

clownfysh.co posts

2016–2017 in chronological order

by Matthew Temple

SYNTHESIZING MY SITES

Do fewer things better.

Stability is good. So is change. I change whenever I need to.

I was having trouble with the constantly changing post-ordering system on my last site builder/host, so I've decided to come over here to Strikingly, as when I recently re-did my résumé on this platform, I thought the tools and design and choices made here were awesome—I was impressed.

My new site is clownfysh.co (the site you're on lol). It replaces all of my other active sites with Strikingly's brilliant (mostly) one-page model. I have encapsulated links to old sites that may be of interest.

All of my books are still free. There is a store and Patreon link by which you may contribute financially if you like—but no pressure ⇒ The whole idea behind free books is that they are actually free.

I'm more concerned with your mind than your money.

That's it!—Yay!—New site! I've had a great day making it and I look forward to using it until someday—hopefully not soon—when I need to change again.

Love,

Matthew Temple

RIDING THE KIDDIE RIDES

And the end of Monopoly

When you're a kid, you ride the kiddie roller coaster for real.

When you're an adult, you ride the kiddie roller coaster for fun—for the benefit of the kids you're with.

That's what's happening with capitalism.

Some of you are still playing for real.

Some of you are now just playing for fun—to placate those who are playing for real.

Think of a Monopoly game.

Think of that point in the game where one person has all the money and the property but there are still others playing.

What happens at that point? Does the kingpin ever win?

No. Everyone stops playing because it's not fun anymore.

That's what's happening to capitalism.
We're approaching a point where the masses who have little or no
holdings are going to stop humoring those who have all the
holdings.
And you know what happens then?
Billionaires are worth nothing.
Everyone stops playing the game.
We all move on to doing something else.
That is happening now.
It is happening soon.
It has happened.

I LOVE MY FAMILY
And they can suck a dick

Email from me to my cousin
It is difficult for me to see the many Facebook posts by you and my
younger cousins gloating for the win of a presidential candidate
who made fun of people disabled by motion disorders in his
campaign speeches.
Do you realize I have a motion disorder caused by medicine
prescribed me by a doctor in a hospital?
It's tough—that's all I'm saying—it's tough.
Matthew

PS. Have you ever been homeless because of a mental disability?
Have you ever slept in a parking lot? I have. I love you and all my
younger cousins but you are so naive about the world. So naive.
Email from me to my aunt and uncle
Recent Facebook posts by your younger daughter, C [young
cousin], and C [young cousin] are alarming. These are children who
know little of the world, guided by parents who know little of the
world.
Please see the email to C regarding motion disorders.
As someone who has worked for more Fortune 500 companies than
C, J [uncle], or anyone else in this family will ever work for and
written 25 books and also, given my disabilities, been
disenfranchised and homeless, I stand in a position of experience
none of you will ever reach.
To hear your children, especially L [teenage cousin]—who is
undeniably intelligent at the gifted level—spout your naive politics,

is tragic. I am ashamed, at this time, to be called members of your family.

Fortunately, a child as smart as L (and it takes one to know one—only S [one of my sisters], L, and me operate at this level of intelligence out of everyone in this family) will quickly strip herself of this ignorance in adulthood. So I don't worry about her.

But I can't help but let you know what a low opinion of mine you have sunk to by imbuing this intelligent child with such limited ideals. I will never think of you in the lofty way my childhood self saw you.

With shame, disappointment, and intellectual horror (something you will never know),

Matthew

Email from me to my entire family

I've had plenty of time to reflect on the events of the time I spent at the Ranchwood house and other events in our family in the recent era.

That Mack was allowed to disrespect S [aunt] and S [cousin] and GG [grandmother] and me (at least) was unconscionable and principally supported by S [aunt]. I condemn this and lament it as a sad chapter in our family history. S, you owe me, your mother, my mother, an apology for this. I urge you to set aside personal embarrassment, take responsibility, and issue the necessary apologies.

That Rusty [Russel Mack—uncle] was allowed to roam the house freely and utter the phrase "nigger pussy" with no recourse from the family is likewise unconscionable. That he was allowed to threaten my residence at the house without challenge from his siblings represents basal weakness on your part. I hold each of you responsible for this.

My opinion of all of you is at an all time low. Your avoidance of conflict has created a family where C [cousin] feels free to disrespect women (ask my sister and mother for examples) and where chaos generally reigns. I am about to leave you all behind (except my mother and sisters) in a major way, for the second time, and my report card to you is that you are failing.

I am not stupid. I realize that things will likely continue the way they have. I am simply letting you have an outsider's perspective on our dysfunctional family, as you move forward.

Things are not looking well.

The more separation I can have from you, the happier I am.
Good luck in your apathy, for I'll have no part of you. And if you think you've received a dose from me tonight, consider that that dose is a molecule, where you deserve a mountain.
I suggest you swallow the molecule, and not invite the mountain, for my mountain involves techniques that your feeble imaginations cannot comprehend. Either take the molecule quietly, or reap the whirlwind.

Matthew

Email from my aunt to me

Matthew,

I am truly sorry that I handled the situation with Mack so poorly. I'm sorry that my actions are continuing to cause you pain. I hope someday you will be able to forgive me.

Love,

S

Response to my aunt

I forgive you. I will never speak of it—or to you—again.

Email to my aunt and uncle

And just in case you think this is some pro-Hillary rant, don't. I wager I know more about the Clintons' evil than you do and you can be sure as shit I didn't vote for one in this election.

But you two are an embarrassment to this family and this species for having influenced a smart child in that way and in L's case it will come back to haunt you—you can bet on that.

Email to my aunt, uncle, and cousin

Something that no one else in the family will say to your face..

You work for companies that are destroying the Earth [ExxonMobil and other oil companies].

This is in direct contradiction to God's directive that we be stewards of this Earth.

You cannot call yourself Christian and do this work—it is a contradiction.

Email to my uncle

Something I learned about J [my uncle]. At Thanksgiving. A couple years ago.

J, I asked you about your job and life, listened with interest, and truly cared, and you never listened to my life—it apparently was of little interest to you.

You are so self-centered.

