



1993-2016
Threads

Thought it would be a good idea to re-read my diaries to see what common and repeating threads I can pick up on. Unfulfilled dreams, etc an idea of how I have changed?

Experiences pass through us every day, the conversion to knowledge requires capturing them, connecting them, getting them in an understandable form and then building upon them...

Diary 1	Mar 91 – Mar 93	Melbourne
Diary 2	Mar 93 – Nov 93	Melbourne
Diary 3	Nov 93 – Jun 94	Hong Kong / London
Diary 4	Jun 94 – Mar 95	London
Diary 5	Mar 95 – Dec 95	London / India
Diary 6	Dec 95 – Feb 96	India
Diary 7	Mar 96 – Apr 96	India / Nepal
Diary 8	Apr 96 – Aug 96	Nepal / Tibet / China / Europe
Diary 9	Aug 96 – Nov 97	Europe / Melbourne
Diary 10	Nov 97 – Feb 00	Melbourne
Diary 11	Mar 00 – Oct 00	Melbourne (w Sth America)
Diary 12	Oct 00 – Dec 02	Melbourne (w Accident)
Diary 13	Dec 02 – Apr 05	Singapore
Diary 14	Apr 05 – Dec 06	Singapore (w Silk Road)
Diary 15	Dec 06 – Aug 08	Singapore
Diary 16	Aug 08 – Jan 09	Singapore
Diary 17	Jan 09 – Mar 09	Singapore
Diary 18	Mar 09 – Dec 10	Singapore
Diary 19	2011	Melbourne
Diary 20	2012	Melbourne
Diary 21	2013	Melbourne
Diary 22	2014	Melbourne
Diary 23	2015	Melbourne
Diary 24	2016	Melbourne

Diary 25	2017	Melbourne
Diary 26	2018	Melbourne
Diary 27	2019	Melbourne
Diary 28	2020	Melbourne
Diary 29	2021	Melbourne
Diary 30	2022	Melbourne
Diary 31	2023	Melbourne
Diary 32	2024	Melbourne

Diary 1

March 1991 – March 1993

Melbourne

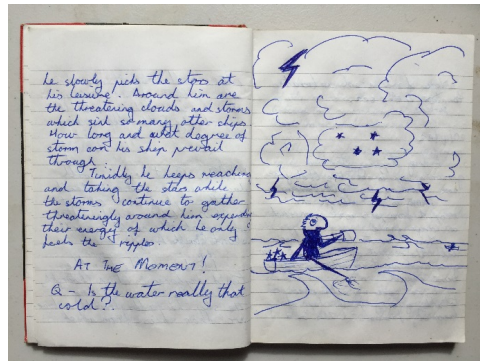
Ahimsa – non violence
Bramacharya – conduct that leads one to God.
Satyagraha – Truth and firmness

Ghandi, The Story of My
Experiments with the Truth.

"And Crawling on the Planets Face,
Insects, called the Human Race,
Lost in Time, Lost in Space,
And never really knowing.

Misquoted (I think) Rocky Horror

- About quality of time, the importance of being pure...
- Connection of souls.
- Have lots of energy.
- Thinking about religion (no definitive view on the existence of God.
- Loving Ange.
- What is the point of life. Have to proceed assuming there is one, some product/usefulness out of living.



...now his fears arise not from the savageness of what is concealed by the night, but by the savageness of the world he lives in, the savageness concealed by his fellow man.

Starry, Starry Night

It was with a teary eye that the rat sat back. His tail under tucked, and his paws gently clasped upon his lap, his nose pointed skywards gently sniffing. In his own small world he sat, his own ideals and thoughts preventing him from running with the other rats, in search of the cheese at the end of the maze. Another rat passed him quickly almost frantically, eyes downward making his way around the maze. Rendered insane by his view of the maze around him he barely noticed him pass.

I a state of depression brought about by the loneliness of his own small separate world he continued to sit forever gazing intently, sadly, above him.

At the end of his upwards gaze bright ad beautiful eyes met his own.

Another rat passed by, this time going in the opposite direction. This time the rat looked briefly down to see the other rat scuffle away. He took a glance around and again registered the corridor of the bland walls that was the world of the maze.

Not being able to see the point of returning he again gazed upwards into the shine of the eyes that met his. He caressed with his mind the bright arcs of reflection and the clearness and the colour of the pupils.

Many questions played upon the fringes of his consciousness. What beautiful creative creature is this and what is it's world, the world above the maze.

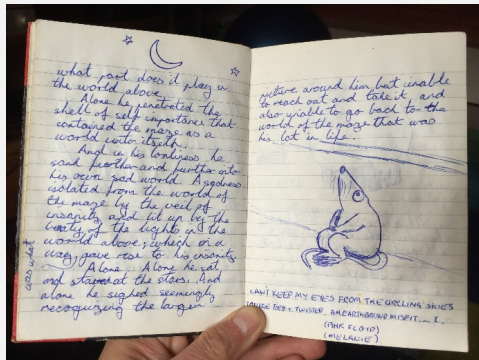
What is the maze; so important unto itself and what part does it play in the world above.

Alone he penetrated the shell of self-importance that contained the maze as a world unto itself.

And in his loneliness he sank further and further into his own sad world. A sadness isolated from the world of the maze by the veil of insanity and lit up by the beauty of the lights in the world above; which in a way was what gave rise to his insanity.

Alone he sat and stared at the stars, and alone he sighed seemingly recognising the larger picture around him but unable to reach out and

take it, and also unable to go back to the world of the maze that was his lot in life.



"Can't keep my eyes from the circling skies, tongue tied and twisted, just an earth bounds misfit... I.

Pink Floyd, (Melanie).

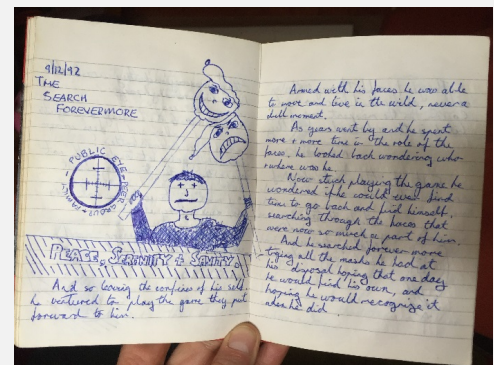
- Work is like a roller coaster and you can shut your eyes to try and get through, but you cannot get off.
- I enjoy being depressed, I feel creative, I feel retrospective, it is interesting, it is dramatic and the self pity is a way of giving yourself attention.
- People are what makes our world, and complexes are what make our people.

Brandy died in the night while we slept. We had no chance to help, we didn't get to say goodbye... She knew only how to love and to be joyful and she went into that good night in the darkness, alone and scared. ...it is spring but feels like autumn.

- ...whole episodes like Beck and Drew splitting up I don't feel like writing about.
- Tired, unstable.

...Armed with his faces he was able to move and live in the world, never a dull moment. As the years went by he spent more and more time in the role of the faces, he looked back wondering who and where was he.

...and he searched forever more trying all the masks he had at his disposal hoping that one day he would find his own, and hoping he would recognise it when he did...



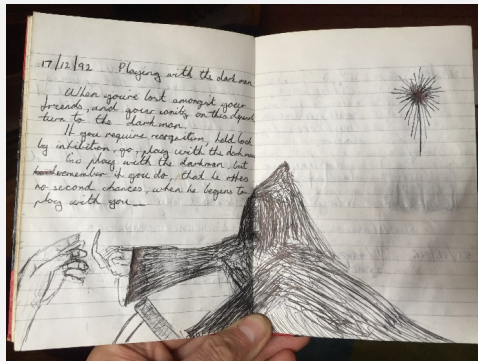
- Trying to save money and do all the things I want to do.
- Death is one of those things that no one else can better; or make light of and brush away like every other underachievement in a person's life.

Playing with the dark man

When you're lost amongst your friends, and your sanity on this depends, turn to the dark man.

If you require recognition, held back by inhibition, go, play with the dark man.

Go play with the dark man, but remember if you do, that he offers no second chances, when he begins to play with you.

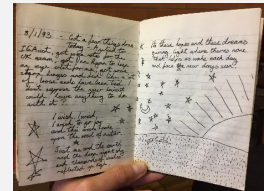


- Feel a little like some loose ends of my life are starting to unravel, haven't quite the control I used to have – need to get overseas I think and get all of this out of my system.
- I think I am coming to a closing part of my life. Everything that was new is now becoming old. Time to start again. Just put on a happy face.
- Note, none of these thoughts are suicide, they just represent the end of a state of mind.
- Adrift.
- I feel alone, like I can sense that no one else can help me through this.

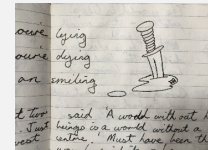
I wish, I wish,
I wish to go far
And this wish I make
Upon the soul of a star.

Just me and the earth
And the deep night sky
And thousands of wishes
Reflected up high.

It's these hopes and dreams
Giving light where there's none
That helps us wake each day
And face a new day's sun.



Smile there where you're lying
Smile there where you're dying
You've got to keep on smiling.



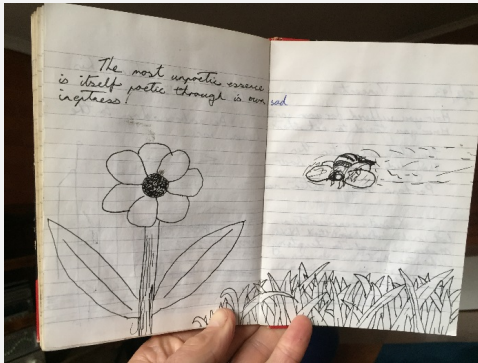
(note: first two lines borrowed from a song I was listening to...)

- The world is like a potato – it is round.
- The world is akin to my dirty clothes basket, it has things living on it.

(a like of the absurd, appreciation of its contrast with the seriousness of real life I suppose).

Get that feeling it's going too fast?
What seems like the future is almost the past.

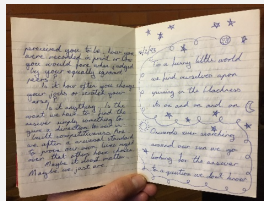
The most unpoetic essence is itself poetic through it's own sad ineptness.



Tis a funny little world
We find ourselves upon
Spinning in the blackness
It's on and on and on.

Onwards ever searching
Around the sun we go,
Looking for the answer,
To a question we don't know

Funny little people,
Running here and there
Always with their eyes shut
Cos too easily they scare.



Dad... How will I know when I am grown up?

When your heart is torn apart son and your dreams have been just that, when your tired and alone and feeling pretty flat, take a look around you for something else to fill your head, cos the moment you stop growing, is the moment you are dead.

Michael Leunig

Dad, why do we follow this trail so faithfully, day in and day out... This trail that turns and twists so strangely without apparent meaning... Why so faithfully father...

...why do you ask?

Michael Leunig

- Still adrift.

We passed someone walking in the street today crying. She was walking in the other direction. I wanted to help but I was not sure how or if it would be accepted. She passed, walking on with no one stopping to help, or even notice.

- If I can save \$9,000 in 9 months and say I could live off \$1,200 a month, I could leave early 1994. Maybe tour around for three months and settle somewhere, say the South of France and make small trips for six months or so.
- Worked back late and finished something I wanted to finish. Walked out to a mild night. City lights unmoving and up high. Noise and music in the air from the pubs/restaurants around. Felt really good. I like the city a lot. Streets are lit with a dim yellow light, magic is in the air.

Books read:

- The Story of My Experiments With the Truth, Mahatma Ghandi
- Jupiter's Travels
- Melanie
- Yul (Brynnner) – very inspiring.
- A Brief History of Time, Stephen Hawking.

Diary 2

March 1993 – November 1993

Melbourne

- Study nights before IStructE exam.
Thursday – 3 hours
Saturday – 8 hours
Monday – 3 hours
Tuesday 2 hours
Thursday 1 hour
- A young guy collecting coins in the station just passed me. I think he is a little simple, but only a little. I hate that this is the way things are. ...Makes me cursing my problems feel pathetic; superficial.

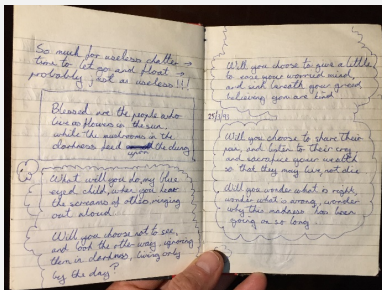
What will you do my blue eyed child, when you hear the screams of others, ringing out aloud?

Will you choose not to see, and look the other way, ignoring them in darkness, living only by the day?

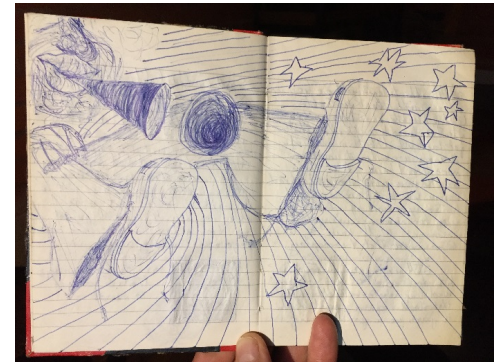
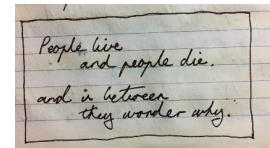
Will you choose to give a little to ease your worried mind, and sink beneath your greed, believing you are kind?

Will you choose to share their pain, and listen to their cry, and sacrifice your wealth so that they may live, not die?

Will you wonder what is right, wonder what is wrong, wonder why this madness has been going on so long.



- I feel most at ease or even happiest when I am in a reflective, sad mood. ...maybe it comes from enjoying being alone with something to think about? ...maybe it is because this is when people relate the best?
- I suspect siding with the underdog, and doing onto others what you would have done to you will play a large part in the way I live my life.



"They're not real, they're not real", stare downwards, close your eyes, open them to find they have not gone, "They're not real!... they're not real."

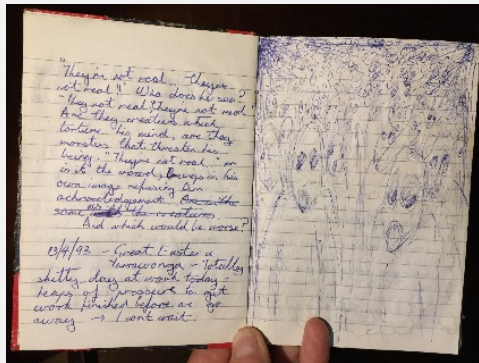
A dirty man, walking the street, a dirty plastic bag, an aluminium can, he is one, the crowd another, never the two meeting.

"They're not real", make no eye contact, "they're not real!" must keep moving must keep alive, why?.. through habit. Scared... "They're not real!..."

The people, the just... The do-ers of good, the destroyers of evil. Thinking but not seeing. Not wanting to know, they pass around him forming the human tomb to which he is damned, perhaps forever.

"They're not real... they're not real!". Who does he see? "They're not real, they're not real". Are they creatures which torture his mind? Are they monsters that threaten his being. "They're not real". Or is it the crowd, beings in his own image refusing him acknowledgement?

And which one would be worse?



...Yeah! Cos when I'm at the top they'll be there to kiss my arse, all those snotty little bastards I still got to pass. Yeah! I'll sit up there high and make them get down low, and drop my dacks so they can see the glow. Yeah, I'll fuck them all, and never show regret! Cos it's the game of life and that's where you gotta get.

I saw a man on my TV last night... He had 45% of his brain shot out by a sniper's bullet. He wasn't at the victory parade that evening...

I saw a man on my TV last night, ...in my living room. He was speaking out against the injustice, speaking out into another man's microphone.

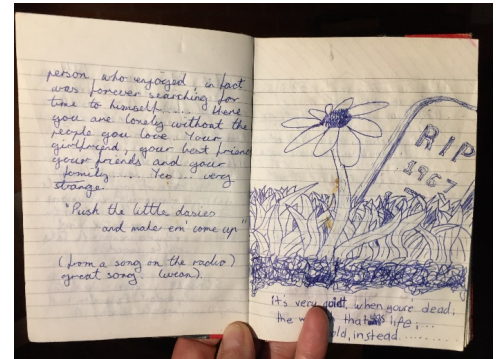
It was all very interesting but just a bit irrelevant. ...because it was only in my living room.

I told the people at work that there was a man in my living room last night who only had 55% of his brain left! ...and they agreed, all very interesting.

A man asked me about my dog today. ...I told him my dog had died. ...died a horrible death.

r.i.p. Brandy

- People are trying to get me to grow up.
- Feeling depressed. So it seems is everyone else at work. Don't know what I am depressed about but feel I need something nice to happen to me. Desperately trying to keep a grip.



Flower in a field

I stood admiring a flower in a field. A gentle breeze blew hills and valleys through the tall brown grass. The field is wonderfully alive to a myriad of unsung tunes only it can hear.

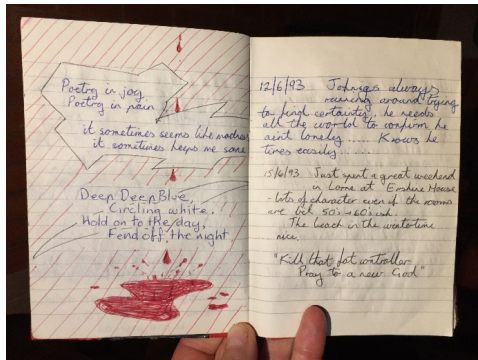
In the middle of the field sits a single flower. Twisting and turning, dancing to a tune of its own. Gently yielding to it's surroundings, it glows with the radiance of the sunlight it reaches for.

I want to dance with flower, to share the sunlight and move freely alongside it in the breeze. But something holds me back. I would like to think that it is because I have no right to enter the field, but I know it is not.

I fear that should I enter the field I may not be able to dance as freely as I would wish to. I fear that should I enter the field I might lose sight of the flower and be left with nothing but the memory to be recalled with eyes closed to the rest of the world.

So I find myself standing on the other side of the fence, admiring a flower in a field, forever wishing for things to be different.

- Life should be lived like a fairytale. A tale of joy and a tale of sorrow, but more importantly a tale to be appreciated and experienced. A tale to be loved.



You scare easily my son.

Is being scared a sin?

Being Scared is a weakness.

Then weakness is a sin?

Weakness can be overcome and weakness is what human is all about.

Weakness will cause you to fail.

Fail, what do you mean fail?

Fail... you know, fail... fail to get what you want.

Fail to live?

Fail to live how you want!

Fail to feel, fail to care, fail to love?

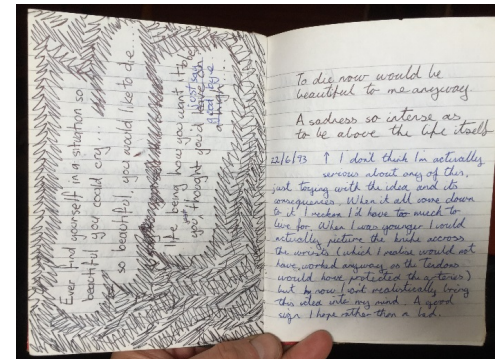
Fail to succeed!

Fail to experience, fail to try... fail to partake?

These things are not a part of success.

Yes... success is a part of these things instead, because these things are what life is all about.

- What's this Brendon, turning into an optimist? Things must be going well.
- Thinking about being in situations so beautiful, it would be a beautiful thing to leave it all there and die. Not serious about this, just toying with the feelings.



Just a shy little boy with a smile when it comes down to it all.
Just a shy little boy.

