I had to learn that one must write volumes before signing one’s own name. I had to learn, and I soon did, that one must give up everything and not do anything else but write, that one must write and write and write, even if everyone in the world advises against it, even if nobody believes in you. Perhaps one does it just because nobody believes, perhaps the real secret lies in making people believe.

To get beneath the facts I would have to become an artist, and one does not become an artist overnight. First you have to be crushed, to have your conflicting points of view annihilated. You have to be wiped out as a human being in order to be born again as an individual. You have to become carbonized and mineralized in order to work upwards from the last common denominator of the self.

Who would want to switch in and listen to Beethoven, for example, when he might himself experience the ecstatic harmonies which Beethoven so desperately strove to register

Everyday we slaughter our first impulses. That is why we get heartache when we read those lines written by the hand of the master and recognize them as our own, as the tender shoots which we stifled because we lacked the faith to believe in our own powers, our own criterion of truth and beauty

The purpose of discipline is to promote freedom. Freedom means the strict inner precision of a Swiss watch combined with absolute recklessness

You must prove it to the world, at least once in your life, or you will go mad believing it all by yourself.

It came without effort. Why? Because instead of forcing it out I had gone to sleep after due surrender of the ego. Do your utmost and let Providence do the rest. It was a victory most illuminating

One must act as if the past is dead and the future unrealizable. One must act as if the next step where the last, which it is.

Like it or not I was obliged to create a new life for myself. And this new life I feel is mine, absolutely mine, to use or smash, as I see fit. In this life, I am god, and like god I am indifferent to my own fate. I am everything there is, so why worry

For the artist to attach himself to his work, or to identify with it, is suicidal. An artist should not be able not only to spit on his predecessor’s art, or on all works of art, but on his own to. He should be able to be an artist all the time, and finally not be an artist at all, but a piece of art.

I have the accelerated rhythm that goes with genius. I am happy all the time inside, even when I am depressed. I never doubt for a minute. Never. I am dead certain of everything. What it is I have it, and I don’t give a fuck by what name you call it. Nature, is with me, and god too, and so are all my brothers in the flesh, though they don’t know it all yet.

I entered the world of art without any apparent talent, a thorough novice, awkward, tongue-tied, almost paralyzed by fear and apprehensiveness. I had to lay one brick on another, set millions of words to paper before writing one real authentic, real word dragged up from my own guts.

I had to throw myself into the current knowing that I would probably sink. The great majority of artists are throwing themselves in with life-preservers around their necks, and more often then not it is the life preserver which sinks them. Nobody can drown in the ocean of reality who voluntarily gives himself up to the experience. Whatever there be of progress in life comes not through adaptation but through daring, through obeying the blind urge.

A man does not go forward through life along a straight, horizontal path; often he does not stop at the stations indicated on the time table. Sometimes he goes off the track completely; sometimes he dives below and is lost for a time; or he takes to the air and is fling against the side of a steep cliff. Tremendous voyages sometimes occur without the person moving from the spot. In five minutes some men have lived out the span of an ordinary mans lifetime

My suffering was so great and my ego too, no doubt- that I imagined it needed a canvas of that scope

Everything that happens to you was intended for you, and never mistake it. Particularly the bad things.

When you can’t create you can work