You never took the time to get to know me—as I did you—and that reveals everything about who you are. I understand your job—I get what you do. And to someone like me (have you reviewed my resume?) you are basically someone who has no significant skills, no deep technical knowledge..of anything.

You're so sure of yourself, and you ignored my story as if I was nothing. I'll never forget that. I'm smarter than you. I've worked for more high-profile companies than you will ever work for. And yet you took no time to listen to me when I spent time listening to you about your life.

What can I say man? You showed your true colors.

Matthew

To my aunt and uncle

J, P;

You owe me an apology. Which I don't expect I'll ever get, as you are—essentially—morally low-class people. But you owe it to your remaining family (which will never include me) to make a change..in yourselves..with respect to S Mack and Rusty.

If you stand by silently while allowing Rusty to say "nigger pussy" in GranGran's house, then you are part of the problem.

I wash my hands of you all,

Matthew

Conclusion

I swear on my future grave I will never speak to anyone in that family—which has never been and will never be my family—again (excluding my sisters and mother). I shake the dust off my feet and move on.

EVERYONE LIKES ME

Except my entire family

Well, that's not exactly true. But there's definitely a trend.

Therapists, psychiatrists, psych evaluators, friends and fellow writers I've met online, strangers I meet and befriend in the grocery store, old old friends, and a few people in my family love the shit out of me, connect with me, exchange wisdom and love and encouragement with me.

But my family en masse—no. The only people I have working relationships with in my family are my mom, one cousin, and one sister. Everyone else shows me animosity or disregard, or I can't

stand their shallowness and non-participation in life..to the point that I cannot have them in my life.

Maybe I don't like them—maybe that's more to the point.

I lived with my grandmother, aunt, and uncle for two years and there was never any intimacy—that was a huge disappointment to me. But they didn't want that..didn't want it with me or don't want it in their lives.

My grandmother has pictures in her room of the grand kids..but no pictures of me. That is not an accident. That is a choice. And it is a choice I noticed when I went into her room to watch TV with her, to talk, to take her dirty dishes to the kitchen.

I don't think my family knows me—I don't think they can appreciate who I am. And it is due to that general lack of intimacy in our family. We can spend Thanksgiving together—or Christmas, a week of time surrounding each other—and never learn anything about each other but the superficial. This seems acceptable to most of those present. It is not acceptable to me. To me, casual family is not family at all—I don't do casual. I learn the names and stories of every employee in the Kroger I shop at. They hug me. They give me gifts. This has always been the case for me. Owners of restaurants give me Christmas presents, they watch my films and listen to me talk about my cellular automata work. They tell me about their lives; I learn from their experience. They make me special meals, and when I'm away for a while and come back, they ask for updates about my life and work.

If only my family treated me with such regard.

Maybe they've been through too much with me and can't respect me. Maybe they disregard me because they know I have mental illness (my family thinks I'm sick—my doctors think I'm well).

Maybe my family doesn't like how I communicate with them. But long before any difficult communication from me, there is always a long period of abuse or disregard from the other party. I endured a lifetime of abuse and neglect from my father before I said a critical word to him. I just can't respect or further endure the behavior of most of my family. Specifically, I cannot abide chronic self-centeredness. If I ask you about you, and listen with interest, and you do not reciprocate, my respect for you goes to zero. There are a lot of people in my family who think they're the only person in the room. Those are not people I want in my life.

I want to—and I think I finally am—peacefully and quietly accepting that I don't have to get along with my family. I learned this a long time ago about my dad. My expectations about what a family should be are beautiful but not realistic. My family truly is a disappointment to me. But I don't have to bang my head against the wall forever. I can relate to the three people therein who are authentic, compassionate, and proactive enough to be worth the effort of exchange. And guess what? Those three are also satellite people—they too have trouble with this tangle of a thing I call my family.

CHAPTERS ALL A LENGTH

"My mother is a fish." —Faulkner

In some books, the chapters are all the same length. In some books, the chapters vary moderately in length. And in some, the lengths of chapters vary wildly.

What is the psychological effect of this on the reader?

I will give my opinion here.

Consider the shortest chapter ever written in a popular work of literature. It consists of the words, "My mother is a fish." and was written by William Faulkner in *As I Lay Dying*.

When you read this chapter, you think: Wow, William Faulkner is a brilliant writer. He possessed the genius to write a chapter so short and the balls to defend it as serious literature. Damn, Faulkner was a literary god. And so on. What is the point? Are you thinking about the story? About the book at all? No, all you can think about is what a literary genius Faulkner is.

This chapter is an extreme example. But I contend that variable chapter lengths, especially the more they vary, draw the reader out of the experience of the story or the sequence of the book by drawing attention to the publicized structure of the book.

When you say, "Chapter 1", you are publicizing the structure of the book. A reader notices when a chapter is especially long, because readers are measuring chapter lengths by other events happening in their lives that have nothing to do with your freaking book. Like a reader might read a 10-page chapter and say, I'm going to read one more chapter, then go to bed. Well, if the next chapter is 20 pages, they're going to notice. It's going to present a challenge to them because they want to go to bed and they also want to finish your chapter and they can't do both at the same time. So it draws

attention to the structure of the book—to the fact that there are chapters in the first place!

Now, on the other hand, if you make all your chapters exactly the same length, it does more than "get the reader into a rhythm." It makes them forget there are chapters, because—by being the same length as all the others—each chapter blends in with the rest, and the lack of variation means there's nothing of the structure for the reader to become aware of. Because nothing sticks out—like "My mother is a fish."—there is nothing of the structure for the reader to pay attention to.

To the extreme, you can have no chapters at all, no paragraphs, no line breaks. This is a technique I have used two or three times. Here the reader is truly lost in the sequence of the words—maybe impossibly so—because there is no structure except the sequence. Of course I'm not advocating any of these as better than the others. Just opining on what effect I think they have on the reader.

REVIEWS

From readers and critics

Five Stars Are Not Enough

Whilst the synopsis on the back cover may lead you to expect a story about bullying, revenge and atonement, in truth, *Things Said in Dreams* is a masterful exploration of much grander topics or deeper subjects.

As I read, I began in awe out of sheer admiration for Matthew Temple's style. By the time I was through, I was paralyzed.