- Need to relax. Making hard work of it.
- Couple of relationship episodes. Others coming to grips with my need to constantly re-evaluate things rather than just accepting and moving forward for a while.
- Feel like we are unable to talk things through.

Nobody seems to appreciate the beauty around them...
Nobody appreciates the feelings within them.

- Feel like slowly getting back on track, into sync with the world.
- Lots of things going around my head. Get dizzy watching, may drop dead.
- I need a passion
- Quite a few child bashings and subsequent deaths in Melbourne recently.

Something nice happened today,
A smile from outside came my way.
It warmed my heart & warmed my soul.
It made me feel just a little more whole.

- Passed my IStructE exam – fantastic! Had been in a bit of depressive state prior to getting results, felt like resigning and committing suicide! Childish behaviour coming from a lack of attention I think?
- The mask it keeps performing whilst the clown inside it dies.
- I like who I am at the moment and appreciate it.
- Brilliant sunset view over the city from the train, funny how no one seems to notice.
- Feel the beat of the soul of a civilisation and its past hurtling through space in a line of time.
- Ange got her permanent position. She is a lot happier. Makes things go more smoothly.
- Feeling like fear drives a lot of behaviours (mine and others).

Something's broken in my head, a happy bit that seems sad instead.
It doesn't know what to do, and I can't help is cause I'm confused too.

All I ask is for a little room,
Where I can be myself and gently croon,
The moon above, and the stars all round,
And be myself without a sound.

Down

Said the man on the ledge in his head : 'all my friends are long since dead.
They're the lovers & the poets who with a frown, got a little frustrated and all jumped down.

- Recognise that Brendon needs recognition, and he wants to live but is having trouble resolving the risks of failure, regret...
- Don't feel in control.
- Feeling repeated withdrawal into myself is a mistake.
- People sit around at work and endlessly complain about what they get paid and how hard done by they are.
- Feeling happy particularly with things like photography and a future life to look forward to.
- I would like to be an engineer all my life but I would not want to work as an engineer all my life.
- Enjoyed time working in Sydney. Feel I need to give myself more of these sorts of opportunities.
- Would like to spend 2 years in London and 12 months in a third world country (India perhaps).

A little ship set out to sea,
And come wind or wave,
Calm he'll be...

- Excited about travelling overseas with work. Still also keen on the 12 months perhaps doing charity work in a third world country.
- Will prior to leaving, insurance super etc split to family, and all other cash - \$13k approx. to a third world charity decided by Mum & Dad.
- There are times when I lie still and try to feel the ebb of the global spirit flowing through me.
- In Hong Kong, feeling tired, burnt out, and in need of a break. A long break.

Books read/Movies watched:

- Setting Free the Bears, John Irving.
- "The Fischer King"

Diary 3

November 1993 – June 1994

Hong Kong / London

Diary stolen from a car in London. Lost expensive runners, a fountain pen Justin and Rosetta had given me for my birthday, and actual diary which hurt the most.

All of my private thoughts poetry, first impressions from Hong Kong and travelling overseas, red packet given to me by colleague in HK.

Things I do recall:

- Feeling of the heartbeat & soul of humanity in the apartments in mid-levels Hong Kong.
- Feelings of going down into a depressive episode.
- Appreciating the sunrise from the plane trip

Books read/Movies watched:

- 1494 (Columbus)

Diary 4

June 1994 – March 1995

London

- A focus on work and learning whilst in London.
- Really enjoying living with Justin & Rosetta.
- Liked Oscar Wilde's attitude to living life and caring for the less fortunate.

Some people have a calm 'at one-ness' attitude to life where I end up running around in circles beating myself about the head with a stick in order to feel anything at all.

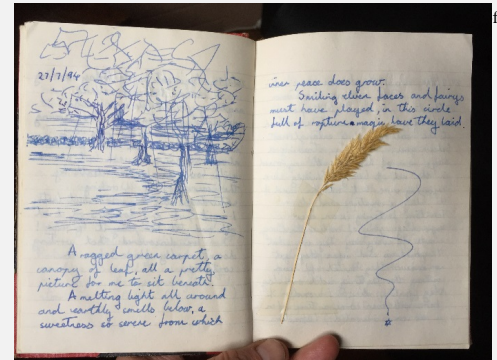
Actually... I think I waver between the two.

- Really enjoying life in London, even work.

Roehampton Fields (War Memorial)

A ragged green carpet, a canopy of leaf, all a pretty picture for me to sit beneath.

A melting light all around and earthly smells below, a sweetness so serene from which inner peace does grow.



- Questioning meaning (refuse to believe existence if for the enjoyment of ones puny self).

'... the wearisome condition of humanity, born under one law, to another bound.'

Aldous Huxley
(from a short story - Bookshop)

- Feeling really good at the moment.
- Enjoyable day to day, but still a feeling of unknown to purpose behind the bigger picture.
- Frustrations with people at work, Ken Coffin, incompetence and childish behaviour.

- Feeling like I have a handle on life's philosophical questions, or the means to work them out in any case.
- Still looking for purpose.
- Enjoying travel – Edinburgh Festival, castles, blue and white skies and fresh breezes, fields of heather.
- **Asked Ange to Marry me on a trip to Greece, (01.07.94) Perissa Beach, Santorini. Pizza, wine, black sand, all smiles!**
- Notting Hill Carnival – Reggae on street corners, two million people.
- Portobello Road – A bag of old clocks for a pound, rain, scones, tea & jam.

Beds of rock
From sands of time
Do proudly stand
Whilst church bells chime.

From coldness borne of stone
Does a power grow,
Stark against nature
Man's strength does he sow.

- Feeling tired, I don't want to work anymore. Felt better after a drink with a couple of work friends.
- Thinking people (and I), find it difficult to let go of the past, taking actions that are all too drastic in order to cut ties.
- Trip to New York.
- Feelings of inexplicable sadness.

Books read/Movies watched:

- Short Stories, Oscar Wilde.
- Short Stories, Aldous Huxley
- Short Stories, Brian Aldiss
- Edward Scissorhands (again).

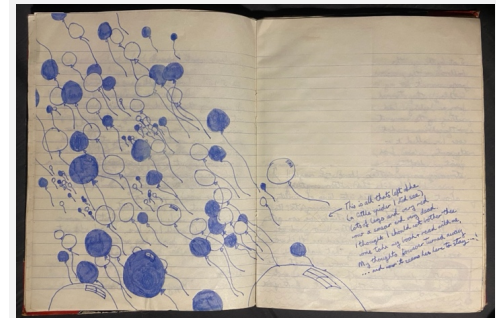
Diary 5

March 1995 – December 1995

London / India

- A want to get more involved in things I like, photography, travel, 'get lost in my soul'. Also a place more permanent that is me (as opposed to everything in arms reach being able to be packed in a suitcase.
- Listening to people gossip on the tubes, people can be pathetic.
- Recognising my tendency to over think. Wanting travel to clear my mind.
- Working on Coda suspension Bridge for Atlanta games (never built), and the wheel (London Eye).
- Trips within London, North of England, Plymouth etc...
- Feel like I have a sadness running through me.
- Thoughts of exploring photography as a career.

This is all that's left of he (a little spider I did see), lots of legs and very red now a smear and very dead.
I thought I should not bother thee come take my book and read with me, my thoughts however turned away ...and now it seems he's here to stay!

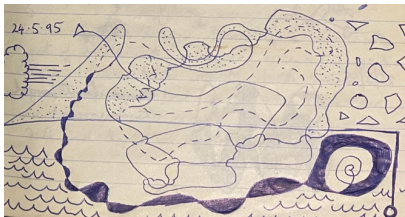


I fear I might be going partly crazy, my mind is seizing, not just lazy.
What is one to do like me, when you've got the door but not the key?

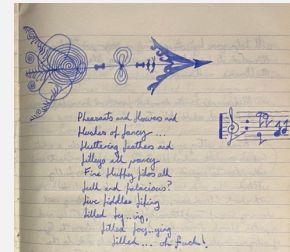


- I can't believe evolution is the whole picture, has to be some primeval level want driving development also?
- Felling the stress of work and yearning for a way out. Non-serious thoughts around suicide being one of those ways.
- Thinking about the consciousness and development of the human race as a whole and what that means in terms of living your own life.
- Sent a protest letter to the French embassy re resurrecting nuclear testing in the Pacific.

Well it's the afternoon and true to
form I am dying a horrible, horrible
death...



Pheasants and flowers and
flushes of fancy...
Fluttering feathers and
Fillies all prancy.
Fine fluffy fillos all
full and fallacious?
five fiddles fifing
filled fy ...ing
filled foy ...ing
filled ...oh fuck!



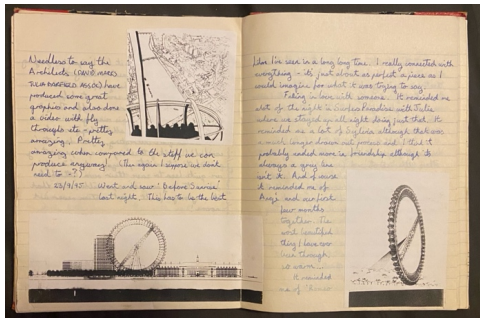
- Wrote about lying down to go to sleep and trying to feel the ebb & flow of humanity and the earth, blend in and let myself beat in harmony or get taken with it.
- Thought pieces on religion, how I would like to struggle through learning myself and only take the snippets worth taking.
- Trips to the caravan (Thornum Beach with Justin & Rosetta).
- Recognising how I can get single minded focused on things.
- Bought my first motorbike, a Honda CB125TDJ, 600 GBP
- Feel like I am starting to break free from the rote learning nature of a lot of the education I had.
- Close to breaking.
- Feel like engineering is killing me slowly from the inside out.
- Looking forward to travelling at the end of the year.
- Trip to Scotland
- Thinking and writing about the old perhaps homeless man who feeds the pigeons every day between 5 & 6 outside of Astor House where I was working. Recognising bits of him in me.
- Dreamed I programmed my calculator to emit a poison gas and killed myself...

Whirl, Whirl, Whirl,
has it always been like this,
will it be forever more?
Being good, being bad,
stepping through the minefield
of a constant moral war.

Rubbing feelings on the outside
with those coming from within.
Getting out and getting by
giving little nervous grins.

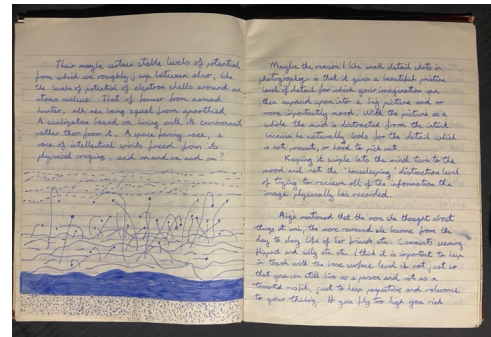
Encountering hard, encountering soft,
you're sometimes no better
trying to keep your little boat afloat

Kind of lost it there huh!

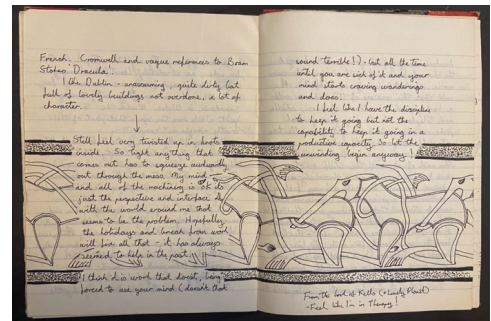


Still think of Brandy.

Words cannot express the pain,
A beautiful soul, died alone, and in vain.



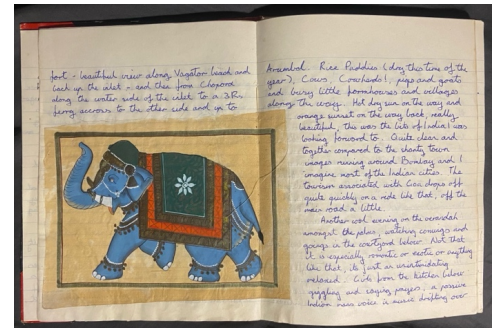
- Reading and appreciating poetry in The Big Issue.
- Sold the motorbike for slightly less than I paid – was running a bit rough...
- Appreciating the chances to observe life through the tubes. Buskers pouring out real time experiences ...for ten pence thrown into a guitar case.
- A guy in a film trying to kill himself in solitary confinement. When the warden asks why he said I just need a holiday that's all. Felt that.
- 21.11.95 finished at Arup to a leaving do at O'Neils bar, people saying some really nice things.



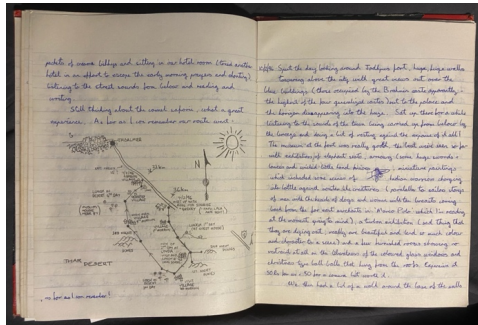
- Books read/Movies watched:**
- Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance.
 - Before Sunrise
 - Forrest Gump

December 1995 – February 1996

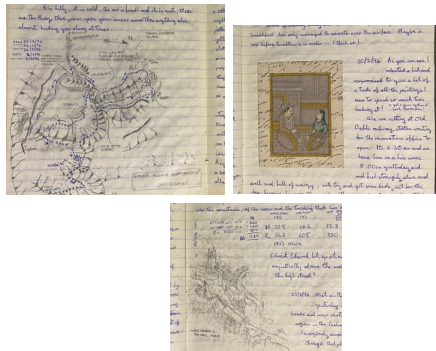
- Villa Fatima Calangute Beach, Goa, how good was that! Our real introduction to backpacker life in India...
- Anxious about the long trip ahead, a year in our heads.
- Enjoying observing the world (as a traveller).
- Noticing well off travellers spending 8 months of the year here... rest of the year at home, ...sounds attractive.
- Getting sick in India not much fun.
- Temper tantrum being frustrated with *Same Old Same Old*.
- Thinking my lows are lower, and maybe my highs higher. Suspecting one day I will bow out in severe depression and suicide, or destroy everything I hold dear in a fit. Recognise up-tightness around decision making.



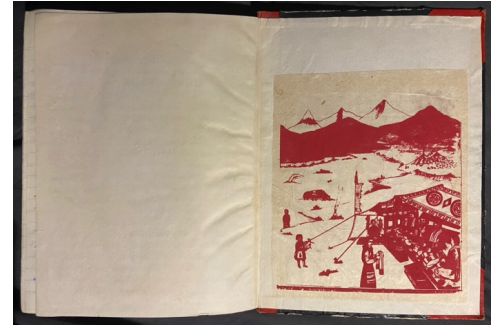
- Schoedinger's cat and the interaction between observer and the state of what is being observed (duality and uncertainty).
- Dream with huge waves enveloping me on the sea floor.
- Appreciating getting into sync with the cycles of the moon etc when travelling.
- Reflecting on Mum & Dad emigrating from NZ, the alcohol fuelled parties of the seventies (with us kids up at the crack of dawn to eat stale chips).



I am exploring the boundaries in the hope of giving purpose to that which I know is inside of me



- Delhi and the impossibility of commerce and economics in the streets.
- Shimla and the hill stations, echoes and remnants of British Raj.
- McLeod Ganj, fantastic walks in the surrounding hills.
- Lots of Germans, French looking for spiritual help, for a guru....



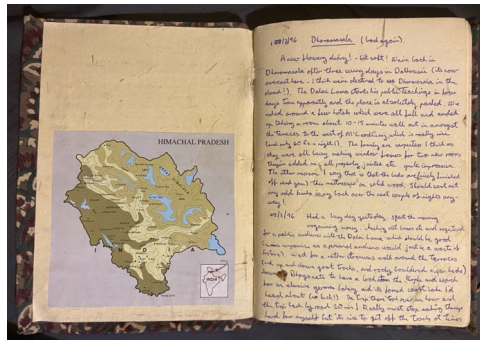
Books read/Movies watched:

- Around the World in Eighty Days.
- Under the Eye of the Clock, Wheelchair bound Christopher Nolan Autobiography.
- Annapurna, Maurice Herzog. Are We Alone, Paul Davies (on extra-terrestrial life)
- The Mysterious Mr Quin, Agatha Christie
- 1984, George Orwell
- Tao Te Ching, R.B. Blakney translation
- Dances with Wolves, Michael Blake
- A Brief History of time, Stephen Hawking
- Marco polo, David Butler
- N or M?, Agatha Christie
- The Moving Hand, Agatha Christie
- A Body in the Library, Agatha Christie
- Halloween Party, Agatha Christie
- Curtain, Poirot's Last Case, Agatha Christie
- Poirot Investigates, Agatha Christie
- Tales of the Raj II (Kipling – maybe not?)
- Untrodden Paths & Unfrequented Valleys, Amelia Edwards

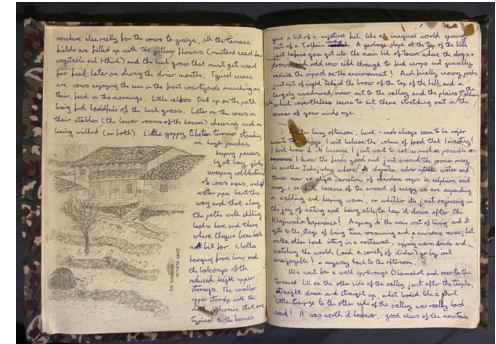
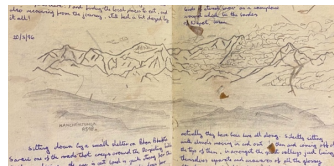
Diary 7

March 1996 – April 1996

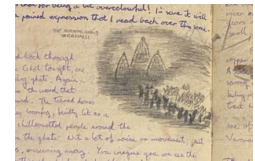
India / Nepal



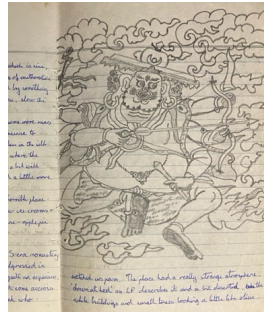
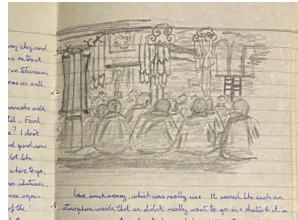
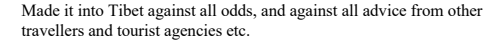
- Back in Dharamasala and McLeod Ganj, this time to visit the Dalai Lama. Staying in a farm house in the terraced hills, also did some English classes with the Tibetan refugees and watched the Man who would have been King, which includes a short scene in Tibetan on which the audience goes wild!
- Getting to hear the Tibetan refugee stories first hand, witness life with political adversity and purpose.
- Getting into the foothills of the Himalayas. Snow and skiing in Solang.
- Eating a huge amount getting back up to weight.



- Long train rides (14 hours Delhi to Varanasi).
- The holiness of the Ganges and the burning ghats at Varanasi, attitudes to religion and death on display.
- Ange had fortune told but didn't appear in my diary...



- Various travel trials, health, scheduling, dealing with other travellers.
- Darjeeling and starting to get to the real foothills of the Himalayas.
- Kathmandu and Nepal. Looking out the back of a jeep leaving India undecided if happy or sad to be leaving! 17 hr bus ride to Kathmandu over shocking roads, welcome.
- Adventures in Nepal, five day rafting the Kali Gandaki. Trekking Annapurna Circuit and the sanctuary.
- Early morning starts, afternoons diary writing, evenings eating chatting. Snowy peaks, fireflies, mountain sickness, Thorung La pass, fit, on top of the world, magical.



