are actually headed upward to
whatever heaven awaits.

Life’s hardest experiences
are like that.
Seen from the right perspective,
what seems like a wall
might actually be a bridge.

PASSENGERS
Wilmette, Ill.
6/23/17

Sitting at the station,
waiting for the train
from there to here.
Can't leave till it does,
or arrive any sooner –
another exercise in trust and patience.

But it's not the train
but the track
that connects us all,
keeping us grounded
while still moving
along paths and schedules pre-arranged.

We adjust to it
rather than it to us.
Thereby all are accommodated.
We don't even have to know the way.
Just know where we're going,
pay the fare,
take your seat,
and enjoy the ride.

9th ALANON B-Day
7/5/17

How different life would be
if happiness was seen as the input
we brought to every situation
instead of the outcome
we sought from it?

Similarly, for serenity,
calmness, peace, love
and maybe even freedom?

Are we waiting to receive
that which only we can give?
To get from the situation
that which we are supposed to bring to it?
Who knew?

Not only would our
expectations and approach,
experience and learning
– indeed, our whole way of living –
be different,
but our purpose for being as well.

Giving that which we seek to receive
is the practice preached by every great teacher
to all of us sloooooow learners.

GOLD COUNTRY
Volcano, CA
7/7/17

Stepping forward
by going back in time,
finding similarities in our differences,
understandings despite our ignorance,
appreciations often obscured by adversities,
and acceptance even when faced with resistance.

Miners destroy our environment
in pursuit of riches,
then as now.
Much of what they find gets lost
in the search for more
or other games of chance,
leaving them with only as much joy
as they carried in with them in the first place.

Yet for all that is now different,
the vast majority remains unchanged:
the breeze in the trees,
chirping birds unseen,
passing clouds in the skies,
shining stars in the night,
thoughts in our minds,
feelings in our hearts,
and a sense of connectedness to each other
and to our past.

FRIENDS
7/8/17

old friends
new friends
red friends
blue friends

relativities of time
and perspective
shrink in proportion
to our openness
and willingness
to trust
and share
life's sufferings
and celebrations
and the incremental progress therein

each step forward
every breath inward
all action well-intended
another moment cherished
blessings appreciated
and day enjoyed,
each for their own sake
rather than outcome derived,
advantage gained,
or position improved.

everything is an end-in-itself,
and also a beginning.