Things Said in Dreams is amphibian chameleon hypnotic sardonic manic hypothetical incisive indelible deep treacherous tragic philosophical spiritual unblinking..forgiving.

You will forget to breathe. You will never forget Matthew Temple.

—Joan Barbara Simon, writer, PhDx2

A New Definition of Narrative Writing

This novel must be as close to the mentation of a physically and sexually and emotionally challenged teenager traversing the corridors of her high school and her out of school maze trying to make sense of her pets, her strange boy friend, her boyfriend's sister (the descriptions of her sensual obsession with that sister's body and accoutrements is at once hilarious and erotic) as any author has accomplished to date.

Yes, there is a lot of vulgarity for lack of a better term for early physical exploration, dialogue with her classmates with some very bizarre moments.

But the glory of the writing is the ongoing unspoken dialogue our strange girl has with us, the reader. It is all over the place crazy at times, disjointed, flights of fancy, discombobulated for pages, but reading this wondrous work is very much akin to wandering in and out of a performance of Bach's Goldberg Variations—complex, wild at times, tender at times and in the end finding center the way Bach's variations are indeed variations.

As satisfying a literary experience as has come down the pike in a novel form in a long time.

—Grady Harp

The Depth Of Salinger With Biting Lyricism

Things Said In Dreams doesn't leap off the page. It spills from it and washes over you like a steady stream of consciousness, released in a singular breath of spoken word given life by the protagonist.

In a way, the plot is secondary to the sheer experience of chasing the story. It seems to race ahead, with characters and relationships appearing from nowhere, each quite organic, but some seeming to want further exploration. Yet that never seems to hinder the flat-out, take-no-prisoners style which Temple wields deftly.

When I finished, I knew what had happened, and how, with even a hint of why, but I realized that I was exhausted. This is not a bad thing in any way. Temple has created a mature, complex experience that is more pursuit than novel, where the story is first out of the starting blocks and you are close behind, never ahead.

A thoroughly enjoyable book for readers seeking a deep, driven narrative.

—Ryne Douglas Pearson, screenwriter of Knowing

More about Things Said in Dreams

Had me gasping and wincing at the same time. The language flows smoothly and freely, and this combined with the events themselves, the main protagonist and the transformative conclusion, makes Things Said in Dreams a very impressive and deeply sympathetic work.

—Berit Ellingsen

Astonishing. This is one of those books which is a combination of intense, offbeat, compelling, brilliant and interesting at the same time! Loved it.

—L. Anne Carrington

It mesmerized me. Not sure what I was expecting, but this was far different, and far more intelligent.. Stream of consciousness can be hard to control, but you've made it an art.

—Genevieve Graham-Sawchyn

Kooky and lascivious.. Sick, but wonderful.

—Peter Morin

A girl with a very dark mind—the way she has it all figured out, as all teenagers think that they do—a disturbing life path full of deadly dangers and sexual exploitation, but all viewed calmly and clinically.. I don't know why but I thought of a modern female Holden Caulfield at times. Haunting and ambitious.

—Ruth Barrett

Beautiful! This is exactly the kind of book I'm searching for when I go to the book store. I'll spend an hour there and not find it, though. I'm amazed. Things Said in Dreams reads like truth. The dialogue feels true, the thoughts feel true, and the narration too.

—Rodney Jones

LEAVING NASHVILLE

Destination Sleepover 2.0

Empty room

Yesterday I packed my things and left my room in Nashville.

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react-text: 70 / react-text



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Driving

Then Mom and I drove to Hallstead, Pennsylvania where I will live with my BFF Davina.

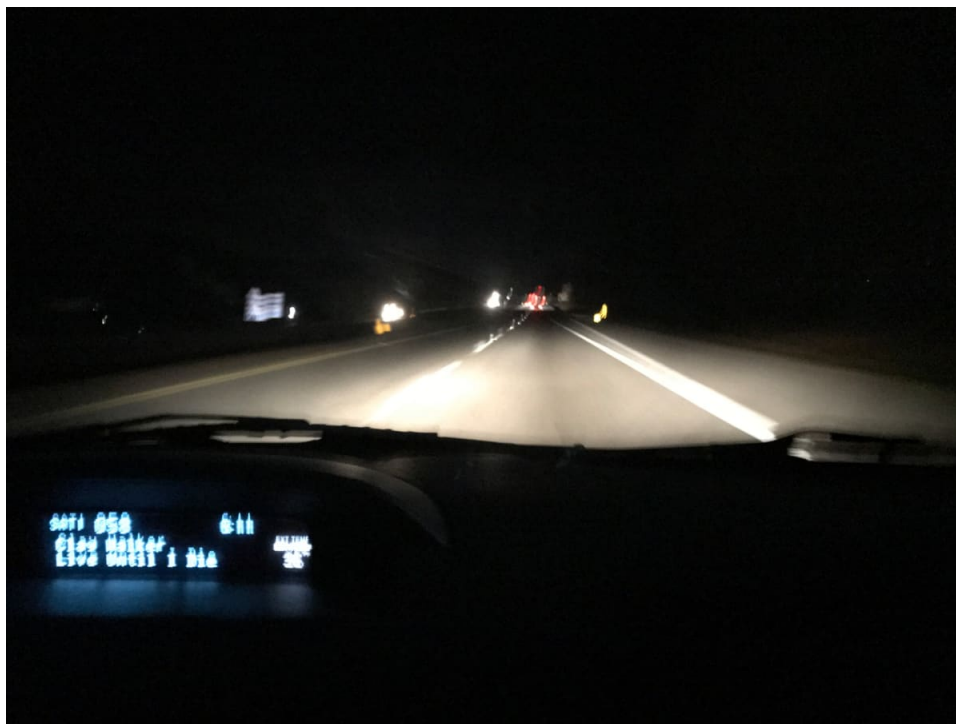
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react-text: 157 / react-text

First we encountered a small tire pressure issue and decided to fix it before continuing down the road.

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We drove at night. Mom did all the driving due to my tardive dyskinesia.

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react-text: 197 /react-text

Quick turnaround in a hotel. We both slept wonderfully.
react-text: 212 / react-text



react-text: 217 / react-text
react-text: 226 / react-text



react-text: 231 / react-text

Was happy to see that Starbucks not only requires employees to wash hands but instructs them on how to do it.