- Friendship Hwy, Rongbuk Monastery, and the revelation of the incredible culture and richness around places like Everest base camp that never really get a mention in the mountaineering docos – why these are the interesting bits!
- Sakya, Shigatse, Gyantse, unbelievable travel like stepping into another time, hard core tantric Buddhism, debating monks seriously exploring life and what it is for. Mind blowingly beautiful
- Arm wrestling with monks, lost the first, they let me win the second! Lesson in that just there.
- Up in the night watching the infighting amongst the Gods – the constant swirling electrical storm in the mountains (that turned out to be the storm that killed many climbers on Everest.
- Experiences like this connecting across the space and time of life.
- Tibet especially teaches the importance of finding things out for yourself, inaccurate Lonely Planet descriptions of stone throwing angry monks at Rongbuk (and other places), what is open and what is not.

I want to fly, I want to tear
And rip and stand legs astride
Fists clenched, eyes bright, mind clear
In control of myself. I want to exude
Energy, I want to stand above and I
Want recognition.

(described a sentence or two later as 'quite an ugly piece of writing').

I remember an old man, a man with a old face, a man of the people with a beret and stubble on his sunburnt face by the grey leaves and pink blossom of Notre Dame who did a charcoal caricature of me for free.

And I remember I remember the warmth of feeling.

If you had have asked me about that memory now I would have said it was a young artist. However I have caricature worthy features and it happened in China also with a French guy so I may be getting confused – I was – a bit later in this diary in fact! ...Nice anyway.

The Flea

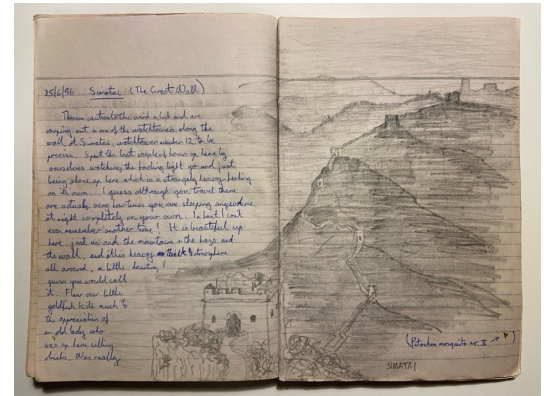
A little flea fossicked in the sand, on the beach. He would fossick for a bit creeping here and there looking under grains of sand and sniffing this and that, pausing to rub his hind legs together and stopping dead silently still at other times, when he sensed a danger coming from where he did not know. And then on impulse he would suddenly up and leave and fly to another bit of sand 5 or 6 inches distant and continue to fossick there. Landing on small ridges and little mounds covering valleys and plains of endless sand in this ocean of a beach.

And then one day he landed upon a black thing. A shiny thing of fibrous feel, lots of little fibrous things woven into a pattern into this black surface upon which he had landed. And he fossicked for a bit noting this strange black surface. It was in fact the nylon strap to a small bag but in his infinitesimally the little flea only saw the surface itself, a curious strange surface of black fibrous things woven into regular pattern of up and over and down and under. And then on impulse he up and left the black surface and flying to another spot 6 or 7 inches distant and lo behold landed upon a white surface. A white surface of roughness this time, a rough of course up and down pattern but also of a fibrous type of makeup not dissimilar to the black surface he had also landed upon the time before. And he fossicked for a bit noting this strange surface and noting that the smells and feels were different as well the smells and feels of the black surface from any of the smells and feels he had come across previously upon the sand.

And then on impulse he up and left making his way to a spot 5 or 6 inches distant we again found the sand of the beach. And again he fossicked turning over grain and crawling up precipitous wedges, up and down valleys, pits of loosed sand breaking away at times under his crawling and causing him to fall and slide and still he continued like this for bit fossicking up and leaving he came across other strange and interesting surfaces in the sea of sand, khaki surface is and a hairy moist pulsating surface over which he had to struggle while he fossicked.

And at the end of day when he nestled down against the wind and made himself comfortable for the night before the next day's fossicking, he contemplated his experiences and thought to himself that, as a flea fossicking on the beach he had seen quite a bit of life, more than most. He wasn't quite sure what this meant but it felt right and he was sure it would be of benefit at some time in the future. Perhaps not the near future maybe but at some time, sometime maybe after this life of fossicking even, sometime when his tiny little soul becomes liberated from his tiny little body and fleas the world over merge somehow to become more than just a mere flea, ...maybe.

Written on a beach on Putoshan, and island out of Shanghai.



- Washes of emotions leaving London to travel through Europe.

Emotion washing in from all directions, from early morning London... from work and life... so many I can't recognise them anymore... future a kaleidoscope of washing emotions no escape, we somehow walked into this position and don't have any control over the emotions, and there are too many to deal with, too many tears + laughs + love + want mixing. Can't it all come together somehow, can't it all be one; it can't.

Washes of emotion on arriving back in London for a couple of weeks and reconnecting with people and life before leaving again to travel Europe.



Checkpoint Charlie, Potsdammer Platz, Brandenburg Gate, and the East Side Gallery (the still standing section [of the Berlin Wall] painted with murals. You get a sense of modern history happening around you (similar to Tibet).

Books read/Movies watched:

- The Old Man and the Sea, Ernest Hemingway
- Shopping for Buddhas, Jeff Greenwald
- Seven Years in Tibet, Heinrich Harrer
- A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens
- After the Funeral, Agatha Christie
- Wild Swans, Jung Chang
- Murder on the Links, Agatha Christie
- The Princess and other Stories, D.H. Lawrence
- Oliver Twist, Charles Dickens
- Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen
- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain
- Lord Jim, Joseph Conrad
- Heat, Val Kilmer, Al Pacino, Robert de Nero
- Muriel's Wedding
- Seven – Brads Pit, Morgan Freeman, Kevin Spacey
- Franky & Johnny, Al Pacino, Michelle Pfeiffer

Diary 9

August 1996 – November 1997

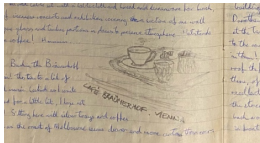
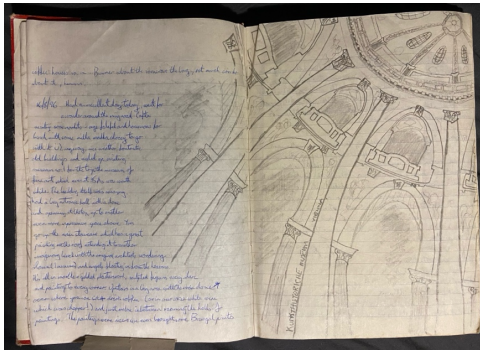
Europe / Melbourne

Arrived in Prague (the Czech Republic) a couple of days ago. Two hours worth of queue at the border, an old green car that sounded like someone was forging horseshoes under the bonnet, a bald man in a white VW asleep at the wheel with everybody driving around him. Then the Czech Republic, green forests with sunlight filtering through, a steady stream of people filing across the border into the duty free shops, winding road through more green forest, a couple of hitchhikers and then about 3 or 4 kilometres of prostitutes, there presumably for all the truckies every 200 metres or so, under the green canopy of trees, a romp in the woods I suppose?



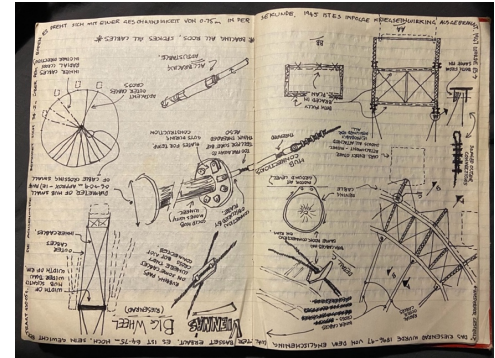
Cesky Krumlov

- A good feeling about a humble poor 'new' country like The Czech Republic, quickly dimmed by a couple of issues with traffic tickets and corruption. Things always more complicated, less idealistic than they seem.
- Muddy river full of boats and canoes and holidaying Czechs having a basic but great time.



- ‘Vienna Coffee’ (& hatstands) in Vienna. I used to drink them in Melbourne, basically coffee with cream lol. Represented a ‘want’ that was a long time in the making happen.... a good feeling.
- Feeling the prospect of Melbourne looming. Recalling the tense silence of Appletree Drive when Mum and Dad and Brian and Vicky were going through tight financial times. A core memory.
- Feeling similar trauma from moments at Franklin Street and work.

I used to be full of openness. I used to love having my opinion asked, and asking others of theirs. It seems however that everything, even the most simple of things have grown so complicated that I just don’t know anymore. I find it harder and harder to think ahead because I just don’t know anymore. I wonder if I ever did, or if I just thought I did, and I wonder which would be worse.



Have you ever felt enough to die,
stick a needle in my eye,
lay down my head and bid me bye,
have you ever felt the need to die?

Have you ever felt the need to live,
Limbs of flab and mind like sieve,
Personally apprehensive,
I was born and so I live.

No I’ve never felt the need to live,
but I think and think and think and be,
and satisfy curiosity,
and think and think and think and die,
stick a needle in my eye.

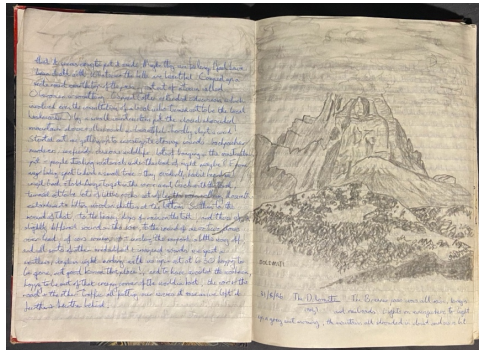
- Staying with Phillip (from trekking in Nepal), in Munich
- Dachau, shades of grey and gravel and a sick feeling in the stomach.
- Camping in the mountains, driving amongst rain and lorries and railroads...

The Dom, the cathedral in Salzburg, Eric Clapton being played badly on plastic guitars out the front, window scenes painted on the roof inside, a man in a donation booth for repairs on the way out, some people giving, I gave just one shilling, one eighty millionth of the sum required apparently.



Not the Dom but taken at that time?

- The Dolomites and memories of Amelia Edwards (we read her travel accounts from the 19th century while travelling.



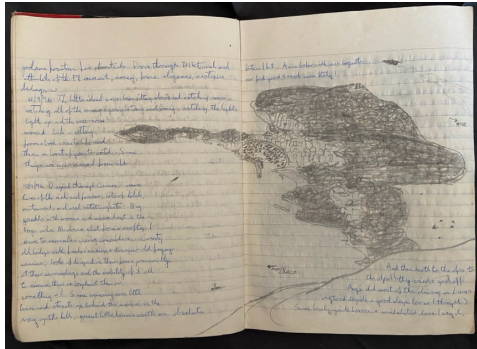
Dolomiti

- Venice and San Marco Square full of cafes and four or five piece quartets or quintets playing classical music, beautiful.
- Gondola regatta in Venice and stumbling onto the Lido film festival by complete coincidence including being given tickets to a film (Grace of my Heart). ...and rainstorms. Feelings of supposed to be there, not supposed to be there. Bigger overlays than just being I guess.
- Driving in the South of Italy (Salerno), bustling free spirited youth loving life and laughing at the jostling in traffic, hard to be upset or angry in the face of all that smiling.
- Pompei and the contorted White Stag tent blowing around like a tumbleweed in the campground. A testament to failures of family holidays and the ability for people to move on.



San Gimignano

- Observing homeless and down and out people in the streets
- Also touching on the glamour and luxury of places like Monte Carlo, Cannes, lifestyles of the rich and famous.
- Waking unable to sleep in the middle of the night (at this stage usually because of something we drank or ate), going over thoughts and things in life that caused embarrassment or regret.
- Recognition I also want things and to live life on the front foot. Material things, money, renown, respect and satisfaction knowing I have mastered or conquered some things in life.



Coastal view b/w Nice and Monte Carlo

Does life seem really sad to you?
Does it make you want to cry?
It makes me want to cry,
...sometimes.

Written on a blanket with wine
and spaghetti apparently

[Do] you ever think that the afterlife is created by individuals? The being is a sort of restrained physical presence, like an embryo stage for the brain to grow, for thought pattern to grow around a spirit, the material body and brain cells then die and fall away, the butterfly brain then escaping into whatever. The medium being the world, the expectation it has created around itself.

People who believe in heaven go there, or perhaps to hell depending upon their own private view of themselves, people who think we merge with the universe do, and people who think you just die and disappear, do, and people who don't know ...?

Had trouble articulating this but rewriting it again there is something interesting in there...

- A bit depressed with the weather. Also a feeling my brain is full.
- Feeling little less an observer and getting pulled into being a participator as return to Australia looms.

Is it possible to pre-empt death?
To sit and get lost in your point,
in your life and its termination,
to die and shrivel up before you've even died.
your place in it all, or lack of it,
coming up and overtaking you,
before you've even had a chance to make it.
wax in a candle snuffing out the flame...
after a pause for thought.

- Seeing photos of movie stars and wanting to be like that.
- Observing siestas from 12-2

People don't write songs about falling out of love, it's not the beautiful thing falling in love can be, it has none of the noble feelings [of] falling in love, it has no tenderness generally, and is not something that happens just like that, you do not fall out of love at a glance, it's a long drawn out process marred by a lot of bickering and petty fighting, it brings out the worst person in you that you can be, as opposed to falling in love which can show you beauty you have never seen before, in yourself and in others, in life in fact, in falling out of love all of your faults seep to the surface, you can [] find yourself speaking word like you were detached from reality, like another unrecognisable stranger had taken over, but it is in fact you and that's one of the hard things to accept, you become even more bitter in anger [] at what you have been reduced to. No, falling out of love is an ugly thing and not something to be written about in a song.

- Dark thoughts, feeling life as a burden. Recognising the black dog alongside of me.
- Still travelling, Spain, Portugal etc...

Don't lament me when I am gone,
 I am just dead that is all,
 I didn't want to hurt you or anybody else by dying,
 I just wanted to go, that's all.
 It is true I had tears in my eyes when I went,
 They were sadness at leaving, at giving up.

...
 The smiles brightness in my face you may have seen would have been
 surrounded by pain and sadness at things I felt I could not cope with

...
 Think of my spirit in the cold and the clear of the night sky,
 At rest and calm and relieved of the burden of living.
 That is why I wanted to die.

Slightly paraphrased

It seems that though you may
 understand life.

Living and coping with it is an entirely
 different thing

- Saying goodbye to Justin and Rosetta. Feeling deeply indebted and teary at leaving them.
- Loving reading, copied the passage on following page from Les Mis, obviously a sketch of a sailing ship worked in to the main text. Very good.
- Back to Melbourne and waiting for reality to set in.
- Reconnecting with work, getting a flat, friends and family, thinking about money and houses etc.
- Can feel the presence of depression alongside of me, all around.

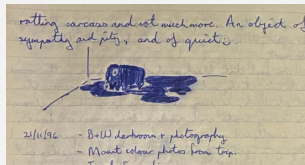


A vessel of the line is composed of the heaviest,
 and at the same time the lightest materials, because
 she has to contend, at one and the same time,
 with the three forms of matter, the solid, the
 liquid and the fluid. She has eleven claws of
 iron to grasp the rock at the bottom of the sea,
 and more wings and scales than the butterfly to
 catch the breezes in the clouds. Her breath goes
 forth through her hundred and twenty guns as
 through enormous trumpets, and haughtily answers
 the thunderbolt. Ocean strives to land her
 astray in the frightful sameness of his billows,
 but the ship has her compass, which is her soul,
 always counselling her and always pointing
 toward the north. In dark nights, her lanterns
 take the place of the stars. Thus then, to oppose
 the wind, she has her ropes and canvas, against
 the water her timber, against the rock her iron,
 her copper, and her lead; against the darkness,
 light, against immensity, needle....

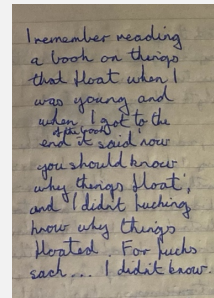
... It is exhaustless in force as the breath
 of infinitude; it gathers up the wind in its canvas,
 it is firmly fixed in the immense chaos of the waves,
 it floats and it reigns.

Victor Hugo
 (Les Misérables)

I can feel that black pool of depression in the room. It feels like sticky oil underfoot, spread across the carpet at work, seeping out of the computer's keyboard, it is in my books and around the corners at home, it lies smattered around my dreams and aspirations, I am trying to ignore it and hoping that it recedes but it is there and its not receding. The cleanliness of the past year travelling seems to make it worse, it spreads it somehow, the year cleans or covers it but the black seeps through when you walk over it. Maybe I can get on top of it, busy building, well waiting to build, (Elwood is the new fortress from which to wage battle, from which to struggle). There is hope, but there is also a lot of oil and it is sticky, you try to clean it up but it sticks to you and then gets on other things, at least when I don't touch it it remains pure and I remain clean for a bit longer. The last few months I have realised what a crime I would be inflicting upon Ange if I were to go, if I were to roll into the oil in an orgy of depression and curl in a corner and suffocate myself, dying to the smell of oil in the carpet and in my nostrils. Cocooned in thick black sticky oil a rotting carcass and not much more. An object of sympathy and pity and quiet.



- Setting up black and white darkroom for photography.
- Toying with thoughts of journalism and travel writing.
- Talking about using hours after work as productive time looking at understanding share investment etc. Less leisure, more productive, and enjoying it.
- Missing Justin & Rosetta and life in London.
- Thoughts around friendship with S _____ and my love for Ange.
- A candle, a Boston bun, Scotch and ice, Blondie on the stereo, there is so much to be in this world and I want to be it all!
- Feeling overawed by the possibilities, the choices.

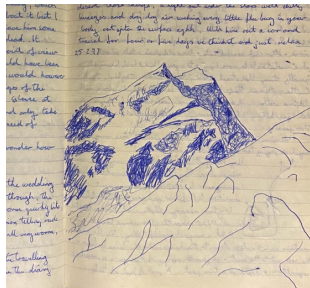


Felt like, what the fuck is wrong with me!

All the little peoples,
and all the animals,
in all the bits and pieces of the world,
doesn't it make your mind boggle,
doesn't it make your mind seize up,
in a fit of not being able to comprehend,
doesn't it make you want to fall to your knees,
and lie back with your head on the ground,
and close your eyes and just be,
and just fade into everything,
become everything,
merge with the infinite,
...doesn't it?

- Realising I can relate to the poetry of the people in the streets (from the Big Issue). Perhaps because I can relate to depression, finding that a bit scary. Knowing it is not external to me but a part of my base makeup.
- Enjoying country Australia, rafting on the Delatite, Craigs Hut etc...
- Feeling depression is medium intelligence, intelligent enough to recognise the shortfalls of life, not intelligent enough to rise above them.

- Owning the EH Holden, playing basketball, enjoying relating to people in the streets around our life (the weird father like guy by the local newsagents for example.
- Find toughness of work, the lack of beauty difficult. Would love to give it up. I want to create art and feeling, and feel it within me.
- Showing care for people, particularly homeless. But not going all the way, one day perhaps...?



- Got married in StKilda Rose Gardens locally in Elwood, reception Metropolitan in city, A'Beckett St around corner from work. Honeymoon in NZ, South Island.
- Not enjoying work
- Up and down on life
- Post travel blues, will I ever feel that calm again?

