

14 May 1995

Dr. Roll-o May
98 Sugarloaf Drive
Tiberon, CA 94920

Dear Dr. May:

...Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

These words by Robert Frost (from "The Road Not Taken") seem to sum up my whole adult life and especially my journey of the last seven years. Now I am nearing 33 years old and it's time for this difference to make a *difference*.

The projects that I have been working on fit the classification of "teaching a man to fish" with the goal of feeding him for a lifetime. More details on the projects later in this letter. For now I want you to know that your works: "Man's Search of Himself," "The Cry For Myth," and "The Courage to Create" have played an integral role in getting me to where I am today on the journey. I am absolutely thrilled that you are located just north of here. Below I will introduce myself, my development and my projects. I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to discuss these with you as well as what further thoughts/theories you've developed in the last half of this century.

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On my eighteenth birthday, I moved to California (from New Jersey) to train for the Olympic marathon. I thrust myself into the adult world and took a clerk job for a defense contractor in Southern California. I lived with my coach and his family, trained and worked. Eventually I established residency and went to school (while working, training and supporting a family). Yes I was a human "doing" in the making.

My exposure to the adult working world prompted me to comment early and often, "Grownups do this for a living?" [I might eventually write a book with that title.] I saw a lot of unhappy people. I saw a lot of insecure people who worked very hard at keeping those around them "down," and I saw an overall lack of urgency. I was puzzled.

After I retired from my marathon career, I graduated into the competitive computer industry where I learned the value of technology and saw what happens to people when the dollars at stake are much larger. I got caught up in corporate politics in Southern California that prompted me to start over in Silicon Valley nearly seven years ago.

While on my own in an unfamiliar area, I spent a lot of time observing my co-workers. Discussions revolved around what's wrong at work and home problems (Note: This level of discussion is usually only reached after the obligatory: "Wow, that commute was awful today... How was your weekend? How about that weather? Deep stuff.).

I did notice a pattern of loneliness, anxiety, unhappiness. There was a whole lot of "doing" and people caught up in it like a riptide, but no sense of purpose. I was feeling it myself. This prompted me to ask things like: Who made these rules? Why is there evil? What am I really supposed to be doing?

Something inside me told me to start reading. The strange thing is that I used to read all the time when I was younger. It was as though I had given it up as my rite of passage into the adult world. Afterall, there's no time for that. You are either "doing" or sleeping.

I started by re-reading "The Little Prince" followed by Joseph Campbell's "The Power of Myth." Then something told me to go back to the Greeks, so I read Homer's "The Odyssey." Over the Christmas holidays I read Dante's Inferno. Upon pondering these readings, I really began to feel that life was an incredible journey with ups and downs, happiness and pain, and endless challenges. I also began to realize that part of this journey is deciding how to deal with the pain (which, according to Edith Hamilton, "... is not given to all to suffer alike") and the challenges thrust upon us.

I chose to proactively meet the challenges head-on. I began to understand that we have everything we need within ourselves to cope in this crazy world. We just need to make the time to tap into our potential...to "know thyself." This, of course, involves courage which is something not readily available in our current rat race called living. Then I was lent a copy of your book, "Man's Search For Himself." Talk about hitting home. This book put into words everything I had been pondering.

This was a very enlightening period for me. Everything I read, even the movies I saw seemed to speak to me. It was like a light bulb turning on. I'd come back from my weekends refreshed and renewed, only to face the same miserable, lonely people. That's when I realized that I needed to find a clever way to get people to see what I saw. This was sort of like returning to the cave and trying to convince the newly freed prisoners below that the shadows (their perceived reality) was fake and that what's outside is real.

I went through a "validation" period where I took a low-profile, non-threatening approach to "enlightening" people. For example, I had complete responsibility for our company's newsletter. In this was a vehicle for conveying product information, I started including poetry and movie reviews in tiny type on the margins. This was well received, in general.

Then I did a wonderful experiment with a five minute video for the company's sales conference. I won't go into details here. I saw our employees playing and enjoying the process. The results were fantastic. I witnessed firsthand the creative potential that is hidden inside all of us.

That was five years ago. During that same period, I took a business trip to Europe and spent three days in Paris. I was hooked on the enabling environment created by Gertrude Stein and her brother Leo. I wanted to find a way to recreate the spirit of that environment. That project is called "Cafe Eclectic".

The mission is: To create a nurturing environment which provides connections, enables the creative spirit and empowers us to proceed on the Journey.

- Based on the principles of: awareness, balance, clever, discipline
- Emphasis on utilizing a wide variety of mediums, including film/video, dance, music, poetry, literature, arts (drawings, painting, pottery) to tell stories and convey core values and messages.

I'm already working a variety show to be staged there called "Not So Remote...Control." The plan is to take a humorous look at things that effect us in our daily lives and see how we can proactively

take control of how we respond. I will share details about this show and the cafe with you if you are interested.

Another project I'm working on came about while I was pondering the problem of transcending the rational mind in order to get to the creative potential. During one of my morning runs (this is my ponder time), I came up with mythological characters that I've dubbed "Lost Pins." In brief, my idea is that the spirits of some famous people have taken up residence in clothes pins that reside at a local preschool. Each pin, like the greek gods, represents certain traits:

8-Sep-94

Introducing the Lost Pins

			Born	Died
Benny	Musician	Benny Goodman	1909	1986
Frankie	Film maker	Frank Capra	1897	1991
Gertie	Enabler	Gertrude Stein	1874	1946
Joey	Storyteller "connections"	Joseph Campbell	1904	1987
Johnny	Writer	John Steinbeck	1902	1968
Lucy	Clown/Comedienne	Lucille Ball	1911	1989
Marty	Dancer	Martha Graham	1894	1991
Paulie	Artist	Paul Cezanne	1839	1906
Petey	Athlete	Pistol Pete Maravich	1947	1988
Tom E	Inventor	Thomas Edison	1847	1931
Smiley	Student (Gang of 10)			
	Teacher of modern culture to gang			

I'm working on all kinds of story lines involving these pins. I've been driving around with Tom E in my Jeep for months, silently conversing with him about the Internet and the latest changes in processor technology. I believe that there is a lot to be learned from these "pins."

I've gone on long enough. You are probably wondering why I'm telling you all this. Am I Dante in need of a Virgil? Not exactly. I returned from one of my runs and wrote in my journal "conversations with Rollo May." That was on April 21 of this year. At the time, I thought that I would have to create an imaginary conversation with you. After doing some research in the library regarding your whereabouts, I realized that I might actually have an outside shot of speaking to you in person.

If you are interested, please let me know by calling me at 408-434-0600 (days) or 408-354-3631 (evenings).

Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Annie Gladue
48A Park Avenue
Los Gatos, CA 95030