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react-text: 251 / react-text

react-text: 260 / react-text



react-text: 265 / react-text

Poultry truck that tried to run us off the road. Happy Thanksgiving.
(Video 1 | Video 2)

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react-text: 294 / react-text



react-text: 299 / react-text

Mom pointed out this wonderful ice blue.

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react-text: 328 / react-text



react-text: 333 / react-text

We start to see snow.

react-text: 348 / react-text



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Sleepover 2.0

When Davina and I visited a few months ago, we called it The Ultimate Sleepover—two weeks of movies, cooking, ordering pizzas, eating Chinese, and celebrating her birthday. Now that we're living together, we've decided to call it Sleepover 2.0—fun, relaxation, and company that never ends.

Life is transition

My friend Shringara and I once said we wanted to make our greetings and partings elegant: to not stutter our goodbyes and say them more than once, but to say goodbye once, bow or hug, and then walk into or out of someone's life.

Transitions are especially hard for some people, but they are generally hard for all of us. Meetings and conclusions require extra energy—or do they?

Can we learn to do what Shringara and I dreamed? I think we can. I think this latest transition is my best yet: with help, with planning, with professional advice even, I walked and drove out of one life, bowing to my old room and the forest that surrounded it, bowing to my mom, and walking into a new house with a new housemate who is an old friend with the littlest of friction.

Walk from one life to the next, elegantly—it is possible.

LOREN ROCKS DOWN

On the guitar in our living room

Davina's and my roommate gives us a private show

This is Loren Kopp. Behold. Fuck yourself. And hail satan.



Loren 1
from Matthew Temple

00:16

Vimeo



Loren 2
from Matthew Temple

00:17

Vimeo



Loren 3
from Matthew Temple

00:18

Vimeo



Loren 4
from Matthew Temple

00:17

Vimeo

Thanks, man. Skills.

CHESS WRITING

Create not on the page..but in the reader's head

Some writing is record keeping.

Some writing is emotional expression.

But some writing, like chess, is manipulation.

All the moves are in the open. There are no secrets in the public action of writing or chess: all the moves and pieces and paragraphs and words are right there for everyone to see.

And yet, sometimes in writing—like in chess—you are making a move not because it's what you want to do, exactly, but because you hope it will cause your reader or your opponent to feel a certain way or make a certain move.

They say film directors are chess players. They don't tell actors what they want them to do..they tell them something that will get them to do what they want them to do.

Sometimes writers are the same way.

Sometimes you want to create—not what's on the page, but—what's in the reader's head. You do something on the page that will create the reaction you want in the reader. Writers are manipulators out in the open—chess players—in this way.

ACTION AND META-THOUGHT IN NOVELING

When to stop thinking about what you're going to do and actually do it

I'm about to write a novel. I start the main writing tomorrow.

I've already done months of work over years on this book.

I've written an outline.

I've written some scenes.

All in all, for a ~200-page novel, I have 60 pages of notes.

Over the last week, I've been massaging my subconscious by loosely thinking about the book while listening to my writing music for this piece.

I am very well prepared.

And it is time to stop preparing.

What I have been doing is meta-thinking—thinking about—the book. But there is a time to stop meta-thought and act—to write the book. So I am giving up on all my planning and just waiting until tomorrow, when the main writing begins.

Something I learned in 12-step programs is they are programs of action, not of thinking. What is important is to stop using, not to philosophize about drug use. I am someone who is more used to thinking coming first—and inspiring action—but sometimes, as in AA, as in writing, there comes a time when it is time to stop thinking and start doing..and a time when action comes first and thought follows, not the other way around.

I have reached that point with this novel.

So no more meta-thinking. I leave all that behind. I clear my mind of thoughts about and attend to eating dinner, talking with my friends, and getting enough sleep to start writing a book in the morning.

LIVING IN THE MOMENT

What does it actually mean?

In certain circles we talk a lot about living in the moment. But what does it actually mean? There must be as many definitions as there are people. It's an elusive and simple concept. Here are some of my thoughts.

Awareness

Being in the moment is about being aware—of yourself, of the world around you..and realizing they are one and the same.

Being aware of yourself can be a subtle act. Do I want to take a walk? Do I need to cum? Am I thirsty? Will a cigarette help me feel better? Will a drink?

Knowing these things about yourself—knowing them well and intimately—is part of living in the moment.

Being aware of what we call others is also part of being in the moment. If I am hiking, what is under my foot? What is over my head. Can I escape the tunnel of reaction-awareness and become more omni-aware? Can I become aware of things which seem at first to have no relevance to me? When I am speaking to someone, interacting with them, can I become aware of their body cues?—look at their lips, their posture, their manipulation of objects in our shared environment?

And can I become aware that she (the tree), she (the woman) are not separate from me? That we are pieces of the same, total organism?

I must be aware of everything..my self..my world..and realize that they are the same thing. (I may be inside the forest, but, also, the forest is inside me.)

Control/influence

In a sense, the only thing I can control is "myself"—what is contained within a bathtub. I can't make the tree grow, I can't make the woman kiss me. But to look at control in this way is too limited. For everything I do affects the world around me, so there is an influence—if not a control—that I exert on everything and everyone around me, and the reverse is true.

I am not even in control of my whole "self"—I do not control my stomach, my digestion. I do not control my subconscious. It is questionable, even, to apply the concept of control to that tiny little part of my brain that seems like "me."

But there is no question that I influence myself and I influence the world around me—the environment, the people, the plants and animals.

This is a key concept of being in the moment. The moment consists of the influence and interaction of all that is close by me, all that is far away. The moment is not a static photograph. It is not a movie. It is an explosion, and it involves everything—that which you know, that which you do not know. Living in the moment is less like sailing a ship; it is more like dancing inside a bomb.

Everything influences everything. All that influence is the moment.

Action

This is about living in the moment, not knowing about a moment. This is the wonderful part.

Whether you are controlling it or not, whether it is part of what you can call, "me," or whether you are essentially part of something too large to ever use that term, you are acting.

Whether you like it or not.

You have no choice.

That's what living is. It's being on the roller coaster that never stops moving. It's the continuous skein of motion of your body and your mind and your thoughts and your words.