Finding things out about myself:

- More right brain than left
- Not strong
- Halfway smart
- Not quick on my feet
- Short temper which blinds my control
- Easily led
- Enjoy appreciating things
- Enjoy a bit of self pity
- Little manic depressive
- Capable and warm and shy
- Good heart but capable of hate also

- Busy at work. Angry with a client who blamed me for something.
- Feel like learning at work, busy and feeling good about it.

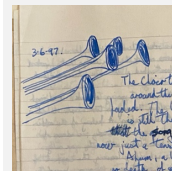
Come the end of high school, Uni & Work, I was a product of the eighties, efficient, logical, ambitious and strong in a society around me that looked up to strength.

In finding myself I am taking a conscious step away from strength... moving towards another me, other bits of me, old bits of me.

Becoming a weaker person and a stronger person. The strength that matters I hope. Me from the inside out, not the outside in as it has been for so long

- Wanting to live more of my life in ideals, in fantasy.
- Liking the concept of Tinkerbell who tells Peter she will be in that space between waking and sleeping.

I am having trouble coming to grips with this society I find myself in, and it makes me want to cry ...its all a game.



The choir that has been around the edges has faded. The bright white is still there. Its just empty, the song has gone. Its now just a tense white static. A hum, a buzz of quiet, of no depth, of emptiness.

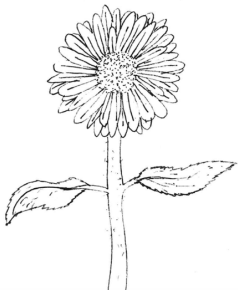
I feel a bit like I've fallen into the white walls and green-grey linoleum of a mental asylum... And out the window against the blue sky is a big mountain covered in snow.

And I can't feel the air out there, can't feel the crispness. All there is, is just the buzz and white walls, and the glass of the windows and the doors.

Snails and strange men and slow drive-by's under street lighting, the world outside was alive and moving last night...

- Wondering how people can be so mean. Reacting with a fuck them attitude.
- Observing people are born into lives without choosing. Into short unjust lives of violence, children in the grave, or monotony and long mundane lives.
- I make mistakes at work when I rush.
- I want to be the best at what I turn my mind to.
- I don't want trite hobbies, bits of woodwork hanging around the house!
- Feeling like am overextended, everything wants a piece of you, need to be more ruthless, more reckless.
- Reading on philosophy & religion, Buddhism at the moment.
- Work & life feeling hard, mistakes and challenges compounding, spreading, 'make it stop'.

I will always be a passenger. Tonight I feel like getting drunk and listening to sad music. I feel like revelling in the sadness, in coldness, in reality, in blood and air.

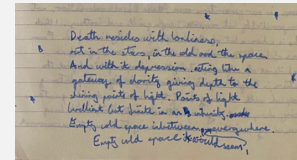


And it feels like to me as if it is all shit all around, knee deep in it all the time. And the people who recognise it for what it is kill themselves under the burden, under the horribleness of it all. A million, a billion souls of light unconnected. Raw beauty and light smothered within a matrix of shit. And the fuckwits who can't see it for what it is, who know only just enough to let them live off the shit (thriving on the shit sometimes, or just managing, every mouthful making them dry retch, like myself), keep on going on. Is there something at the end of it all? Will it ever unfold?

...written on the background of a friend's niece at work having committed suicide.

- Remonstrating with myself over letting an Indian guy who came to the front door go. He was asking, saying he didn't know what to say, ...but end up asking if he could just come in and sit for a bit. I offered money etc but in the end he left. Felt terrible...

Death resides with loneliness, out with the stars, in the cold and the space. And with it depression, acting like a gateway of clarity, giving depth to the shining points of light. Points of light brilliant but finite in an infinity. Empty cold space in-between, empty cold space it would seem, ...everywhere.



- A fascination with death. Something about undertones of the 90's?

People are being abused by priests, animals are being tested on, the environment is being destroyed in the pursuit of money...

...You see I secretly believe my bit [the bit in my head] isn't broken, maybe my bit is ok and all the other bits are just stupid, and uncaring, and belligerent. That is what I secretly believe.

- Dinner with Drew and Fiona, clearing air over new friends in London and growing apart...
- Uncertainty, nothing seeming to stick, fumbling about trying to find something (writing rejected from The Age and The Herald Sun).

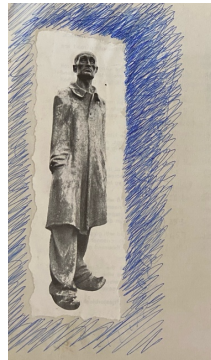
I want my life to be like a battlefield. I want it strewn with mud and blood, with victory and spectacular failure.

But that is not me.

I like my sleep too much and I find it hard to let go that much; much as I'd like to, I'm altogether less serious than I like to think, me thinkst...

Books read/Plays/Movies watched:

- Sense & Sensibility, Jane Austin
- Three Men on the Bommel, Jerome K Jerome
- Sherlock Holmes (Short Stories), Arthur Conan-Doyle
- Tai Pan, James Clavell
- Les Miserables, Victor Hugo
- Longitude
- Buddhism, John Snelling
- The Three Sisters
- Grace of My Heart (Lido Film Festival)
- The Chocolate War
- Braveheart
- Romeo & Juliet
- Priscilla, Queen of the Desert
- Groundhog Day
- Trainspotting
- Mrs Doubtfire
- Phenomenon
- Schindler List
- Saturday Night Fever
- The Truth About Cats and Dogs
- The Basketball Diaries
- Kiss or Kill
- Jerry McGuire



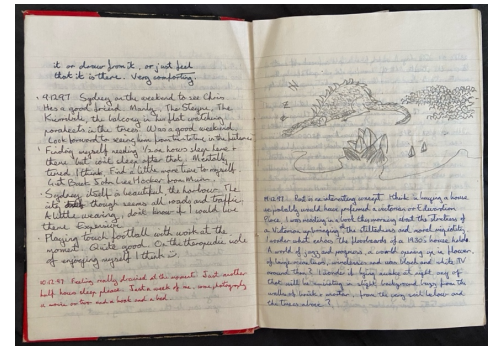
Dachau

Diary 10

November 1997 – February 2000

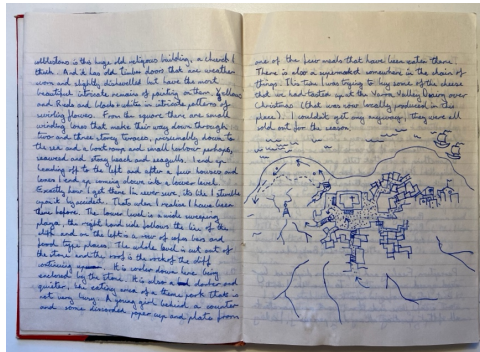
Melbourne

- Visiting Pentridge as a part of work and seeing Malaysian men used to the tropics locked in that cold thick bluestone walled place.
- Feeling, sensing the world, falling asleep to a view, someone walking past the flat outside in the street at night...
- Feeling I need to rebalance myself.



- Starting to write about dreams. Recognising that they (the dream places), are recurring, I go back to them at different times (in my dreams).
- Dream memories fade so quickly and there is something in them telling you not to follow (for your own good?).
- Realising how much travel meant to me, more than the words I have to express.

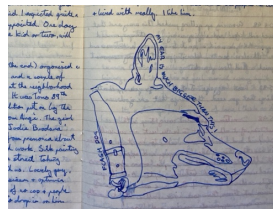
I think sometimes we mistake the route to our happiness as the solution to the world's problems when really ...it doesn't have anything to do with it.



Coastal Village in my dreams, a mix of Australia and Mediterranean

What is it that leads everything we do towards power and wealth. We have to be better...

- Reading more on Tao.
- Onto the observing and contemplation thing, the world through a coffee shop window.
- Street party, welcoming Flash, a couple of babies, and Flash. Tom (our elderly neighbour across the road also turns 89.



- Registering a few relaxed weekends. Life seems to be a bit more settled, less tense with sorting out what it is going to be after travel.

There are times I find myself so full of feeling and emotion I want to curl up in pain and cry at the injustices and sadness of the human[ity].

And it makes me feel carried away by it all, wanting to hold onto it, to not let it go, to revel in it.

It is a strange feeling, one of love I think as it has all the same characteristics.

Every now and then When it is really cold and night time has come, and I feel like being alone, not even alone as Ange sometimes comes too, solitary maybe, out of phase or away from it, taken away [], Flash and I walk down by the river. It really is beautiful, be it in mist or rain or moon or just night, it has a clarity of atmosphere about it. When a train goes over the railway bridge above you and there is stone and iron and green light and the solid sound of train on rail all superimposed in moving shadows of positive and negative, you could be 50 years away. You could be in a world war, or in a Sherlock Holmes novel, time and place seemed to tingle with connections to where or what I do not know. It is quite a nice moment to turn from this, hands in pocket with Flash on the path in front of you somewhere, ...and walk further into the darkness.

q...written about the path by the river at Park Street.

- Ron, Auntie Rhonda's father, and my boss at Bowens passed away. Visited him in his house, he was in a coma with Rhonda stroking his cheek on one side, Norma (his wife) smiling and being her normal chirpy self. David was asleep having been up for the night and the kids were watching television in the other room. He seemed peaceful. He had expressions passing over his face which made me think he was dreaming. He had been in a coma for a while (a day or more). Couldn't leave him without saying I will see you again...

Have been in an intimate mood the last couple of weeks, months? I just want to lie down with someone, hold them and be cared for.

- Loving movies. They will take you to faraway places, fill your heart and your soul to the brim, with love or fear or hope, will play with you and awaken all that is within you, show you what life and humanity can be.
- Appreciating Ange's solidness and recognising the intimacy in which we started. The most amazing high of my life that time when we were first together...

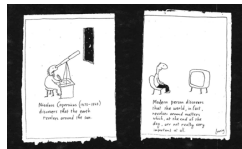
- Noticed Ange was a little depressed tonight. Worried it might be me as it is not her nature to be like that.
- Understanding of God as the inner core to people in whatever that may be (Leunig observing this from how people refer to God).
- Anger at no pay rise and no promotion. Despising the 'pudgy pompous arrogant arseholes' – like Stephen King prevalent.

...does the fact that there is no afterlife preclude other things, the path of an overall consciousness in the race that is poisoned by delusions like the immortality of its component soldier ant parts?

- Rescued a raven with a damaged wing. Kept it in our shed for a bit with water (wouldn't take the worms harvested from the compost heap. Put it outside on the roof and it was gone when went back.

...while somewhere in India a prostitute girl sold for 5,000 Rs is dragged kicking and screaming down a corridor.... All these subtleties of appreciating philosophies on life breakdown in [that] small corridor filled with kicking and screaming, filled with the ravaged human rights of a young girl with the eyes of a terrified animal. As in fact they breakdown in the animal testing laboratories and all other corners on this planet were a person or animal or thing is denied control of its own physical being, where the pain inflicted on nerve endings and straps restricting movement, or the minds way forward, are under the control immediate of another list respecting entity

- Road rage incident ending with me thumping my fist on a rear window... In the right but disappointed at losing control. Frustrated at work? ...or frustrated with the smallness of life here in the face of bigger issuers overseas.
- Just worked three, thirteen hour days through the flu...
- Questioning the world, everyone pouring their souls into houses, cars, wives, children, football teams...
- Missing London
- Losing sleep over work, 'to do' lists creeping their way in...



- Stress a perceived large part of life. Starting to talk about meditation.

6.1.99 I am at work and I am scared and I want to run away. There is no one to lean on. ...It is amazing how a little lack of confidence can escalate.

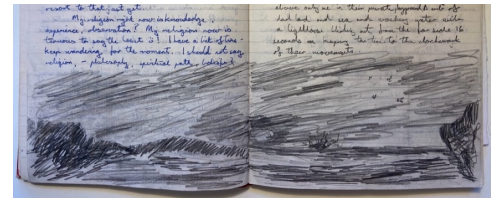
7.1.99 I am at work, it is raining outside and I want to go home to bed.

10.1.99 I am not going to let this happen next year. Working weekends through summer is not on. I should be down at the beach bumming, not on my way to fucking work

Cathedrals on the weekend. Lay back on the blanket and stared up into the sky. After a few minutes the stars have lifted down to you. You can probe and explore all the corners and edges and paths around the different clusters. You can ponder time and space and life. You can send your searching stare up there wondering how many others have sought either solitude, or reflection or understanding with you. You can wonder if there are other eyes, other souls, searching back this way from their own corners.

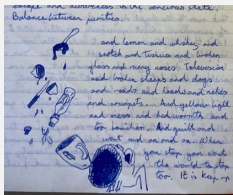
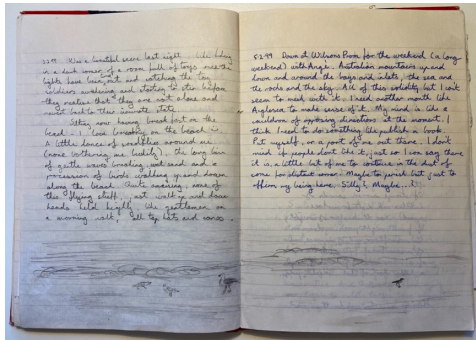
- Started the 12 week School of Philosophy course.

My religion right now is knowledge. My religion right now is tenuous at best!



Anglesea beach at night, glow of Melbourne on one side, receding twilight on the other.

- Trip away for the night to Anglesea, camping on my own and a bit of a surf.



...and lemon and whiskey and
scotch and tissues and broken
glass and runny noses. And
broken sleeps and dogs and reads
and heads and aches and
crumplets. And yellow light and
mess and bed warmth and too
familiar. And guilt and want and
on and on. When you stop you
want the world to stop too.

- Feeling guilty about being sick and away from work but realised it is partially as I want to be there to complete it. To say it is mine and I am worthy.
- A new philosophy teacher who was more articulate and lively. Other people in the class saying how much better he was, except that I liked Alan Stokes the old one, I don't like being sold things...

- Still playing basketball, hard. Sweating out a cold.

Sometimes I have these thoughts of a Brendon born back in prehistoric times. When I was young, I didn't think he would stand a very good chance of survival, and I rather think that he wouldn't have... [if he did] he's skinny, and dirty, skinnier and dirtier than most as he's near the bottom of the pecking. He lives in constant fear and paranoia of his fellow savages, bitter and small minded with furrowed brow bred through ill treatment. He lives for the pack. weak of character and body he could not survive on his own but hunts with the pack living off the gristlier scraps of the kill left by those stronger than he ... His best moments where he runs with the pack, not entirely as useful as others but at that moment their attention is turned away from him and he can join in the common cause, become a part of the hunt. He looks for that momentary sense of belonging, [but] he has no thought for his fellow human when he falls, just as long as it is not him. So he joins in the pack when they turn on the weaker pack member and follows the throng with a sideways glance to ensure common direction. He does not seem to register, living only in the present I suppose, that sooner or later it will be his turn.

Pretty dire view of base nature. That is a base nature born of needing to survive in the lower orders of society without any strength to stand. Perhaps I've no sense of memory of this Brendon as he never comes to be. He did end up having character and finding his way – perhaps.

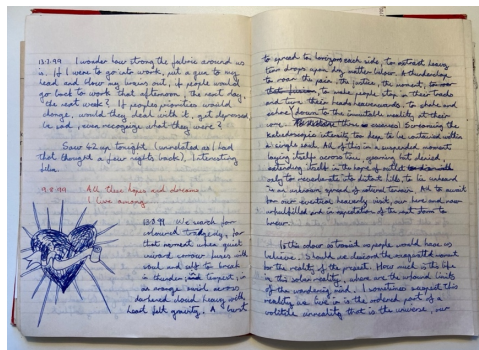
- Starting to get into Haiku, Basho...
- Feeling I need a sabbatical to spend time understand the world and me within it.

Disturbed at the moment... Life is going on in a distorted fish eye around me and my connection with it is twisted and turned and strained in accordance. I need to break, to distance myself for a while to rebuild, to renew...

I have a sense of impending fate. ...I stepped outside to walk Flash and a very slow and reasonable size plane flew over. I stood still and looked up almost expecting some sort of verdict to be delivered.

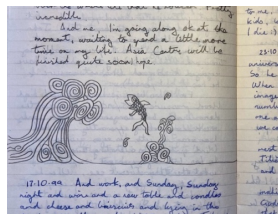
...My belief in ideals, my love of losing myself in distraction, in fantasy past and present, is at odds with someone who can be good in the here and now, in the emergency of the moment.

- I feel I often deal with things on other people's terms, to make things go easier, more smoothly. Which can be stressful.



With all this looking outward, creating with hands and mind, of tracking reality, I seem to have lost some relationship within.

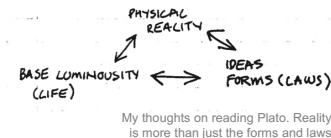
- Enjoying working on Asia Centre and with Joseph Paonessa (NFK), and John Legge (Arup).
- Frank in hospital with extremely high blood pressure.



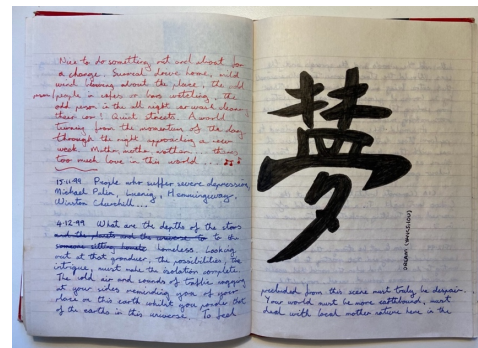
Since your beginning and end are only of dust, do not imagine you are on earth, but in it.

Omar Khayyam

- On a week long 'Leading the Consultancy of the Future Course'. I don't like being in a social situation for so long. I like time to myself, alone, also.
- Reading Plato (in 90 mins much top Ange's amusement and teasing). Reality interpreted as the shadows the people make on the wall rather than the actual selves – Book VII, 514 a-c.



- Feeling platonic love towards a girl I met in Brisbane (from Arup). Wanting that intimate understanding. Yearning for love and companionship, sharing.
- Enjoy the strings in music...



- Thinking about what the stars mean to homeless people.



Farmed fields flying into Santiago...

Above the odd paddock and fence line and cow and sheep and damn, then slowly a visitor of the mall, and then a Skype where they have received it beyond attached reality into a world, below which you fly. And lifting to clouds and up through holes cumulus up and in and down and Ouch and magical flying machines, propeller drones and goggles and scarves, and a whole other world above. And then serious and long jet streams swept, smiling stewardess is and long cigar super sounds of the 60s and 70s airline is, jet age, and then above that into dinner atmospheres and 10 kilometres of economical cruising height. The paddocks made of dirt having become a crust, and the crust encapsulating a huge rock spreading in a shallow curve every way. Hint not of a planet not that high yet, but the definite earth and us still only skimming the thin atmosphere, lens like around it, and sunsets and coastlines.

And then an ageing off of noise, of symphonic white, and clouds, on watch, off white, on, on, off, off and then overcastness and paddocks again, and houses and real moving speeds, and the clean breaking up around the edges, piles of earthworks and cleared land and dirty gravel and tufts of grass and humanity's unkempt development in tarmac and temperatures and an unfortunate drop back into reality, reality seemingly stain everywhere. Different people, different times and a slow decline and adjustment as the new reality starts, very slowly at first to let itself be known.

And following the map in Lonely Planet, keep doing circles in her hand, we're close she thinks. The Church of San Francisco, big red walls and old stone. And then a passing moment of an elder man looking at some goings on with and exasperation. Confined wants not being able to be met by his circumstances, moves too slow, thinks too slow? I don't know but that's I have want and of watching it disappear, not having the means to meet it, the release of that moment!

