

Thoughts for the Day March 2019

3/31/19

My youngest niece is with her parents checking out potential schools for her undergraduate education. What an exciting time. I knew where I wanted to go when I graduated from high school. By being so definite, I didn't end up dragging my parents around the country to check out different schools. I missed out on a rite of passage.

3/30/19

One of my favorite activities for several years was participating in NaNoWriMo in November. It's National Novel Writing Month. The last couple years I have had distractions that have kept me from being involved. However, I was recently reading one of my NaNoWriMo novels, and it has inspired to write. Whether it is next November, or sooner, it's something I enjoy.

3/29/19

One thing that can impact quality of life is chronic pain. For most of us, who have never experienced long-term chronic pain, it is difficult to understand just how difficult it makes a person's existence. While medication is a key part of the process, there has to be more. Our current predicament in the U.S. with opiates is in part due to throwing large amounts of pain meds at people with pain, without doing more. Incorporating movement and mental health care into the equation is crucial. Ensuring that the person has a full life with meaningful activities is also critical. It may seem cruel at times to push people with chronic pain to do more. But letting their body and mind atrophy only makes things worse. However, this has to be tempered with an understanding of their limitations to ensure the expectations are realistic.

3/28/19

I have a colleague who is very different than me. One day a few months ago I was feeling kind of down and not full of my usual "Joie de vivre". She told me that the prescription for my condition was to go out dancing. For those of you who know me, that is something I am not comfortable doing. Anyway, one situation where it feels comfortable is at George Clinton Parliament Funkadelic shows. And there happened to be two back to back shows in Seattle. And boy did I feel better. One skill that is tough to do is generalize a behavior from one situation to others. So how do I take my willingness to dance a George Clinton concert into other situations? That is something I will have to ponder.

3/27/19

Over the weekend I grilled some chicken for the first time this season. A friend seasoned it first and I did the grilling. It was an amazing shared experience to then enjoy the end result of our work. You could taste the love we both contributed to the food.

3/26/19

A theme in a few people's lives who I am seeing has been the issue of figuring out how to age gracefully. And letting go of the past and one's youth. I have found there are two things that have helped me let go of my youth with few regrets. One key is to live a full life. If you live as many moments as you can in the present and to their fullest there are fewer regrets. The second part is to live life with others in it to share the ups and downs. Those shared moments, even if colossal flops aren't as bad when you have someone there with you. And if they were "successful" they will energize you.

3/25/19

Do you have someone who you work well with? Maybe a sibling, maybe a relationship partner, or perhaps a coworker. I love that feeling of being in "the zone" with someone. Where things come together and mesh. The funny thing that I have found about those moments that feel so connected and effortless is that there generally has been a fair amount of time and effort put into the relationship before this occurs. Those moments are the fruit of the labor.

3/24/19

I saw another show of Victor Wooten's this weekend. He has his brother on tour with him playing lead guitar. He is very gracious in calling his older brother his "teacher". At the same time, he jokes that if you don't like the show blame his brother who taught him everything. In all seriousness, you can feel the love and connectedness between them as they play together. They get into this zone where it is so natural for them to seamlessly blend sounds.

3/23/19

I am working with some people who are very culturally different than me. When it comes to making amends and being forgiven, their cultures have very different ways of accomplishing this than we do in the U.S. One of these men and their culture dictate that the subject isn't verbally discussed. However, the person commits to doing acts of service to atone until they are reintegrated back into the family. When the family reintegrates them they know they are officially done with the atonement process. It's a culture where actions speak louder than words.

3/22/19

I was watching my favorite part of The Color Purple when Shug Avery tells her father "See daddy, even a sinner has a soul." A very touching moment. We are all people who are redeemable if we choose to be. Even people such as preachers and others in the helping profession can forget this at times. Atonement and redemption are important processes that are very good for the soul.

3/21/19

I saw the bass player Victor Wooten and his band perform tonight. I am seeing a couple more shows this weekend of his. He is very inspiring in the way he performs. He gives 100% every night. I haven't ever seen him have an off night. In addition to his own music he did covers of John Coltrane and James Brown's music. I like it when musicians not only play their music, but give you a taste of other musician's work that moves them in some way.

3/20/19

The next few months I will be going to a lot of music shows. I prefer to go to small clubs where you actually can see and really hear the musicians. Most of the shows will be at Jazz Alley where you are truly immersed in the experience. If you have never seen shows in a small venue, it's a treat.