And you can act in a way that reflects awareness and the reality of the universal influence of everything, or you can act like a dud—that is, act in a way that is unaware of the world and its wild garden/fusion bomb of activity.

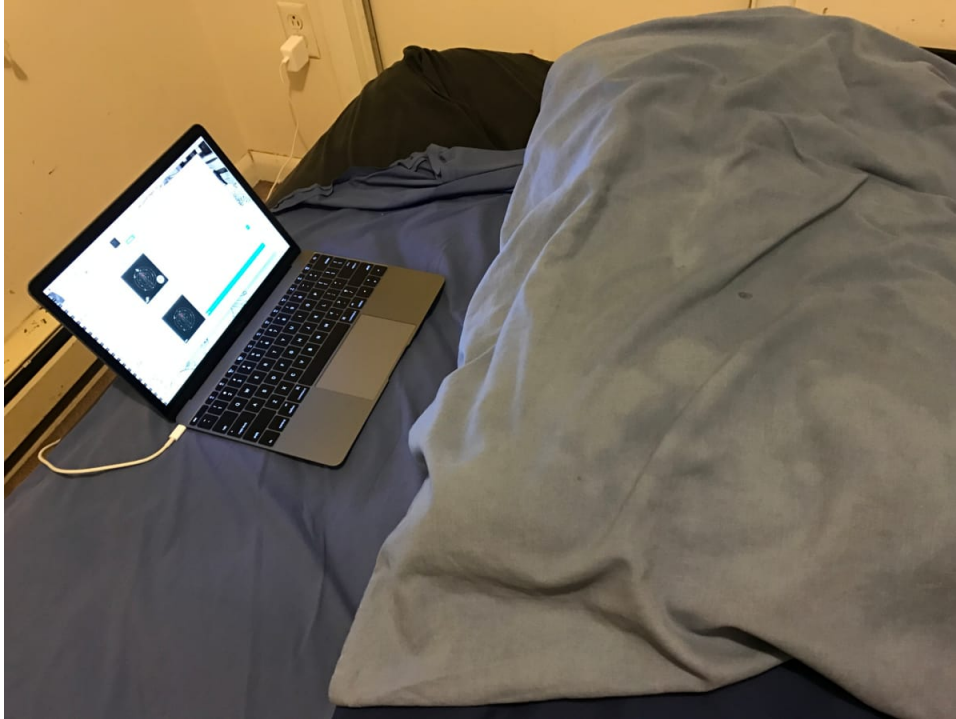
Act in a way that reflects awareness of everything you know ("self" and "others") and in concert with the dynamism of the fire and the ocean and the hurricane that we live in and I think you will find you are living in the moment, at least by this particular definition.

MY WRITING STATION

For The Survivalist and beyond

Since I cannot type sitting up, and must type lying on my stomach, this is my writing station for The Survivalist and perhaps my 2017 books.

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react-text: 62 / react-text



react-text: 67 / react-text
I get to work from bed..do you?

I LOVE HATE, BUT..

See it this way

I have long discounted philosophies who deny hate. I stand by that today.

But as was my gateway into understanding compassion, everyone is doing their best.

Don't you see what that means? There are no good guys, no bad guys. The police officer is no longer my enemy than my lover than the barista.

We are all one chaos, and we are the results of these individual attempts to do our best. So we are not at odds. This is equilibrium.

MOVING IN

To my new room

Moving in

Today Davina put together some shelves I bought for my room. I dislike putting together furniture and she was glad to help, to support me. She has been a great support for me today and the days I've been here in her house in Hallstead—especially the hard days.

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Buying shelves and organizing my room and really moving in is an indicator to myself that I feel safe here—that I don't think this arrangement is about to evaporate for some reason. Davina says she is happy to have me here and that she loves me. And I love her too and am happy to be here. I am still working on getting psychiatric/therapeutic care here and I worried about that some today but I've done what I can to request appointments with the local clinic and that's all I can do.

Wild nights

I started drinking again. I am stopping again. I started smoking again. I am stopping again. I make things so hard on myself but I get bored with normal life. I need adventure. I need wild nights. But I go too far. My appetite for disaster is nearly endless.

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react-text: 92 / react-text

Night walks

I've been taking night walks—2 or 3am walks into town when everyone in the house is sleeping. I sit by the gas stations and think about my life, writing, whatever comes to mind. Simply, sometimes, I just cannot sleep.

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Case for Raspberry Pi

I built a new case for my computer (that whole thing is the size of a pack of cards). I had a plain black case before. This new case is totally unnecessary from a functional point of view but what things look like matters to me—I need style.