My heart went silent and I was scared for him and for others, and I registered how many people I had seen and here without the same safety. And i felt mean and hard because i did not have that same vulnerability, i had US dollars that would be inefficiently spent, i hope he had a place to sleep. Reflection in that moment, care and beauty and a bit of guilt, and appreciation of others lives, and then of being scared for them left they be my eyes there with a mini bus in the dark passing by. An associating of a reality which is not... Exasperation on my part I guess, may there be a higher order that looks after this man, gives him a moment of security each day in which to rest. Or am I talking about me, ...probably.

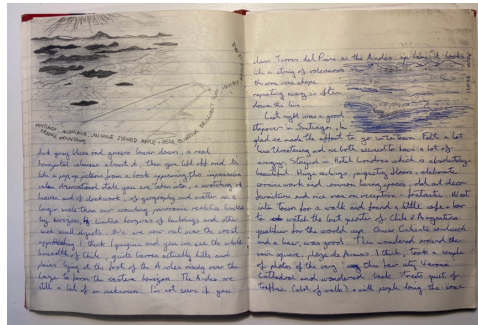
- Getting lost in the experience of walking. Not losing the me but it being overlaid and overridden by these great experiences. What is real life? Is it experiences like these or is it dealing with the mundane everyday of life back at home?
- Carlos the Chilean who adopted us for a bit, and Ed the 60/70 year old American, people on the trail an experience.
- My life experience is full of past associations (feelings of expecting to come across Yoda in the forest at any moment).
- Experiencing nature and its philosophic effects.



"Nature is a labyrinth in which the very haste you move with will make you lose your way." – Francis Bacon.

- Seeing real mountains and real glaciers and a proper worthwhile experience of note (and beauty). Different to the warmth and cosyness of the Himalayas, both good.
- Ange on a mission walking in the rain; girls don't like getting wet!

- Feeling the injustice of the loss of Chiles indigenous cultures – disappeared on the premise of survival of the fittest :(.
- I still think of the spirits of the hills and the earth. Another 'indigenous'.



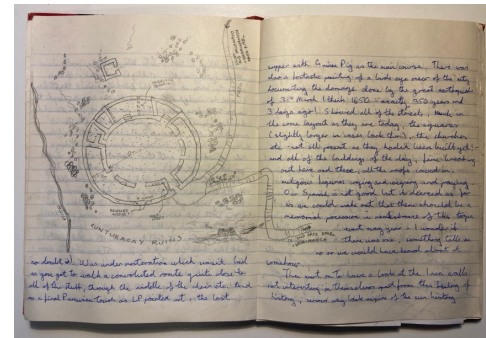
Santiago, Aconcagua, Lan Chile stewed apple & pear, blinding brilliant sun, Iquique, Arica, La Paz.

- Noticing quite a few homeless in Santiago, sorting through garbage.
- Also noticing and finding it interesting that social systems such as religion are still alive and functioning today.



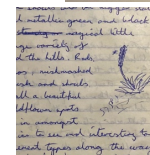
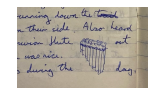
Travelling detail

- Cuzco at 2:00am in the morning, people looking for corners to sleep in, most definitely on the travelling trail.
- Midnight debacle trying find the bathroom with torch and waking people including Ange who is not very understanding when it comes to sleep.

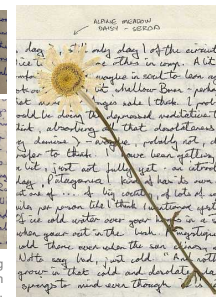


Sketch of Runturacay ruins done over lunch I think...

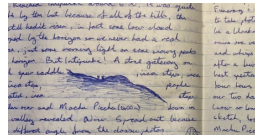
- Inca culture and engineering, walking highlights and honest walking (5-6 hours a day)
- Strange overnight bus trips, drivers taking turns sleeping in the baggage compartment, Lonely Planet warnings of crime and towns being something to miss.



Pan Flutes and humming birds, pressed wildflowers on the Inca trail...

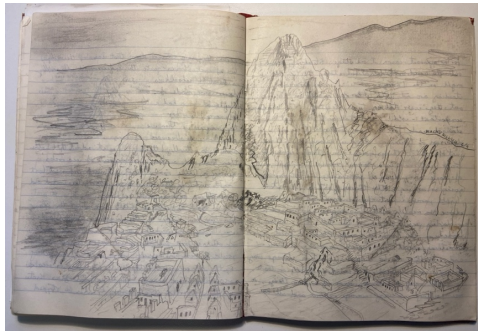


- Intipunku (The Sun Gate), still a strong memory after 25 odd years. less so the colour from the pressed flowers which has faded.



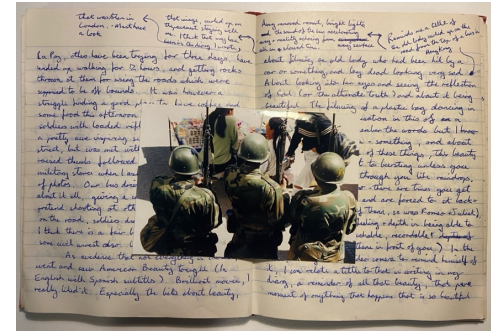
Intipunku

- So many warnings and rumours of crime, backpack stealing, knife cut opening to steal things. Never saw any actual evidence of this.



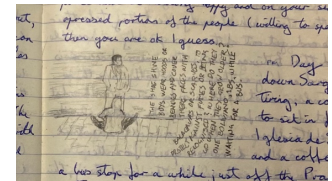
Machu Picchu

- Arriving back to Bolivia and civil unrest. Soldiers at the end of the street, in the markets etc. The odd gunshot at one stage. All feeling a lot less dangerous than it might/should. Probably as we were tourists.
- Seeing American Beauty, relating to the plastic bag scene and knowing this is how I see a lot of life.

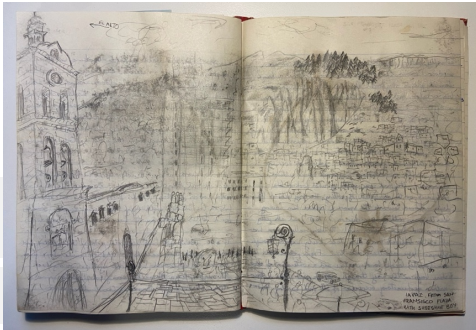


Civil unrest, La Paz

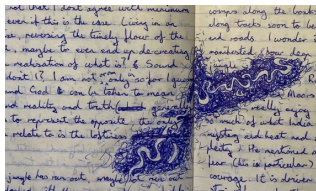
- Trying to understand why traveller's toilet cleanliness is so bad. Bodies and dispositions to clean to dirty themselves with pulling a cord to flush after they have been.



The shoeshine boys wear hoods or beanies and cover their faces with balaclavas or scarves, to protect against fumes or being recognised? Where do they go when they grow older? One boliviano, 1BS, while waiting for a bus.



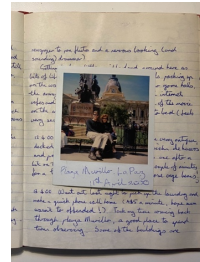
A Day in Plaza Murillo (La Paz) watching pigeons being fed, ice creams, jelly creams and fruit salads being sold by white hospital gowned women, speaking to an old lady who seemed to still live in memories of a trip to Paris many years ago.



Flying over... hundreds of miles of rivers and jungles at which time, any time one could presumably drop into a quiet of toucans, insects and possibly local people with black fringes and red face paint, or possible a jungle book She Kahn?

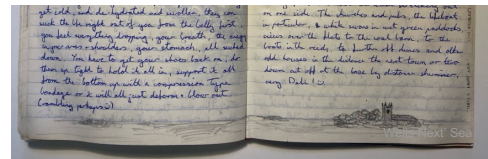
... Well the jungle has run out, maybe not run out but has been splashed with the squares of man's fields, stricked with the long muddy clay lines of his roads. It happened first with the rivers. I noticed the white bow line of a boat making its way upstream... That must be how it starts, humans making their way along the arteries to establish muddy cleared camps along the banks, and from there inwards, along tracks soon to become throughfares and in the end roads.

- Seeing life from different lenses, from shoeshine boys on the streets to the scale of the jungles and man and progress' ingress. I love flying and the perspective it gives you (not to mention the time to yourself to think and write).



Reading The Moor's Last Sigh (Salman Rushdie). It mentioned a nice concept on the fall of fear... It has nothing to do with courage. It is driven by something much more straight forward. The simple need to get on with your life. I stopped being afraid because my time on was limited (more or less) and funnily enough he quotes Joseph Conrad "I must live until I die". I can feel the same sorts of things happening. Fear of failure, of rejection, of embarrassment. Life is too short.

- Back in London, the English number plates sticking out to consign South America to 'a million miles away and another time' away.
- Justin and Rosetta had arranged to take us straight up to Thornum, how beautiful and how good are they

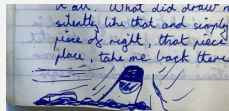


...a dream ...a helicopter view ...[and what] we first thought was a wolf but as we got closer it was big brown fluffy haired dog. ...it was tired and hunted. Three men finally got a hold of it and two of them were about to kill it, ...the third managed to argue otherwise and as they forced its mouth closed, put a gladwrap type ribbon around him to keep his [it] shut. I felt so relieved.

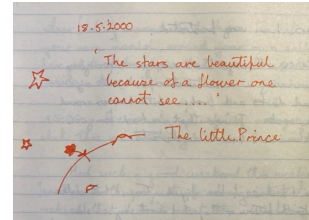
- Back in Melbourne, to that life and that little dog (Flash). Feeling like big parts of my brain are being shackled or cut away, denied as I need to apply them to work...

Good being back [after the holiday], but this work thing... it threatens to take over everything. Time, all my energy, all my thoughts.

I keep thinking back to that night camped in the rain just down the hill from the youth hostel on the Inca trail. Big heavy drops of rain, sitting up by the door to the tent, wetness heavy all around, and sleeping, and looking out to the terrace and the other tents and the odd bit of lightning. The world felt very small and warm, a lovely place to be starting out on. Why can't I live in that moment, hold on to that hope, that calmness of being, observing, it's just so beautiful not to be running for sleep, away, just to have the time, the whatever it is drawing you to sit up and watch.



- I like sitting alone in cafes (...and second hand bookshops).
- I want life to be a beautiful experience, a romantic darkness, there is a universal cosmos out there to be tapped into.
- Lots of thinking about life. The closest I have come to sensing insight is through Tao. "Something there is" gives me comfort.



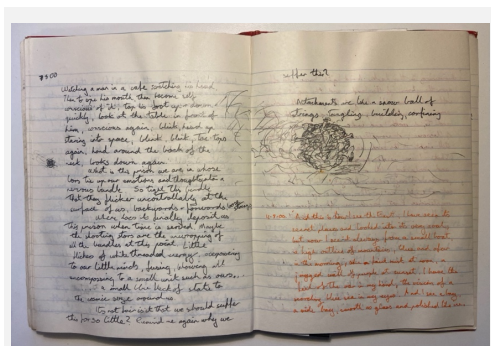
...even reality is short term and delusional ...in fact delusion may be the only way around reality to the bigger circles we look for.

- I enjoy walking out into the cold at night to look at the stars, I also enjoy getting into the city early in the morning and experiencing it as it is waking up.
- Arranging overnight (moonlit) hikes up Mt Stirling. Epic outings.



...and after a thousand starbursts I discover this is also affected, twisted, unreal, Nirvana itself is polluted?

[We] had a bit of a cry on Friday night. "Why can't we run away from all of this". ...there will be a running away sometime.



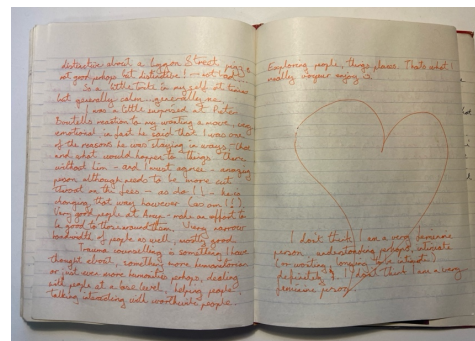
Watching a man in the cafe scratching his head. Then to wipe his mouth, then become self-conscious of it, tap his foot up and down quickly, look at the table in front of him, conscious again, blink, head up staring into space, blink, blink, to tops again, hand around the back of the neck, looks down again.

What is this prison we're in whose bars tyre power emotions and thoughts into a nervous bundle. So tight this bundle that they flicker uncontrollably at the surface of us, backwards and forwards, loose strings.

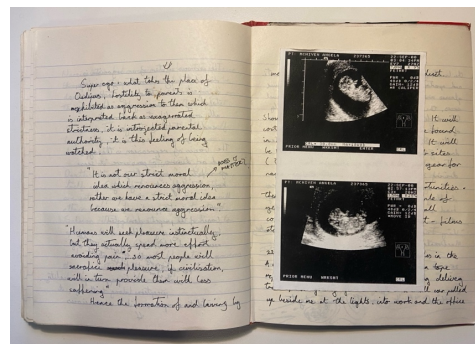
Where does it finally deposit us this prison when time is served. Maybe the shooting stars are the unwrapping of all the bundles at this point. Little flickers of white threaded energy, overpowering to our little minds, fusing, blowing all-encompassing to a small unit such as ours. Doctor dot a small blue Fleck of static to the cosmic size around us.

It's not fair is it that we should suffer this for so little? Remind me again why we suffer this?

- Looking for alternatives to work. Talking to Peter Bowtell at work about a move and having him tell me I am one of the reasons he is staying!
- Reading Freud and Jung. Some scary disturbing stuff in there.



- Still feeling the need to spend time with others talking about life. More female than male I must admit but platonically.
- Battling at work and tired. Can't physically put in the hours to get things to work.
- Questioning how effeminate (feminine?) I am. Concluded not very.



- A new arrival expected apparently :) !

Books read/Plays/Music/Movies watched:

- The Moor's Last Sigh, Salman Rushdie
- The Bhagavad Gita
- Don Quixote
- The Travels of the Beagle, Darwin
- About the Amazon
- The Tao of Pooh
- Freud for beginners
- Slavs Snowshow
- American Beauty
- The Legend of 1900
- The Castle
- Notting Hill
- Prince Charming Story
- Chasing Buddha
- Gladiator

Diary 12

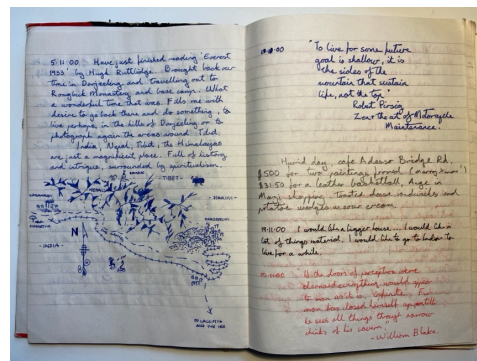
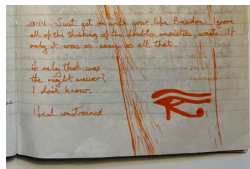
October 2000 – December 2002

Melbourne (w Accident)

- Saw some footage of a bad motorcycle accident (can't say wasn't warned for what is about to come).
- Reading on Buddhism & Hinduism (Bhagavad Gita), Islam...

...If it feels right, if it feels true, if there is some inclination, purity, something fitting about it, do it.

...[Better] a blind man in a dark room with his eyes closed, feeling sensing his way, rather than the blind man in a dark room with a torch, trying to pick out what he will never see under cold light anyway?



Reading Everest 1933 bringing back memories and yearning for that part of the world, ago.

- Fell asleep in a bean bag in our small front garden and was woken by a neighbour Nisha smiling at me. Nice.
- Rescued a baby possum from the park.
- Reading more on Haiku (liking it). Contradiction, comparison, association, seasons etc. but above all the moment.

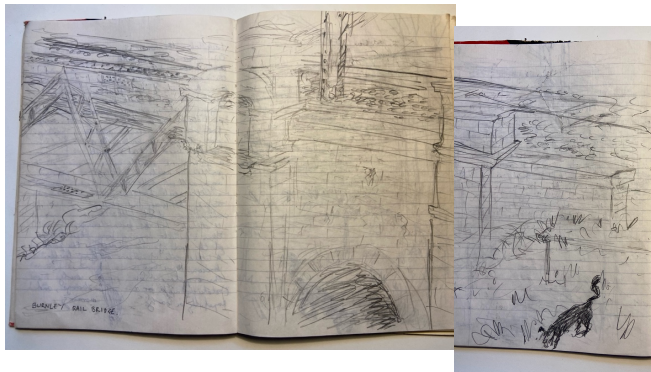


Cockatoos making havoc, generally above Reichard & Jacques place

- Still hating the idea of work.
- Appreciating the park and Australiana aspects of living in Park Street.

You can spend all your money on roads and housing and on the poor, but in the end you simply find yourself needing more money.
Real civilisation starts in the mind.

Prof. Mohsen Zahran, architect & city planner on the new Alexandria Library in Egypt.



- Chris Hocking leaving a note with his flatmate saying you won't see me again. Everyone fearing the worst. Turned up after a few months, an awkward coming out.

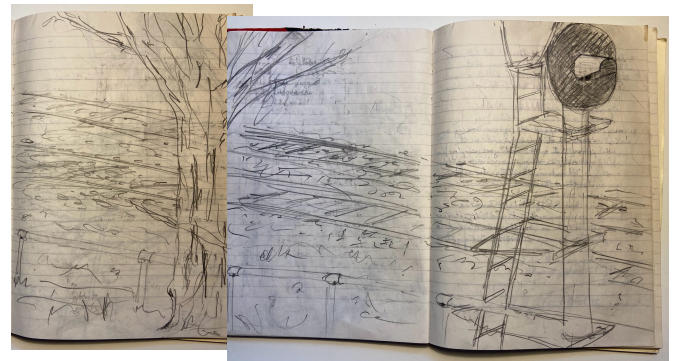
Francis of Assisi seems to be popping up a bit at the moment. [In] Tenzing Palmo, the picture of him we unknowingly bought back from Bolivia, and Wilson of the Antarctic. I like the idea of the way with animals also, suggests a naturalism, something born from the old earth and not the new.

I have been taking the odd cold shower to take me back to Torres del Paine and Nepal :).

- Questioning things I can't reconcile from first principles about life. Love for a single person, working for a living in a house, on office, a town even, a whole singular framework.

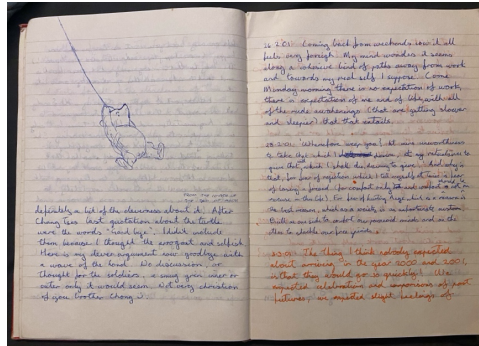
...what would life be like in that world. A world of superheroes. Good and evil still I suppose on a higher heat searing of existence.

- Enjoying the different feelings infused through different language at Opera at the Markets. Hot blooded heat of the Italian, romanticism of the French. Slightly scared by I Still Call Australia home...



Burnley Rail Bridge

- Organised a work trip to the prom, fantastic.
- Enjoying interactions with others on a spiritual life level, still yearn for that intimacy.
- Feeling spiritually happy at the moment, perhaps in the wake of the Prom trip.
- Waking from a dream with a jolt, being hunted, Jade (Leonic's daughter?), having died, a feeling of a scream.