3/19/19

I've been watching a lot of "Catfish" lately. It's interesting to see the lengths people will go to in order to be someone they aren't. Sadly if they put the energy into improving themselves they would be much closer to the person they want to be than they are. And beyond that, if their hope is that a relationship will actually work out after it has been built upon a foundation of lies they are fooling themselves. How much do you love you? Would you date you? If not, do more of what it would take to love yourself and be dateable.

3/18/19

A few of my colleagues are providing neuro-biofeedback to help people literally change brain wave activity to improve their functioning in day to day life. Mood disorders that are not responding well to traditional CBT and/or medication are a prime example of an issue that this intervention has had some success in treating.. It's a pretty amazing idea to teach one's brain to react differently when certain feelings are difficult to tolerate or manage.

3/17/19

Sometimes people use "Maladaptive" coping mechanism to deal with stress and other difficult emotions. A common way to address this is to inflict physical pain upon oneself to distract from emotional pain and suffering. It is difficult at times to get people to give up this strategy because it is so effective, even if there are negative side effects as a result. The key is finding less destructive, or even constructive ways to manage one's emotions.

3/16/19

I have had a couple medical issues recently. The strange thing about both has been that the testing to determine the severity of the situation has been more difficult to endure than the actual medical

procedure to address the issue. Most recently it was relating to carpal tunnel. Having the neurologist send shocks up and down the nerves in my arm and hand was much worse than the surgery and the aftercare.

3/15/19

My hand is recovering nicely from carpal tunnel surgery and almost completely back to normal. Even better actually. The one motion that is tough is anything that involves "torque". The twisting motion requiring any degree of strength isn't back yet. Part of my carpal tunnel getting bad resulted in me changing the hand I use to operate a mouse. It's funny now, because I thought I would go back to using my dominant hand with the mouse. But now it feels awkward to do that. Funny what happens when we retrain our brains, and the old pathway doesn't feel so familiar anymore.

3/14/19

If my dad was alive, he'd be 90 today. In about 6 weeks it will be the tenth anniversary of his death as well. The passing of time can feel so relative. Happy Pi Day dad (and Einstein too - who he shared his birthday with).

3/13/19

Tonight one of the original members of Pink Floyd (Nick Mason) is playing many of their very early songs. I am looking forward to the show and hearing some old, old Pink Floyd. And he didn't let me down. The show was amazing.

3/12/19

Sometimes therapy results in people examining the meaning of their lives. Sometimes people come into therapy already there and overwhelmed by what it dredges up. Many times this conversation will result in people thinking about what their legacy will be. Therapy is a great place to delve deeper into these issues if you are having an existential crisis.

3/11/19

My grandparents' had a first cousin in common who accomplished many things. He developed an idea called "Wigner's Friend". It is still being studied and discussed to this day. It connects concepts relating to physics with issues relating to the objectivity of reality. Pretty intense stuff.

3/10/19

Just finished writing another report. It feels nice when they are done and off one's "To-Do" list.

3/9/19

My brother (and his daughter) are going to have a third book published some time in 2019. I read a draft of his book. What impressed me most was how much research went into writing it. I am proud of him for his drive to do this.

3/8/19

Happy Birthday mom. Thanks for everything you have done for me.

3/7/19

Unlike yesterday, today's post is more constructive. I read today someone posted "Do something today that your future self will thank you for." I like that idea, just not about doing my taxes.

3/6/19

It's my favorite time of year. The time to procrastinate when it comes to doing my taxes. However, I am committing to completing them by March 15th.

3/5/19

A colleague has just retired due to physical issues that make it impossible to work. In working with people in this situation, I have found the most important issue is to find something that makes life feel meaningful. Otherwise it can be easy to lose one's will to live, or at least to get out of bed in the morning. Many people, men in particular define the way they have meaning in their life by their

work. When that is gone, it can be tough. It is important to start developing and ensuring there are meaningful things to do in your life beyond work.

3/4/19

Washington State's governor has decided to run for President. The opposing party asserted he should resign as governor if he is going to focus on a presidential run. Does a state deserve a full-time governor and not one who is splitting time between his current elected position and the one he aspires to hold? It depends, but it seems like it is something that should be considered. If the average employee split his/her time between his current position and the one s/he aspires to have s/he might not keep their current position for very long.

3/3/19

My brother was just recognized at his job for being one of the top people. I have an amazing family with a lot of very talented and driven people.

3/2/19

My hand is on the mend so far. Smooth sailing with the surgery. Modern medicine is amazing.

3/1/19

A new month. I like March because it can be nice one day and stormy the next. And the plants and flowers start poking up and showing life. My daffodils are doing their thing. Somehow my croci (crocuses?) seem to be struggling this year. And the snow earlier in February decimated my "hot lips". Time for some new Hot Lips to attract the hummingbirds.