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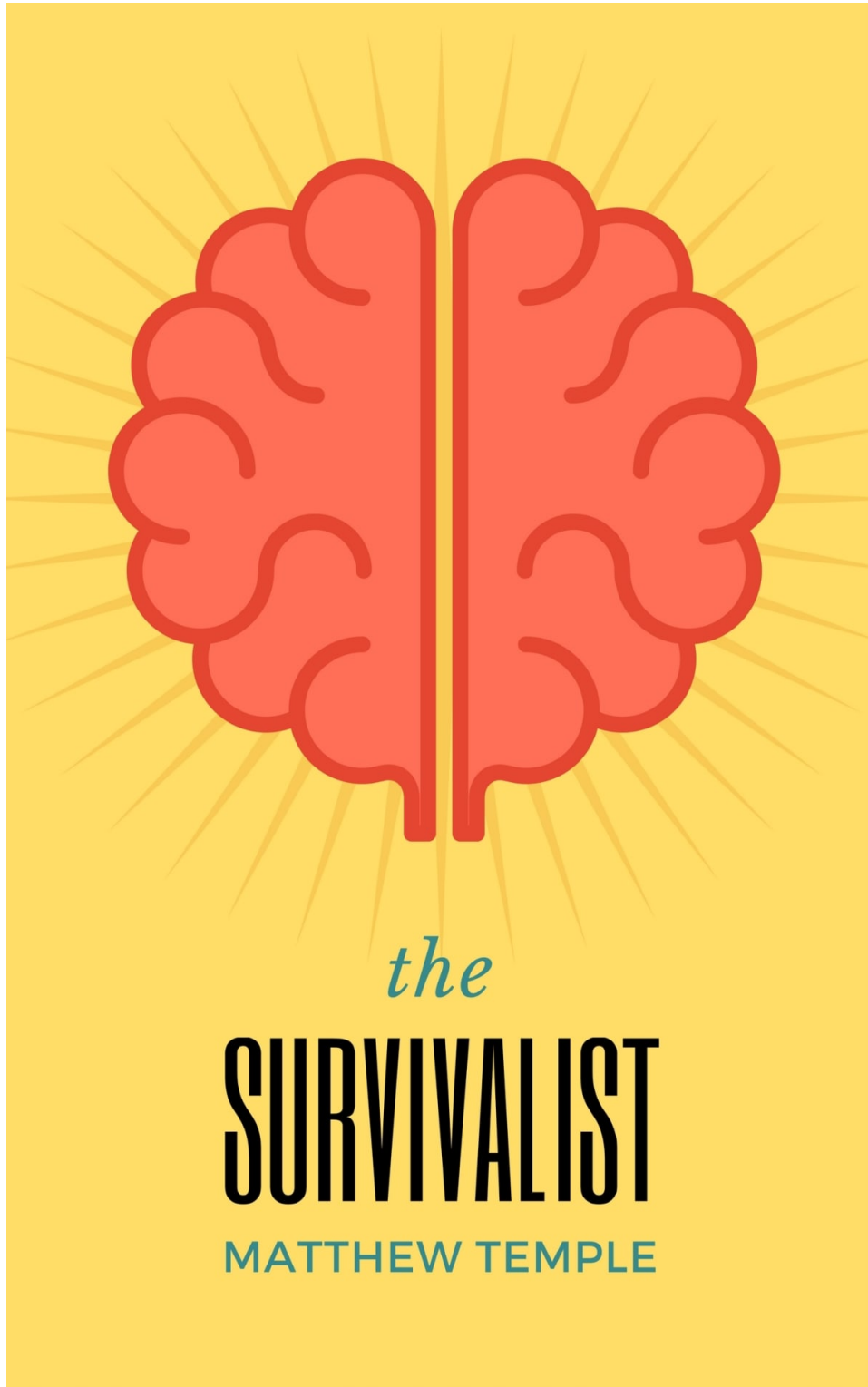


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Current book

I wrote five days of my current book (The Survivalist) then took a break because I had a cold and my energy was low. Then I wrote five more days. Then I stopped to go wild. I'm going to start again tomorrow. It's a 30-day first draft for a project I started years ago. I have about 1/3 of it written already and I'm synthesizing what I already wrote with new text that fills out the story. I have to tell this story, so I have to get my life orderly again so I can do my words each day. Breaks are necessary, but so is the routine of writing every

day. Tonight I'm going to listen to music, meditate, and get an early bedtime so that hopefully I will have the energy and centeredness I need to continue with day 11 tomorrow.



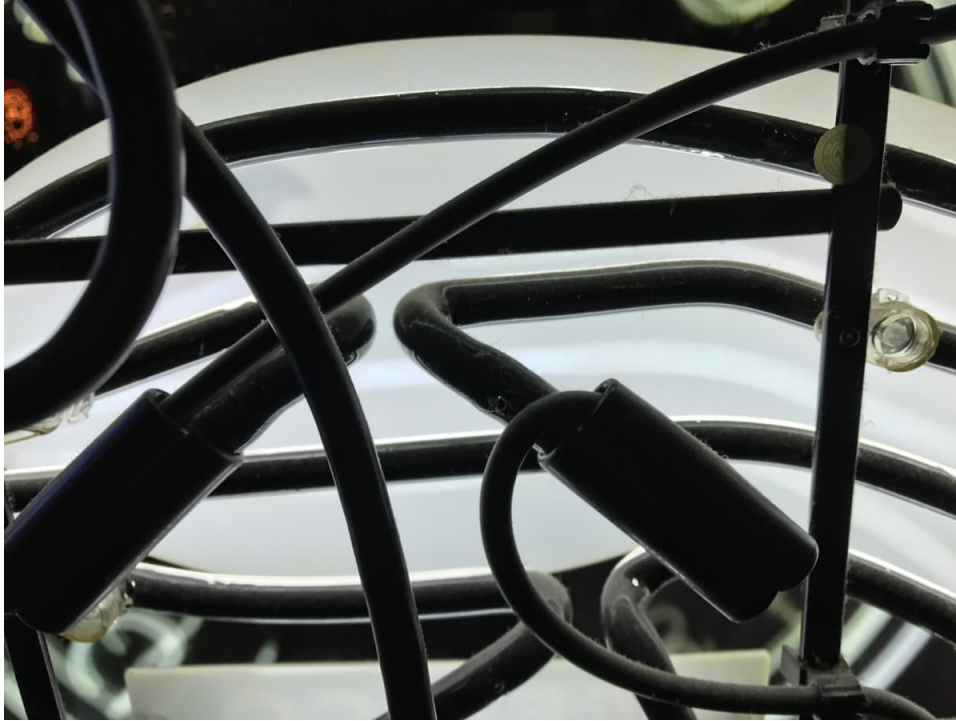
PICTURES FROM THE BAR TONIGHT

With an iPhone 7 Plus



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My bartender's name was Laurie.

SUPREME INNOVATORS OF RAP

Not just top of form, but redefining form

Some people operate within a genre. Some redefine it. In my opinion, these are the supreme innovators of rap so far:

- 1 Q-Tip
- 2 Busta Rhymes
- 3 Eminem
- 4 Kid Cudi?

Specifically, I think these songs and albums are the seminal works in rap:

- 1 Q-Tip / What / The Low End Theory
- 2 Busta Rhymes / Break Ya Neck / Genesis
- 3 Eminem / Rap God / The Marshal Mathers LP2
- 4 Kid Cudi / ? / ?

The Low End Theory is doubtless the most important album in rap. Q-Tip's playfulness on What is epic. Rappers came before, but Q-Tip was the first to really change the game—a fledgling game. There are other great rappers: Mos Def and others. Jay-Z is fascinating. The Wu-Tang Clan is the greatest ensemble group in history—truly top of form. But the rappers I listed above expanded the genre, redefined it.