[Endings are not great], with endings come expectations and disappointment.

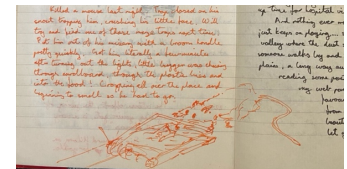
Learnings from The Cup (Tibetan Film Festival)

- Feeling the attraction to sailing. Telemachus sailing off in a rowing boat on the 'wine dark sea' (*The Odyssey*), Indian fishing boats in Goa, the Geek islands, the Shoals of *The Perfect Storm*.
- Enjoying life with Ange in Richmond, videos and Flash on Saturday night, also enjoying culture, Buena Vista Social Club, Inka Marka, Banjo Patterson.... Enjoyed Mozart & Hayden at a string quartet.
- Heavy dreams of petrol fires, started and having to be put out by me, no without some anxiety. Sudden awakenings.
- Recognising some of work is good as it forces me to grow. Also not liking work as it makes me someone I am not!
- Liking LaMama's vibrant raw feeling & emotion, not polished or for profit, alive and good.

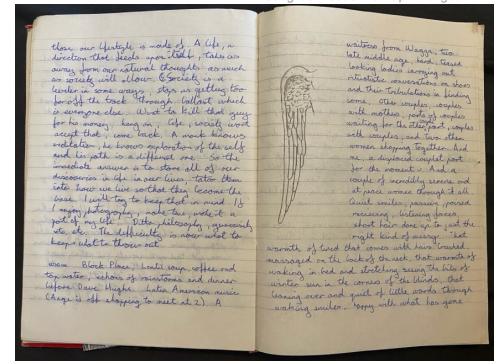
Not believing in the institution of marriage but partaking as it works in practice.

Believing in the potential of drugs but not partaking because they don't work in practice (opening doors perhaps but destroying in the process)

- Tub (Ian)'s dad Merve passing away and the writing of speeches and breaking down (Joshua who was grandson to Merve), at the funeral.
- Read some old diaries and noticed I have less of a fascination, fixation on death than I used to.
- Too easily in and out of love (attachment feelings to people)?



Caught a mouse in a trap – not good.



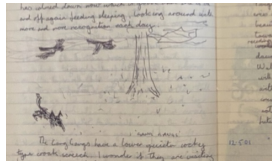
Stella's arrival 2:31pm 30/4/01.

The night before my senses were as if tenfold, wrote about the stars.

Mars the closest it had been in ten years almost a disc, others flashing vivid red, green, white.

Heavy mist morning and beautiful sunset on her first day, the nurse in fact telling us to remember to say this to you...

- First days and weeks with Stella beautiful. Gang Gang (black) cockatoos in the park seeming to be there to welcome her to the world.

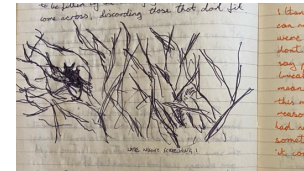


- Zippping Stella up in my jacket on the couch watching movies...

[Every now and then] a lone card will turn up in your life. This one on the way home from an *under the sea* party at Andy & Mozz's ... (Stella was a starfish). ... I am a big believer that you should pick them up and given them to someone close to you, or to put them in your diary for safekeeping :). [Maybe] I am not a big believer but it is a nice idea [and I do it]



- Very busy at work, home at 7, bed at 9+/-, broken sleep, spells on the computer, up at 6, work at 8 and all over again. Enjoying it.



Screaching in the night...

Three months and one week later. A paused second, a car, the feeling of the cold road under my back and a body in shock.

What do you remember? I remember paramedics leaning over my face.

Do you remember anything else? I remember Christmas in the hospital quite well. I remember a black BMW pulling out in front of me.

No one could believe the amount of morphine that pumped into me. Truckloads apparently and that's where all of my dreams come from, bringing an early Christmas and substituting black BMW's for white Pintaras. The vision of the angelic paramedic was real, I think.

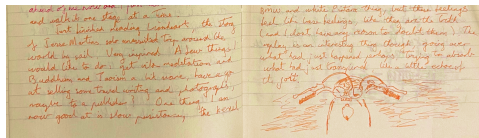
A few small memories came back later talking to Ange. Telling her to keep Stella away because of the risk of disease from the hospitals. ...but really that is about it. Ange said she got me to move my hands and head and fingers, [then] they took me away then to surgery and sedated me for what ended up being seven weeks.

Through a broken leg, broken wrist, broken ribs on both sides, a collapsed lung, [punctured lung, bruised spleen], ARDS (adult respiratory distress syndrome), I tracheotomy, dislocated shoulder, and if that wasn't enough, a cut pair of jeans and greenstone necklace, inflicted apparently on the ride to the Alfred.

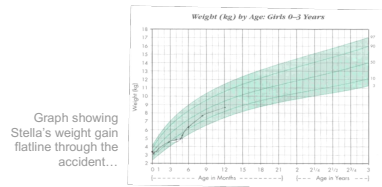


Little Stell, I hope I give you all that you deserve.

- So many vivid dreams from the accident. Crazy, weird, evil, people I know and people I don't, mixed up with bits of television worming their way in, I think as they would have been on for the nurses caring for me 24/7.
- Forty days (and nights :) of coma. Over 100 x-rays. Learning to walk again. Tubes and trachys hospital and rehab.
- Reading email Ange kept I seemed to have bad days on weekends, perhaps when the regular nurses were off?
- Calling out in my sleep in the night in rehab ended up with me in my own room.



Stella is fantastic, I lie awake at night sometimes worried that someone will come in and steal her. Would adopt her as their own. We would be forgotten memories and she would never know how much we loved her.
...breaks my heart to think about these things.
Perhaps I do it just to feel that love. It is a beautiful wonderous thing :).



- Having Stella has bought on a whole lot of other ways to feel emotional, vulnerable. Your being invested in others you would do anything for but not necessarily always be able to protect.

Saw a documentary on the holocaust the other night. Terribly sad. Saw a little girl that looked just like stella, staring out of a black and white photograph with a striped cap on, her eyes wide open with that look of taking everything in, a look of wondering what was going on, a look of trying to understand. Innocent and at the mercy of things, events and people around her. I have seen that same look on stella, breaks your heart knowing what was going on.

- Extremes are borne from extremes...

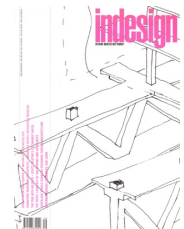
I think sometimes I would like to go back there, to all the dreams and ICU where all you had to do was exist. I'm not sure I like this other world where there are things expected of you.

- Not feeling strong. Few little things, rib pain, shoulder etc. Scared to go back in and start messing with things... Going to let it settle for a bit.
- Every now and then I see an image that will remind me of ICU. A calm aquiline face for some reason. Or a sound (bellbirds by the Yarra). It is like another world living inside of me seeping through with the tiniest prompt.
- Went into get my ribs looked at, ended up in tears and unable to get myself together enough to even speak. Its highly emotional heart felt shit anything to do with the accident...

Art produces ugly things which frequently become beautiful with time. Fashion on the other hand produces beautiful things which always become ugly with time.

Jean Cocteau
French poet, artist, designer...

- Working hard on Yarra's Edge. Asia Centre sketch used in InDesign magazine :).
- Observing that I wasn't quite all there in going back to work after the accident. Physical and mental are more connected than I thought.
- There is something else, feel there is a *real time* Bren, and a *3 month moving time average* Bren, ...a little weird?



Singapore Opportunity:

For	Against
Adventure & Travel	Stress and hard work
Ange's study (work)	Loss of contacts
Home help for Stella	Away from family
More responsibility	
Change and refresh	
+\$25 to \$30k	
Free couple of years on home loan	
Last chance before Stella at school	

There is a rally this Friday night against detaining refugees. I am going to try and go. I think it is disgusting and it makes me ashamed to live in this country.

- Work (Yarra's Edge) hard, feel let down and stuck with it, angry and feel like running away and crying.
- Still enjoying *The Big Issue* street poetry.
- Nana Gopperth is dying. She once told me she would like to die with a bullet in her head. Think of her nature as Bodhisatv-ic.

The world will be incrementally colder without you Nana.

Love Bren.

- Weighing up whether to get the rod out of my leg and risk DVT on way to Sg, or wait a few years and have a harder operation...

Look[ing] down at my right hand, the big pink scar on my right hand ...instantaneously thought about ...the rheumatism I will probably suffer when I get older.

And suddenly time overtook me. I looked at my watch, and it was the watch of an old man, a relic. [and I] inconsequential, not important, just a few lines, memories in someone's book, maybe a family history, maybe this diary, maybe not.

It just keeps on going, love and happiness and life, and sad nostalgic passing. All the more reason to concentrate on the love and happiness and life I guess. I just I'm happy to be here to see it come and go, come and pass... I guess?

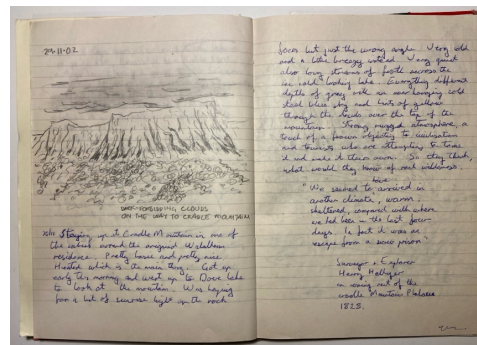
- A weeks work in Singapore to test the waters. Stayed at The Plaza Beach Rd, searching for milk, wastewater smells similar to HK, and echoes of Joseph Conrad :). Cool.
- Need to go under general anaesthetic. ...which I don't like, I have a lot to live for at the moment.

A few times I have felt that I should not be here. This time is a time granted to me out of kindness, a little longer on this earth with Stella and Ange just because I want it means so much to me and I want it so badly.

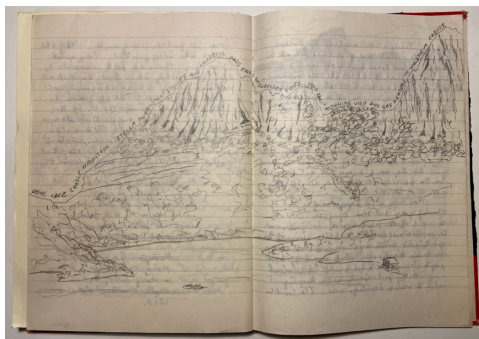
Thoughts in Singapore. Not lost on me that it is a turnaround from teenage Bren who used to think of suicide.



Removed and separated!
Feels good it is just me now,
getting better on my own.
No more metal, no more
operations, Just Ange, Stella
and me.

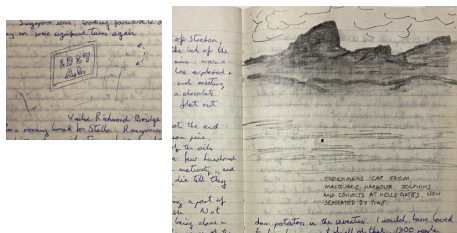


A week in Tassie before Singapore. Dark foreboding clouds on the way to Cradle



Dove Lake, Cradle Mountain. Stella throwing stones and grabbing dad's ears on shoulder rides. Cold early morning visit and gas heaters in Waldheim cabins.

- Joining tours which feels a bit strange. The Franklin dam protests in the seventies, I would have loved to have been a part of all of that.



Richmond Bridge (1827 A.D. and Frenchman's cap from Macquarie Harbour. Dolphins and convicts at Hells Gates, now separated by time.

Books read/Plays/Music/Exhibitions/Movies watched:

- Buddhism, Ronald Fussey (Buddhist Society)
- Everest 1933, Hugh Rutledge
- Islam
- Edward Wilson of the Antarctic
- The Odyssey, Homer
- The Story of my Experiments with the truth, Ghandi's autobiography
- Lionheart, Jesse Martin
- A Passage to India, E.M.Forster
- A Room with a View, E.M.Forster
- Elena and the Nightingale (La Mama)
- Opera at the Markets (Compilation)
- 2001 A Music Odyssey (Australian String Quartet)
- Spring Flowers Autumn Grass, The spirit of nature in Asian Art.
- Fight Club
- Man on the Moon
- Himalaya
- My Own Private Idaho
- The Cup (Tibetan Film Festival)
- Memento
- Saving Private Ryan

Diary 13

December 2002 – April 2005

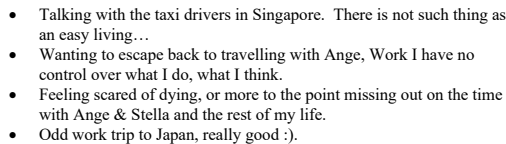
Singapore

I've found that luck is quite predictable.
If you want more luck, take more chances,
be more active, show up more often.

Brian Tracey
Author...

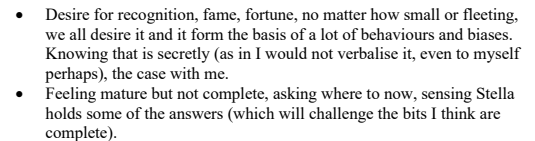
- Singapore market depressed, harder and tougher than Melbourne, what the hell am I doing here, feel like everyone else can do a better job than I can. What to do – keep pressing on!
- Getting a Taoist fortune (from back when travelling) translated – good health, well being, good business dealings... and also that I had a guardian Angel looking over me. I have always felt the guardian Angel thing. Nana Gopperth used to tell me that.

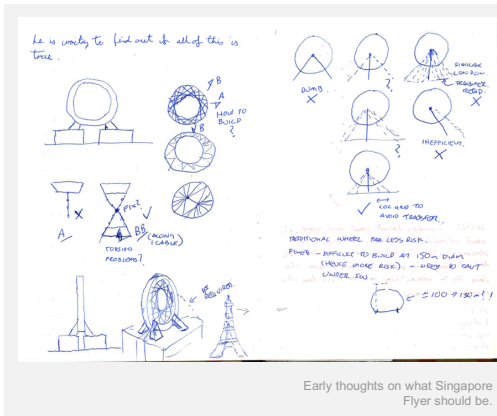
- Back to not sleeping at night,
turning things over in my mind,
not turning off.



- Serious concerns over office finances in Singapore, volume of new work needed etc. Questioning whether I will make the two years.
- SARS is happening at the moment. 93 infected and 4 dead in Singapore, more in Hong Kong and China.... Feel it is an over-reaction. Perception of risk increases with distance

...[do people peak], or do they just get tired like I [think maybe I] am.





- Fear of failure comes from my sense of self-worth residing in others and not me.
- Trying for a second child unsuccessfully. Stories in press of tragic deaths involving children – affecting me (recall lighting a candle and observing silence whenever they come up).

21-5-03 Brendon doesn't want hard work. He wants adventure and travel. Brendon is an observer in this life not a leader or a doer. He does not enjoy being a slave or being deceived. He does like to produce things however. He does like recognition and praise.

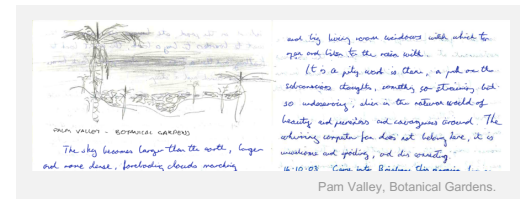
- Still dealing with lawyers on accident discussing 9.7% injuries rounded down to 0!
- Regular entries of things to do tomorrow in respect to work.
- I am an excessive worrier and have trouble keeping things out of my mind.
- Stress trying to manage Singapore Flyer design between London and Singapore. Reliant on at Dallard and others...

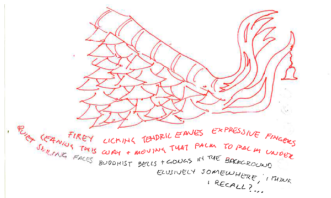
- Four am diary entries unable to sleep for worry, mapping out what I need to do workwise.
- Work stressful but good financially (personally), leadership back and forth trying and boring.

I live with this totally unreasonable fear that maybe one day if I fail, things won't be. Everyone's confidence in me and love for me, including my own will collapse around me and fall away in ruins. At least that is what I'm guessing my unreasonable fear is. Have never seen it face to face, looked it in the eye and seen its potential reality, I am too scared to. I keep avoiding it's gaze by working harder and stressing more.

Think this was the period when I had the odd panic attack, lying on bed in spare bedroom struggling to breathe...

- Made Chair of the management executive at work. Decisions on staffing on my mind...
- Working a lot of weekends, odd weekend off riding trains and buses with Stella.
- Enjoying the tropics, thunderstorms and lush jungle, Conrad connotations.
- I love the feeling of salt drying in my hair after an ocean swim.
- Still feeling the need for intimacy. Would like to experience falling in love again while respecting where I am in life (married with a kid)! Desire that getting to know another intimately!
- Questioning why I am away from nature and travelling, the things I love.





First impressions Thai roof eaves...

- Feeling very thirty something (36) peeling off the layers of myself as a young man. Earning money, making a way in the world. Feeling I need to weave more of life into my life...
- Noticing what an ugly race Europeans are, not for the first time.... Too much superficial stuff gone wrong, make up, flash cars etc...

Our ancestors world was alive, and they were as deeply woven into the fabric of it, the living and dying of it, as any of the plants they gathered or the animals they hunted. The world spoke to them and they learned to listen, to enter the conversation, to find the path of least disturbance through the great interwoven web of life - the trails that allowed the tribe to survive, or even thrive without out-growing, the supplies it's environment provided.

Gordon McClelland
 on Shamanism.

- Up every morning at 5:00am worrying about making the office work. Planning different scenarios for me/us as a family in my head.
- Seeing a lot of horrible things in the world, animal cruelty, poverty and disease. Have to reconcile with giving to a sponsor child through Plan and concentrating on our little family, trying to provide for them.

In [] reality, I just want someone to say it will all be alright. I want someone to give me a magical serene answer which will let me just live and enjoy without having to work hard or worry. I want to go back to my childhood when that was a reality, but that is growing up isn't it. And that is now gone not to return.

Perhaps I need to stop and listen in case I can catch a glimpse of what is to come, or where it will come from ...perhaps.

Thoughts of what to do with my life

- Started Theosophy classes in Singapore. Combo of meditation and study of the Bhagavad Gita etc...
- Recalling the total nothing, blackness of the coma. All the memories and dreams were after and around, the coma an immense black nothing. Feeling the afterglow of that break from the world.

Ewan arrives, 26.5.04, 10:03pm, 3.73kg, 53cm

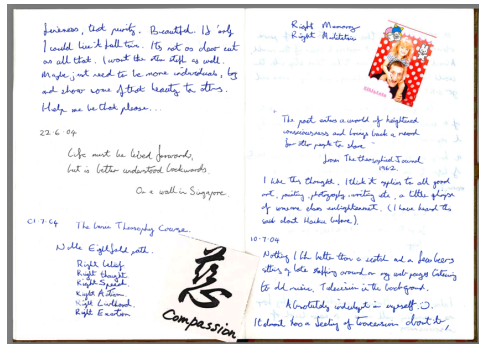
Came into the world strong, crying, blinking and stretching. A heavy atmospheric night, tropical thunder as a backdrop. Ewan at one and at peace.

...What does the world think of Ewan. Saturday night was a wild night of howling winds, pelting drumming rain and constant thunder and lightning. The world was revolting and flexing its muscles. Ewan on the other hand was just himself.

...Perhaps when the world welcomed Stella it welcomed her as a daughter. Someone to care for and love, someone to interact with.