Break Ya Neck and the Genesis album as a whole is the pinnacle in a career of redefinition by one of the stellar rappers in the history of rap.

Eminem is the supreme innovator of the genre, unquestionably. He has the combination of a winner: the most talented and the hardest worker. His catalogue is immense at this point. He remains honest to his life even as his life changes—an excellent quality in an artist. Rap God, like many of Eminem's songs, is the best the genre has to offer. Listen to Rap God 20 times—you will discover new puns on each listening. And like Busta Rhymes' Break Ya Neck, it's fast—both songs push the limits of diction shockingly.

And Kid Cudi—still developing—is a wicked king. Eminem redefines rap. Kid Cudi invents new types of music. The diversity, candor, and insane humility, stylishness, and creativity of this rapper, along with his musical diversity, make him probably the next data point in this lineage of supreme innovators of rap. His music is so diverse, I can't pick a single song or album. He's all over the place in the best way. The video for King Wizard, where Cudi

just walks around an alley playing to a camera on a crane, is proof that this motherfucker is one of the coolest people in the world.

THINKING ABOUT NOTHING

My new meditation

I spent a long time in a psych hospital years ago.

There were groups and classes.

I skipped some classes once I had been there long enough—because they were repetitive—but one class I never missed was meditation.

It happened in the morning before breakfast. We did yoga, then breath-centered meditation. After the meditation, Yvonne, the mental health tech who facilitated, asked us each what we felt. I gave many reflections, but toward the end of my stay, I told Yvonne I had nothing to say—my thoughts were empty, nothing, blank. She said, given how many times I had come to her group, that she was glad that was my answer—that she expected it from me at that time.

Now I sit outside in the cold of Pennsylvania, 10*, and I start out thinking about how much I hate my family, or about some stupid thing I did that day. And after a few minutes, I find myself looking at the moon, thinking about nothing.

It is my new meditation.

NOT WORTHY OF A HUMAN LIFE

Terrible thoughts

Out of my medicine.

Can't get past or future psychiatrists to call me back, set up an appointment, prescribe more.

Stopped drinking.

Feel like I'm not worthy of a human life—don't love myself, so can't see how others would.

Not suicidal, but set against myself.

Cleaned my room; hoping that right behavior will help me feel better with time.

Haven't written in two days—hope to write again tomorrow and keep my schedule for 2017.

Oh yeah, 39th birthday is in two days and I'm not feeling too good about it.

LOW TIMES

Hard times

Not enough money for food. My friend and I supporting four people on our disability. People think it's cool to talk about killing my friend and I, like that's funny ("I'm going to kill you and make it look like a murder-suicide" etc). Adjusting to new medication, barely enough to pay for my prescriptions. Just general disrespect from people with jobs not contributing to the house but they have enough money for \$1000 worth of weed every month. The one housemate with a car won't drive us to get groceries so me and my friend (where I have a movement disorder and she walks with a cane)..we're walking to and from the grocery store. Disrespect of my possessions..people just throw stuff on the floor. Put in a stepfatherish position with my friend's child, when I never wanted to be in any position of that sort—I've very intentionally not had kids and now this young gentleman is telling me if I ever break up with his mom or hurt her he'll kill me—totally unnecessary and frankly counterproductive (as it makes it hard for me to justify continuing to live here). My glasses broke. I keep dropping my phone. No money to fix or replace either. Second day not writing..feel terrible. Hating myself. Unhappy in my relationship, don't see how it can work. Feel unlovable, though my friend does still love me even given how morose I've been. I love her too. Hating my family; have been made to feel very unwelcome there. Feel ashamed for being poor. Don't want to get out of bed.

PROCESS LIFE

Self-therapy

Not currently seeing a therapist. Really need one. The clinic in Hallstead says they will have a therapist I can see in a couple months. Doing as much self-therapy as possible but of course that has limitations.

We're keeping the heat low to save money but that makes it too cold for me to type comfortably. One housemate is moving out today (it sounds like) and that should make it so there are three of us living here with a bedroom for each of us instead of my friend's son having to sleep on the couch. Also it means my friend and I are buying food for one less person—a person who hasn't been contributing anything financially.

Bank account is negative—borrowed \$50 as a gift card from Mom to add to my friend's \$50 with which we bought food from

Amazon. Can't pay my health insurance this month. Hope it doesn't get cancelled.

Worried about things breaking. Wearing broken glasses. Using a phone with a cracked screen—keep dropping it, need a case, can't afford one, hope it doesn't break before I can afford another one.

Laptop acting weird—also just hoping it lasts long enough that I can buy a new one.

Below the level of functioning—can't write: this is the third day in a row I haven't written on my book.

Feel like a failure, and upset with myself that I'm even judging myself in terms of success/failure—it's not a mature paradigm.

Lingering feelings of anger and disappointment toward family and people I've worked with. Feel like they've wronged me and hate that my family are such fuck ups. Know that if I was happy myself that I wouldn't even care..wouldn't be thinking about them and/or would think of them more forgivingly. "You do you" is advice I know would be good for me to follow. I have unreasonable expectations—or unrealistic expectations—of my family. They're not special people, by and large; they're regular people and I hate them for that. I fall into the trap of thinking that because I am next to them (their family, their coworker) that anything they do has anything to do with me. Of course it doesn't. And maybe the line between being honest and being egotistical is blurry, but I am a special person and I am lonely in some ways because of that. Do I need to feel special to feel good? I don't know, but the fact is I am different than most people: have higher standards and hit higher marks. And that makes it difficult to relate to normal people—they don't like someone who has an attitude of superiority. But I am superior in some ways, and I need people to accept that—anything else is a lie. I honor other people's specialness and value. But "the tall nail gets hammered down"—it is difficult for people I've worked with and people in my family to accept who I am. And it is difficult for me to accept who they are.

But I don't want to spend any more time thinking about them.

I want to live and let live.