When the world welcomed Ewan it stood back a bit with its bristles up. It sensed something. Not something evil or bad necessarily but something as strong, as independent and free willed as itself.

- Observing life is good. But sensing there is also more to come and wanting it all!
- Easing off the philosophy and theosophy stuff as it feels too complicated. Feel answers lie somewhere simpler, in nature or in-between.
- Feelings of guilt in how lucky I am. Maybe the last 10-15 years of your life should be given over to helping others...
- Missing Ange and the kids when they are away.
- Twenty year Glenny High reunion. None of the base personalities had changed much (including mine), people fell straight back to the old groups.



Late Friday night watching music, scotch in hand ... candle burning in the corner.

This is me, travelling and taking photos through Torres del Paine, that is me. Being strong and outgoing and hard nosed running an office. That is not me.

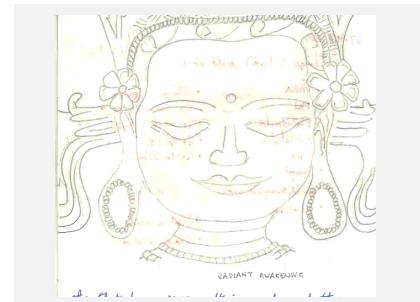
Loving Ange and Stella and Ewan, that is me.

...It is not as clear cut as all of that. I want the other stuff as well.

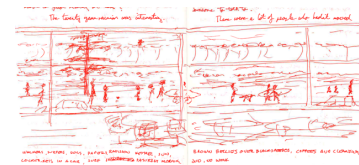
Just watched a show on cancer patients ...shit.

Life is rarely a gentle end.

- Trip into JB to do some shopping. Private developments in a sea of poorly funded infrastructure. All feels pretty trivial with over 100,000 dead in the Tsunami. Could easily have been us. Trying to reconcile how good life here is with the bloated corpses and destroyed families...

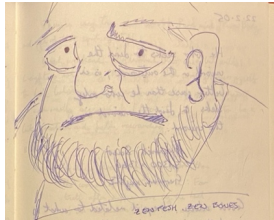


I sense there is something out there I am not sure what. Something soulful and spiritual waiting in the wings. I feel it when I am doing some photography, or listening to music, or taking the time to do a sketch, or just sit and observe the world around me.



View to Manly beach coming down to breakfast for a work event in Sydney, so Australian.

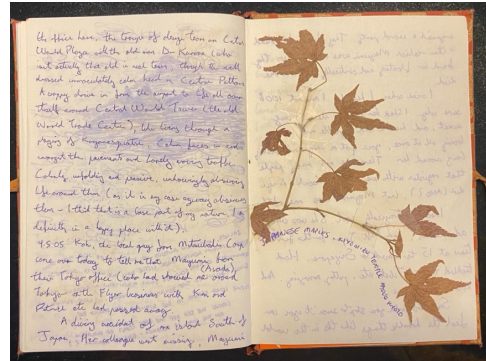
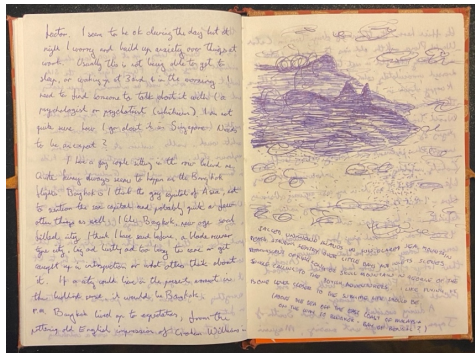
- Observing how everyone is so connected to the reality around them in Sydney. Different to Singapore where it seems hard to find reality at times.
- Trip to Japan. Off searching for internet cafes in the cold of the night to send work emails (in a kimono top branded with the hotel name!).
- Stella getting into Christmas, Ewan exploring things with all his might, will study from an inch away often falling onto it through lack of body control.
- Watching Michael Palin's Himalaya, what we did was so much better. Feels a little like flirting with nirvana, dipping in and out of this connection with the world.



- More contemplation. Of Taoism and Buddhism. Feeling like I have known the bits of peace I am searching for in the world but not the whole...
- Feeling depressed by the stories of atrocities in the news involving children.

He who seeks to find the inward in the outward, is in better case than he who only seeks to find the inward in the inward.

Heinrich Suso
c1300-1366
German Mystic



Japanese maples,
Kiyomizu Temple above Kyoto..

- Was told today that Mayumi, the girl from MHI, who was a part of the team on the Flyer and showed us around Tokyo, and whom I really quite liked, had died in a diving accident. She was adventurous, left Japan for the first time at fifteen, had travelled in Tibet etc. She had gone out searching for her missing boyfriend who also died.... I cried when I heard.

Sometimes when you stop to sense it, you can feel the horrible things [] in this world.

The rape, the tragic, the injustices, a million plights in it all. And it all starts to bear down on you like a weight, like a sense of overwhelming pressure. It doesn't buckle or break you because it comes from all sides. It just compresses and stifles you and weighs heavily on your heart, the horrible things that happen every day to people the world over.



Books read/Music/Exhibitions/Movies watched:

- Kim, Rudyard Kipling
- If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him
- Shamanism, Gordon McClelland
- Zen Flesh, Zen Bones
- Singapore Symphony Orchestra 25th Anniversary Concert
- Botero Exhibition, Singapore Art Museum
- A Brilliant Mind.
- The Taste of Others (French movie)
- Titanic
- Before Sunset
- Himalaya, Michael Palin
- The Polar Express
- Adaptation
- Wiggles Movie

Diary 14

April 2005 – December 2006

Singapore (with Silk Road)

- Reflecting on the last two years having been hard, a struggle. Having said that I am happy with who I am and not unhappy with where I am.



...and where I was, was in Bali, Ubud

- Also reflecting on the Bali Bombings and interplay of Balinese poverty and Australian culture in interplay. Writing good intentions in my diary telling myself, one day...
- Work difficult. Having to take responsibility for other's mistakes, could do with a month off to sort myself out.

I need a sense of work, and creation, and experience again. A project, some writing, poetry maybe.

- Knowing I talk too much (on a personal level), wear my heart on my sleeve, am an idealist., I like to experience.
- Beating myself up for silly mistakes at work (forgetting to check the limit of liability made its way into the Flyer contracts). Weighing whether I should resign or stick it out.
- Battling with truth at the moment. Tends to make things too black and white, right and wrong. Also feels like a burden I need to get out there so as to simplify my life.



- Simon & Margo staying with us. Simon more religious than I expected prostrating in front of Buddha statues etc. A little surprised, mainly as Buddhism to me is open eyed philosophy based not ritualistic.

Some people are active forces in this world, changing, manipulating, affecting, I am not. I am happy to be along for the ride and the experience. Life at times becomes the song that carries you away. But isn't the words, or the meaning, it is the final feeling [you get from it], that feeling of detachment, of closed eyes, drifting with the current, resting and being.

And it is all good.

- Few wins, the Flyer, Buildings Group finances, going for the odd run, feeling good about life.
- Got angry with Stella over something. Underlying stress from work... I am sorry Stell and will try to be a better dad in the future).
- Taking the odd Stillnox tablet to help sleep. Working 60-70 hrs/pw.
- Drugs in the news, Michelle Leslie, The Bali Nine. The Bali Nine arrests came from one of the dads tipping of AFP, and it getting to Indonesian authorities. Thoughts about how horrible he must feel...

Ewan's favourite toy at the moment is the little diecast blue Comfort taxi.

- Stella asking me what. I wanted to be when I grew up. Told her I am grown up and an engineer designing buildings. She wants to be a clown to make people laugh. Also got let in on the secret that she wants to marry me... :).

I really like flying
("slipping for a moment
into the present").

I feel very at ease with my understanding of the world,
however would not say I understand or am in control
of it. The world was not meant to be like that.

- Still working hard, When will this feeling of tiredness end, this feeling of being on the back foot...?

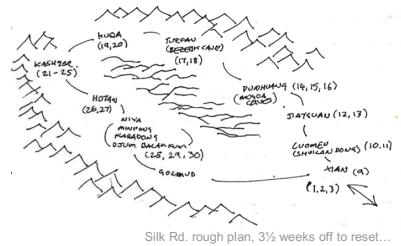


...Absent minded scribble?

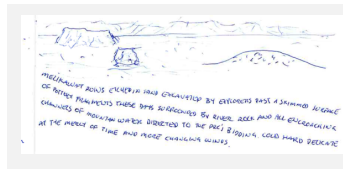
- Resigned from work (Mar 06). Too much with David Tse in there in the mix. Lots of people trying to talk me out of it. First and foremost I need a rest.
- Lots of people telling me they don't want me to leave. No one saying please stay, or you have done a good job...



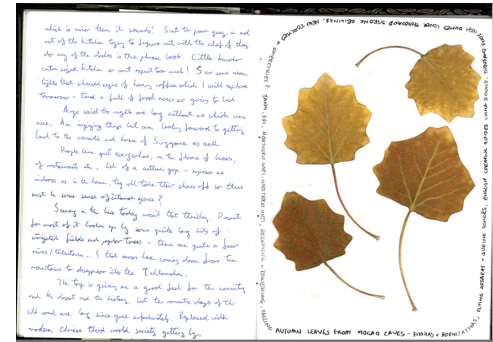
- Kids enjoying growing up. Trips to Sibei (island off SE Malaysia), hor



- Travels around the Silk Rd. Fantastic!
- In touch with Ange, misguided worried texts about Uighurs and kidnappings!
- Ange said nights are long without me which was nice.



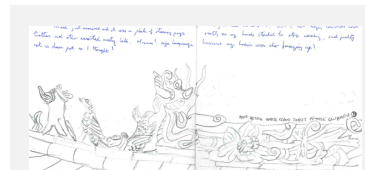
The inspiration for the trip, Yumenguan, Gade Gate.



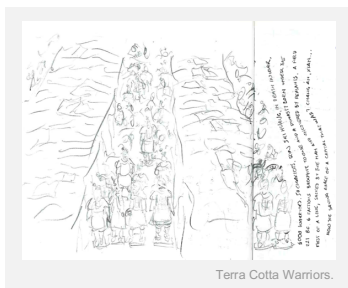
Autumn leaves from Mogao Caves.



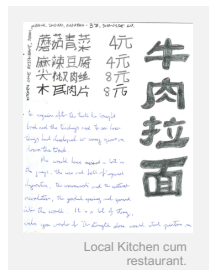
Shuilian Dong Temples, Gansu..



Roof detail White Cloud Taoist Temple, Lanzhao.



Terra Cotta Warriors.



- A large undercurrent of sex in the economy. Stories of women held in prostitution as collateral for loans, unrelenting phone calls at night in hotels, demure suggestive looks ambiguous enough to invite, a number left on a table. Directed particularly toward me as a westerner – pilgrimage cleansing nature of trip made in not hard to abstain.
- Back in Singapore, second half of time off with family, Island hopping around Thailand!



Island Hopping, Thailand, Tonsai, Koh Lanta, Koh Jum...

Books read/Plays/Music/Movies watched:

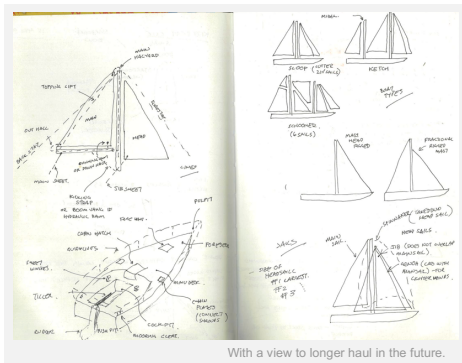
- JFK's biography
- Ten Thousand Miles Without a Cloud
- The Satanic Verses, Salman Rushdie
- The Voyage of the Beagle, Charles Darwin
- Origin of the species, Charles Darwin
- Mao's Little Red Book (bits only)
- The Nightingale
- The Lion King
- David Yang monologue, The Esplanade, Sg.
- Joja Wendt (German Jazz musician – compliments Melchers at Jubilee Hall, Raffles).
- Monsters Inc.
- Crying out love in the centre of the world (Japanese).
- Cars.
- The Two Towers
- What Should I Do with my Life (movie? Series?)
- What's up doc, Barbara Streisand

Diary 15

December 2006 – August 2008

Singapore

- Competent Crew course - must get back into sailing. Crewing around Singapore, want to do more (ultimate goal long haul in mind).
- Spending proper unfettered time with Stella & Ewan a 'real high'.
- Back to work after two months break...
- I don't think I am that much smarter than the next person. I do think I am a little smarter though. I also think I am better adjusted and have a better view of reality.



I feel sometimes like my consciousness in this life is on and off. One moment I am sharp and focused and capable, the next I am vague, disinterested, slow and forgetful. And I start to wonder if it was the accident. Something that has left my head, my mind not quite right? And then I think back and I remember that it has always been like this...

It might sound strange but within myself I don't mind this at all. I have periods of startling insight and clarity. And other periods of wonderful dreaminess where I can feel things and life around me. It's just that it doesn't fit well into the rest of the world which demands constancy. And I end living in eternal fear that I will let someone on one side of the equation down terribly.

- Appreciating how beautiful Stella & Ewan are at the moment.
- Reading about dealing with adversity (how to deal with things falling apart). Learn to live with impermanence, address fears. Don't have much faith in these books...
- Eva our helper had a biopsy return positive for cancer, Cams Wedding, Ange pregnant, moving house, work full pelt, a lot going on.

Little Ewie was up at 5:00am this morning wandering around the house singing what Ange calls his whale song. A high pitched humming of some tune unrecognisable.

...He is good at the moment, not interested in television very much but prefers to make his own fun in little games he plays with himself around the place, usually at the fringes of all the other activity going on.

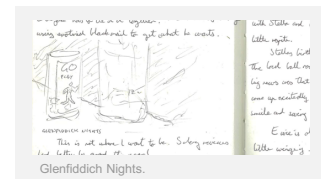
He loves Stella giving her hugs at his school when he sees her unexpectedly or in similar such situations. And Stella loves him back looking after him. She went digging around in the cupboards the other day and came put with a blanket to cover him when he fell asleep on the loungeroom floor.

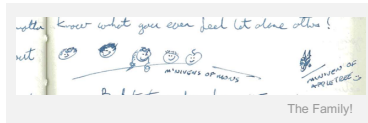
Freya arrives, 28 February 2007, 3.54kg.

Similar to Stella arrived just as I sat down to eat, dinner this time. Did a 180 degree turn at last moment coming out foot first. Swollen purple feet and lovely little round head. Only awake for a few hours a day and sucking her fingers as she used to do in the womb. Ange's mum visiting to help out around the house (very nice).

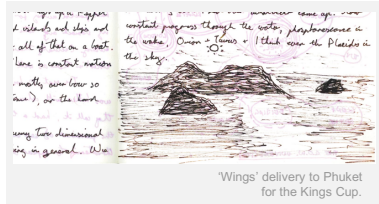
With stella it was the black cockatoos, Ewie, the wind, and Freya, the rain. A gentle heavy rain that lasted for days. On and off a little but almost solidly for the first 24 hours.

- Work is tough at the moment, Singapore Flyer rim just completed, Marina Bay Sands taking off, Macau Lucky 8 and others underway. Loving the kids though and managing time to sail etc. Ange very accommodating.





- Feeling a bit disassociated with things at the moment (after a work trip to London). Ange feels same, maybe thoughts of Melbourne looming in the future?
- Loving Ange & the kids
- Waking at two and three in the morning worried about work.
- Job offers and opportunities elsewhere but choosing to put my faith in Arup knowing them as a company.

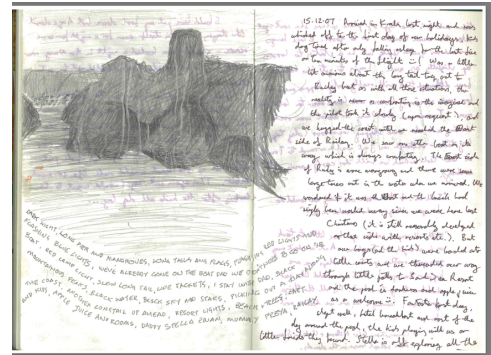


- In dark moments I have an unreasonable fear of losing one of the kids.

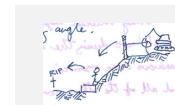
...I think back to the Alfred + the accident + thank my lucky stars I am alive to experience this (most other times are with the kids → Ewie and Freya in particular obviously neither of whom would be here right now.

Must say I truly feel happy. ...If you are only ever happy in retrospect, then this is one of those time you manage to stop and let joy catch you up a little, purely on its own momentum.

Written after enjoying time to myself and a Scotch
(Singleton), at a bar in Beijing.



- Rodney Thompson died, News Years Eve (41). Massive heart attack in the car park of Fountain Gate shopping centre after exercising, I think. All those years of grand final marathons...
- Seeing the massive change in Beijing. Advertising, cars and superhighways replacing rivers of bicycles and drab blues and greys.
- Appreciating the history of Beijing and Asia but missing Ange and the kids, too easy to work too hard.
- Lacking motivation, feeling unfit, hating working.



- Share market continues to tumble.
- I feel like I have been just managing to stay ahead of the white water career wise and am now a little out here on my own. Just. Through not wanting to give up. Where did all the others go?

Seems I sit in meetings not entirely on the same track as everyone else. But my mind is not quick enough and my speech not eloquent enough to be able to change anything. And I think others think the same thing but we all just keep on going. Some care more, others care less and I am not sure who wins the game at the end of the day?

Keep looking for that holy grail of understanding...

- P & J have split up again. P kept seeing the same girl, I can't quite understand it not that I would know.
- Their daughter E, Stella's friend came in and told J the other night that she could feel something bad was coming, breaks my heart hearing that sort of thing.



Drinks & dinner at the Colbar with Richard & Heather, and Peter B. Kids on the bikes, neighbours on the way home. Lisa + Will + Ned, Catherine, very nice.

The Colbar was an old colonial era bar in Woking Rd estate, wide verandas, basic English food menu and a selection of English beers. So much character, loved it.

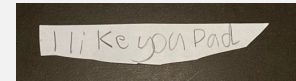
- Finally promoted to Director (Grade 9).

Have to get back in sync with the world - try some meditation and drink more water.

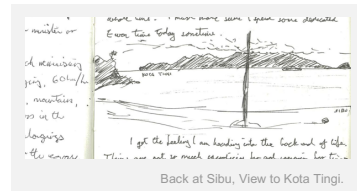


Stella is actually not bad in the water diving for rings etc. and playing about but is not so good on the different strokes. ...[School swimming carnival she would] struggle and struggle, spluttering along behind everyone else, the life guards helping her along a bit. We would be cheering and she would drag herself a bit bewildered and crest fallen from the end of the pool after all the others had gone back to the main rallying area. To her absolute credit she kept trying her best, a bit teary in between races, and trying on a life jacket at one stage to see if it helped.

...told her how much fun I had, had watching her and all the others, the loud music etc. I was so proud of her managing to struggle her way through the whole thing, building some character rather than just giving up...



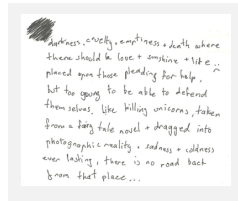
- Appreciating Ho Chong Leong as a senior local leader. Employed See Lin Ming and Chia Wah Kam. We (I) have done a good job of building that office for a long-term future I think...



'There are no accidents'
'There is no secret ingredient'

Kung Fu Panda

- More atrocities of kids dying through neglectful parents. A three-year-old arriving at a neighbour's door naked asking if he could live there. Oh my God, ...my stomach turns at the horror.