I'm frustrated even with my mom's level of understanding. She doesn't seem to have understood, last year when my psychiatrist wanted to see her as well as me, that he was investigating her life to see about her mental health, and that "the problem" was not me alone, but the way she and I were interacting. She could never

accept that. The only model she would accept is that I was sick and she was the caretaker, which is simply not accurate. My aunt had the same model. But when I'm not in their presence, some of "my" problems go away. And my psychiatrists have always evaluated me as stronger and better off than my family evaluates me. Which leads me to believe, even though I'm ill, that we have systemic family problems and I am an identified patient. I'm sickest when I'm interacting with my family..so I think it's best for all of us if I don't interact with them: that way I don't carry the burden of their patterns and they don't have me around to blame things on, so hopefully they will be forced to face the possibility that they have problems that have nothing to do with me.

Please god/universe/self, let me let them go and focus on what I can change, which is just myself.

I want to get to a functional level of being, creative again, enough joy to be good to myself, be good to my friend, and to write my books.

DRUNK DIALED OLD BOSSES

Hopefully not too angry

And hopefully I didn't make any threats, just expressed my continued disappointment with them.

I imagine I'm the only ex-employee of either of these jokers who, ten years later, thinks of them at all, especially in my in vino veritas state.

But I would have worked for them for free if they had been competent business owners. These were the first and last companies I worked for, both small businesses that (in my estimation) went nowhere. I worked for both in the hope that the companies would grow, but both had employee-retention problems, for similar reasons (absent bosses, malignant employees in management positions) and ultimately I feel that these guys wasted my time.

Ugh. I shouldn't drink. I hate that I opened myself to them. I hope I didn't say anything they can use against me in court. I actually wish them both the best, and I hope I never contact them again.

ENJOY LIFE

If possible

I've been angry, maladjusted. Part of me wants to be that way—to be adjusted to this world is a sign of insanity, in my view. But I can't go on being angry at my family, old bosses, current housemates, and myself.

I'm disabled a) in the sense that I can't fit in with the expectations of corporate America, b) corporate America won't hire me, and c) I have severe mental and physical problems that make it impossible for me to drive, sit at a desk, type regularly, look normal / presentable..I'm a twitching, psychotic mess.

My life expectancy is reduced by 10 years via bipolar disorder and another 10 via tardive dystonia (both increase the chance of suicide). With BD, I trash relationships. With TD, I shake uncontrollably to the point that my muscles, joints, and bones hurt constantly; sleep is difficult; and sitting or standing still..impossible.

I'm on disability, so I'm making 1 / 8 of what I used to make as a programmer. That means living in poverty. If it's ever cut off, it will mean homelessness (again).

My point is, I might as well enjoy what life I can get, what life I have now—and being angry doesn't fit in with that enjoyment. I gotta let go of all the old people and all the old feelings and live in the now, because my now deserves it. I haven't done too well at this in the past, but I gotta relax and accept: it makes sense for me to have been angry..most of my family members, most people I've worked for..are jokers. They're not what I would call serious people..and they have wronged me. But who cares. Let the fuckers go and live for now, my friend, my self. Care enough for you to brush the dirt off my soles and appreciate the few people who treat me well and who I love. Understand that all the people I can't stand are doing their best. And give myself a break, because I'm doing my best too.

PARANOID? THOUGHTS

I can't exactly tell

Knowing I called my ex-bosses the other day has spawned a bunch of probably paranoid thoughts that I haven't had in a while, and some that I've never had before.

One of my ex-bosses revealed to me his fraudulent arrangement with an Army colonel and I have long feared that either the boss or the colonel would take illegal / deadly action against me to silence

me or discredit me. Another boss asked illegal questions in an interview with me, trying to determine my sexual orientation, and also asked me about my political affiliation shortly before firing me, and fired me based on properties of my disability (bipolar disorder).

I worry (probably illogically) that these people will want to take court action against me somehow, even though the action should be going the other way. I want nothing from these people except to be done with them..and likely they want the same from me. I can't determine what is reasonable to fear and what is paranoia, though, which lends weight to the most recent diagnosis of bipolar-type schizoaffective disorder instead of bipolar disorder I, which I would rather the diagnosis be (and which it used to be until seeing my latest psychiatrist).

Killing myself psychologically for drunk dialing those assholes recently and torturing myself with fantasies that I said something they could use against me in court. I wish I had never met those people, never worked for them. I wish I wasn't ruled by this (probable) paranoia. Wish people understood mental illness better, but I can't even get members of my own family to read a two-sided pamphlet about bipolar. Hope I can stay out of jail, psych hospitals, and away from death as long as possible.

Side note: glasses broken decisively, no money to get an eye exam and a new pair, so things may be blurry for a while. Davina reading me subtitles when we watch movies (thanks). We have the heat turned off for a Pennsylvania winter, so it's rather cold inside..but we're saving money. Bank account is negative. No music (since no music service). Paused on writing, will resume when I'm not so distracted by my own mental mess that I can't concentrate.

Feels good to get this all out. Hoping the tragic side of my nature does not win over.

CALM DAY

Hope it will continue thus

Sat outside with Davina in gray weather but warm(ish) weather.

Drank coffee. Ate one of our remaining cans of ravioli.

One of my sisters called. I am afraid to call her back because I'm afraid I'll say the wrong thing. Same with text from my mom..kept response brief and friendly, tried not to screw things up. Of course I know that avoiding interaction will screw things up as well, but

generally when I hold back, people think things are ok, and when I speak my truth, people don't like it. Need my relationships with my sister(s) and mom to continue.

Lying inside on the couch, getting as still as I can. I am out of one of my TD medicines—the pharmacy took four days from the time of my order to fill and mail my prescription, so I'm shaking/twitching/clenching more than usual and I don't know how long it will be until my medicine arrives. Dealing with it.

Haven't gotten my tax return—still owe taxes from 2006 (11 years ago) so I may not get it at all. Need that money but they will probably apply it to my debt. That's fair but sucks for everyone. Dealing with it.

Not writing today..will resume once I get my music subscription back and maybe once I get new glasses and medicine. Quiet day. Calm day. Glad.

BANK ACCOUNT DEACTIVATED

Because it's -7.76 USD

It's been many years since I had a negative bank balance. I'm trying not to take it as a mark against me, against my value, or view it in terms of a success/failure paradigm.

I like this site builder but I am considering moving this site to a free platform, maybe stopping using domains I have to pay for, doing everything on free hosts. Idk. Not sure.

Might stop blogging.

Cold today.