- Reflecting on a leadership course suggestion to change behaviours. Incredibly difficult to change nature, leads to all sorts of conflicts and mismatches, better to work with the strengths!
- Loving the house in Woking Rd. Exotic birdlife from the balcony.

What lessons do you learn from holding a shivering rabbit on the side of a (Mount) Elephant, that has had both it's eyes pecked out by the crows. Fear? ...trust also?

...I just get stuck on that awful initial image of the helpless rabbit in your arms not knowing what is going on.



Thoughts around a primary school camp experience.

- Got to go to Beijing Olympics and invite a guest (Tony Ang from Aedas). Bit of a political full circle after he threatened to remove Arup from MBS if David Tse was sacked at the start of the job, but then became pretty amiable.

Books read/Events attended/Movies watched:

- What to do When Things Fall Apart (Buddhist self help).
- The lost Men (Shackleton's story).
- Three Cups of Tea.
- Into the Wild (about Chris McCandless).
- The Secret Life of Salvador Dali (Dali's autobiography).
- Riding the Iron Rooster, Paulk Theroux.
- Olympic Swimming
- Lost in Translation.
- The Heart of Darkness (the movie).
- The Joy Luck Club.
- Midnight Cowboy.
- Blades of Glory.
- Queen Latifa.
- Wild Hogs.
- Baraka.
- Kung /fu Panda.

Diary 16

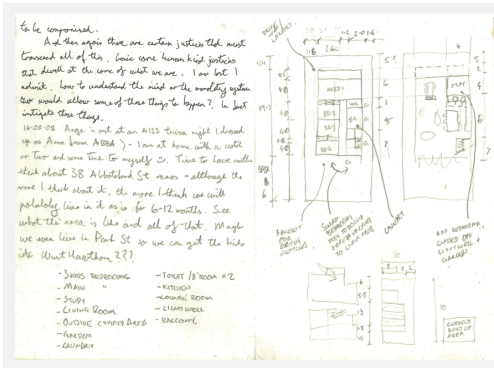
August 2008 – January 2009

Singapore

- Enjoyed the Olympics trip, hard not to think back over all that has happened since the accident and feel lucky to be here
- Stella played 'The Elephant Waltz' on piano at a school concert. One of the youngest and was cool as a cucumber.
- Ange worried about kids progression, Stella spelling and reading, Ewan physically compared to others his age.

Supposed to be on a time management course – arrived at the building to find out it is actually next month! Maybe I should book Hwei Nu (my secretary) into a time management course instead!

...took the opportunity for a Kopi and Kaya toast – very nice.
...especially with a bit of people watching.



- Boys day out with Ewan who I sense was feeling a bit middle child. Great fun touring city on a weekend.
- Thinking about the times we have been given things (film tickets at Lido in Venice). Must try to do more giving myself.
- Shares continue to fall – Sold many but not all keeping banks which I feel will recover, 150k down from their peak!
- Saw some suspicious people in East Coast and meandered over to speak to them worried the girl was being kidnapped. Turns out the guy was Singaporean and she was pretty clearly fresh from China going into sex work. Not great but a part of the scheme of things here...

Thoughts of our trekking in Tibet & Patagonia. Life at the moment is busy and rewarding but it doesn't have the depth of field of those days!

Wandering some of those times and feelings back....

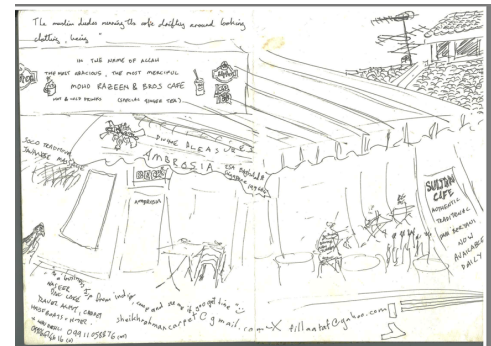
- Feels like world is melting down financially. In too deep to pull out, down overall 200k (50%).

- More fucking child abuse cases in the news (this time UK). Carers abused a little girl, keeping her in a cold bath in her own excrement clothed in a bin liner. Ended up beating her to death thinking she was the devil. How fucked up is all this... it affects me deeply.
- Hard times financially office wise, redundancies etc. Difficult but necessary.
- Looking after the kids while Ange in Singapore. Loving it.
- Peter Waugh (ex office leader) died. Reflections on his life, questionable sex choices (Aids?), protected and played but rarely gave. Never took either I suppose... RIP Peter.

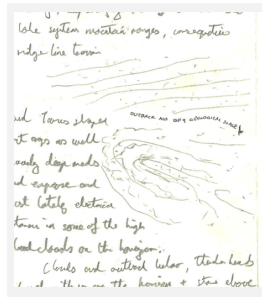
'A man who has had his way is seldom happy, for generally he finds that the way does not lead very far on this earth of desires which can never be fully satisfied.

Joseph Conrad (Chance)

Life is good at the moment. The days of not caring about death seem to have evaporated. I find myself loving the kids and Ange and looking forward to spending time with them.



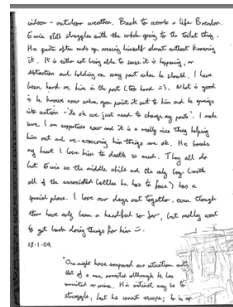
The Blue Café, Arab Street.



Finding it tough at the moment. I feel my life is not significant enough. I can sense a lot of the forces going on around me but am unable to deal with them or control them.

Books read:

- Chance, Joseph Conrad.



Diary 17

January 2009 – March 2009

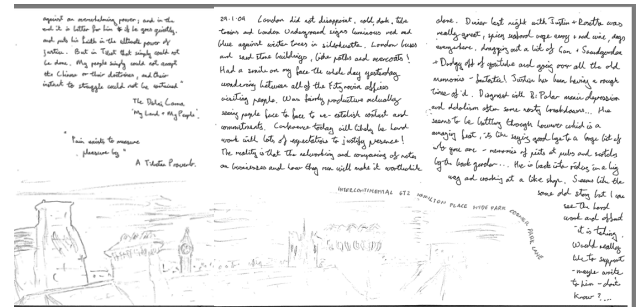
Singapore

- Strange mix of reading about the injustices of Tibet and the cultural revolution at country scale, and reflecting on BD and the running of the office.

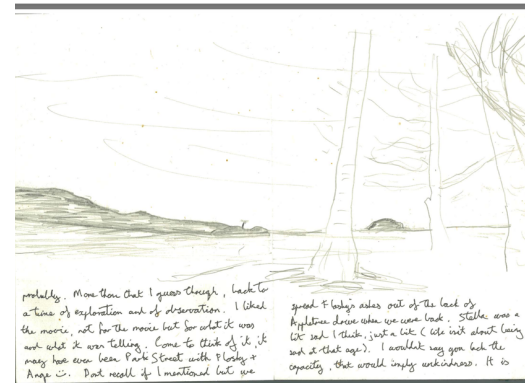
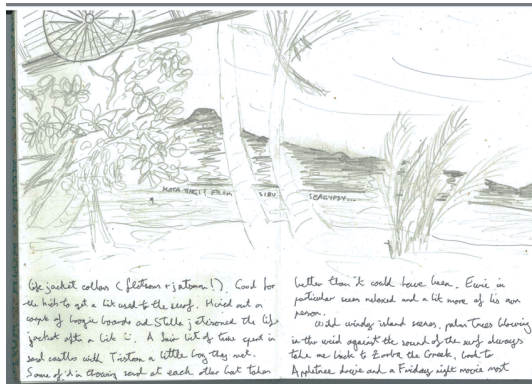
Just back from a day of taxis and planes and a dirty mix of banana palms shoddily built expressways and mopeds, marked by the lingering feeling of carsickness. Must say I am feeling a little bit lime what doesn't kill you makes you weaker at the moment.

Musings from a Jakarta trip (I think)

- Spread Flash's ashes behind Appletree Drive. Stella was a bit sad but only a bit (life is not about being sad at that age). I remember not being able to understand why mum used to cry saying goodbye to her mum on trips from NZ.
- Trip to London did not disappoint! Caught up with a lot of people
- A father threw his 4 year old girl off the West Gate Bridge yesterday. In front of his 2 year old and 7 year old subsequent to the finalisation of a custody battle (In which he was granted rights) ...My God.



Turn Blue (Iggy Pop), a double scotch on the rocks and nighttime (virtual night) on a plane, hmm... good for the soul, good for Bren :).



Kota Tingi from Sea Gypsy (Sibu).

- Thoughts of travel. Of the moments, Chile, NW China...
- Disappointed with literature on Taoism. I don't want the once or twice removed stuff, I want stuff from the original Tao Te Ching. What that means...
- Enjoying Japanese poetry, the succinctness and connection with what is real, contemporary and historical.

Ewan asked me today if everybody has to die. He doesn't want to die he told me.

- A level of unhappiness with Singapore and other things from my relationship bringing a touch of misery to everything.

Sitting on a couch alone out of the action at an Arup morning tea (feeling quite seedy after a night out with Patrick MacMahon). I had all of the 030 admin [staff] come over and sit next to me for a photo. Had a really warm sense of appreciation and belonging.

- Starting to write a bit of poetry.
- Worrying about Ewan and the pool, he pushes it to a point it is dangerous without knowing or realising. Don't know what I would do if I were to lose one of the kids.
- Still struggling with work. People seem so serious, machines with no downtime to be human, forgiving.
- Work
- Forums in Australia. People laughing too hard and being too proactive. Lots of cocks strutting their stuff. Weedles out the future leaders of Arup, unfortunately not me. You need to be a bit of a cock to succeed.
- Realising I am quite an emotive person. Realising that realising this could take me further down that road.

Books read / Movies watched:

- My Land My People, The Dalai Lama
- Tanikawa, A Modern Japanese Poet
- Slum Dog Millionaire

Diary 18

March 2009 – December 2010

Singapore

- Neighbour's (Sheela & George), dog Scully died, held a funeral in the grassy fields in the estate planting a frangipani tree on top of her. Stella marches in during ceremony to ask how did Scully die :)...
- Loving pushing the limits exercise wise (playing squash).

Still avoiding work – or being drawn to other things (anything but work!) it would seem. Am a bit stale – don't like the constant questioning of myself, my capabilities etc etc. I just want to be and to observe and to partake and not get to stressed and twisted and forced in the whole thing.



Sketchup model of 38 Abbotsford (rebuild)

- Thoughts of what it would be like back in Melbourne. Living in this house, lights on downstairs etc...
- The world is a much better place when viewed through music, you can distort the world as you see fit or need to. Life needs some denial of reality about it or nothing would ever get done!

- Joined British Club as a part of reduced rent and facilities at Woking Road.



030 results looking healthy, and view from work on a rainy day on the weekend – related?!

Inspired by Mao's last dancer, the resolute ambition and want to do something, the sacrifice. I remember that from sport, going out and doing stair training, or football training late at night in the cold and the wet, rejoicing in the sacrifice and enjoying the good will feeling towards oneself it gave. I need to get a bit of that sacrifice and discipline back in my life – right after I get over this cold!

A five year old girl beheaded at her own birthday party by her obviously deranged 23 year old brother. How are you supposed to deal with that? What is life like? – five years old when you are just starting out in life and everything should be new and exciting and magical.



- I am finding myself angry all the time at the moment. I am still not well, I am not able to keep up with email at work, I am constantly interrupted at work by people, and there are a lot of things not going my way...

- Was joined at half past three in the morning last night by Stella. Sat up and had a little chat while I did some work.
- Googling different types of religion, Dei-ism, Rational Christianity...
- Enjoying working with Antony Gormley on MBS sculpture. Remember him saying 'well let's do it now then' or something like that when I mentioned I wanted to do some long haul sailing...! Impressive.
- Saving money :).
- Lighting incense for the victims of terrible crimes I keep hearing about on the news.

Back at the blue café (Arab St.). I have grown to like this place. I like it because of its honesty. The old guys who serve have obviously been here since time indeterminate, they are a part of the fabric of the place, as solid as the bricks. There is no pleasing or impressing them, or upsetting by the same token I imagine, they just are, hold no grudges no discrimination against anyone, as unquestionable as the sea (that's a bit of victor Hugo shining through).

- Struck in surprise at how old I am – a full 20 years older than some of the graduates we are interviewing!

“Melancholy is a twilight state in which suffering transmutes into sombre joy. It is the enjoyment of being sad.”

Victor Hugo (The Toilers of the sea)

Melancholy has always had a special place in my life, in my psyche.

- Arguing in my relationship, all the unfinished piles of stuff get on my nerves. Cleaning house when I get home before going to bed. Mum actually told me last trip she didn't think she was coping. Don't know what to do about it.
- A lot of it spillover from challenges with Stella & Ewan. Both with issues which Ange is taking on herself. Doctors behaviours atrocious and not helping...

I seem to be involved in everything – it surprises me at times exactly how much and at what level I get involved – I don't know how I am doing it which is slightly worrying to tell you the truth.

- More horrific stories of child abuse through neglect. These things haunt me, hollow out my insides, I just can't reconcile it with reality.
- Shares recovering but an up and down ride.

Had a call ten minutes into my walk to work this morning to speak with Freya who was upset at my having to leave the house. Had a really good night with Ewan last night as well. Helping to restore my confidence a little...

Had a very good weekend with the kids. Gave them their trophies and certificates on Saturday – turned out very well – engraved the whole lot. Stella had the underwater swimmer award, Ewan rock climbing, and Freya beach combing. Ewan had a gold Oscar trophy, and Freya a fish – very cute. Neither of them let go of them for the rest of the weekend. I think / hope it has done a lot of good for Ewan's self confidence – he has been talking about it almost constantly. “I want to be a rock climber when I grow up”, asking how he can get more – brushing his teeth etc...

Some good times with the kids at the moment :).

"There are no rules for good photographs,
there are only good photographs"

Ansel Adams.

Good day with the kids today – down at Sentosa watching them play around the fountains at Palawan beach. Feeling pretty good about the little family at the moment – photo below was taken at the Arup family day at the zoo.



Stella set up a whole imaginary race this morning with a couple of advertising leaflets "there is going to be a race sat (start) today". She then had two little forms to fill out for circling the person you were going to support – Stella, Ewan, Freya. They all did four circuits of the house, Stella on her scooter, Ewan transformed as Alien X, and Freya on toot toot.

I blocked Stell for a bit in fun and then did the same to Ewan when it looked like she wouldn't win, but she let Ewan win anyway.

Kids are just so good at the moment.

- Jacob (Beck & Micks son) diagnosed with epilepsy last week. Beautiful boy, seems so unfair.
- Had first red meat steak in 15 years...

A photograph of a piece of white paper with handwritten text in black ink. The text reads: "A rope is going to get today". The handwriting is somewhat cursive and informal.

One person can't be expected to take on thus much surely. I am going back and forth over the edge, into paranoia and out of. I want to scream for help, I want it to stop, I am not this strong, have not the judgement to deal with all of this...

Sleeping terribly, common to wake at 3:30 worrying.

- Feel like I have a lot to live for at the moment. Ange & kids, images of life in Abbotsford.... Not sure I feel that strong physically however, particularly lungs, health effects from the accident maybe....?
- Glimpses into the cutthroat world of Melchers and entrepreneurs.
- Interest on psychology and how the mind works.
- Thinking about house choices and the feasibility of long haul sailing dream.
- Feeling Mum & Dad quite critical of some of our parenting decisions...
- Waking up in cold sweats over work. Lamenting the futility of performance management when people are technically not capable.

Violence I think is nothing more than a form of energy, as are most parts of our lives. Love, commitment, worry, concern, hate industriousness, everything, they are all just different facets of the same thing

...In a similar way to how I perceive some aspects of Buddhism, in trying to remove or suppress some of these feelings, you can find yourself stripping away layers of what you are, of your essence of life if you are not careful.

- Made up mind to go back to Australia. Partick (the client from Sg Flyer) was amazed I would leave Singapore. It's a kids decision not a money decision...

I burn incense these days for each little life lost that way (not sure if I mentioned that previously). Helps me think about these people – they deserve to be thought about – and at the same time not get too obsessed with them. Mum told me someone burned some candles for me when I was sick. A nice thing to do and I really felt appreciative – felt like there was something (someone), else out there on my side.



I don't live in denial (I think), but I do live with secrets that are mine – coiled tightly around an inner core that is me. How far I am able to penetrate that core myself I don't know – no one ever can – I like to think quite a way...

- Ange asked ne what's in my backpack (from the 'Up in the Air' movie relating important things you would take with you). ...really only family.

I find old wind up watches beautiful because of their clockwork, the jewels, the fact they need attention, winding and cleaning, because of their heritage. They enabled us to navigate the world, they are the product of [refined] thought and engineering [] through the ages, second hand ones have direct history also – joy and sadness, ...they have seen things... [All of this encapsulated] within an object, what a beautiful thing...



Abbotsford render

"Do you know what my favourite thing in the whole world is? I'll tell you.

Each week millions and millions of upper middle class Americans put on expensive dress clothes, and load themselves into SUV's, and drive past homeless shelters, orphanages, prisons, missions and half way houses, on their way to a very expensive and nice church, where somebody tells them how to be more like Jesus.

That is fucking awesome let me tell you"

From a randomn Stumbleupon page.



- Reading The Art of War and one thing that struck me a passage on to treat one's troops. First with humility and then with an iron fist. If you punish without having first established respect and trust, you risk underlying resentment and anger, lack of loyalty. If you never punish you risk having no control or commitment.
- Hwei Nu told me in her appraisal that people call to see "what the weather is like" before coming to see me :).

Early morning wakenings worrying about work again... This time some detailing to one of the main port-cochre entry trusses.

These guys don't have a good sense of safe construction – too much reliance on site welding and lack of redundancy. They could all do with a course in lego construction or furniture making to get a good understanding of stiffness and robust construction.

Scares me ...need to work through.



Eckhardt Toll talks about being addicted to thinking. This is how our egos survive. They project themselves forward into the future and work out ways they can be fed. Basically, they are our image of ourselves. I think therefore I am becomes I am because I think, and in fact my thoughts are what I am.

He also talks about thinking filling up all the space we should perhaps be living in. Creativity happens in the base self – the quiet true self. Thinking all the time is a reason we are not creative, not the other way around.

- I have got to stop reading these child abuse stories on the news – I feel I have to know but feel sick and emotionally scrubbed afterwards. Leaves me with a what the hell do I do feeling – go and look at our kids and love them even more. Light some incense, give them a few thoughts and try to calm down and go to other places mentally.

Carl Jung tells of a conversation with an American Indian chief whose perception it was that most white people have tense faces, staring eyes, and a cruel demeanour : “They are always seeking something. What are they seeking? The whites always want something. They are always uneasy and restless. We don’t know what they want. We think they are mad.”

π

MBS taking all the priority
time at the moment.



Krabi (Thailand), our go to place.

- Scrutiny of options and realising keeping Abbotsford as an investment and buying Millicent a good option.
- Feeling embedded and at ease in the Singapore construction industry, realising how much I am giving up by leaving. Had my appraisal with Peter Bailey, clear this is a bit of a highpoint in my career.

Wah Kam sms'd tonight to inform of a fatality on site. A Chinese National slipped and fell on the Theatre package, just as they were all quietening down to finish apparently.

Somewhere a family is grieving... not nice.

- Bought 19 Millicent \$1.315M, were expecting anywhere from 1.25-1.43...



Adventures.

Night time it seems other influences rule my subconscious. Monsters from the depths come up to the surface and break water, I catch sight of their large horny scaled backs (a glimmer here and there in the moonlight), they briefly arch and dive staying shallow however in their movements. At times there can be many, almost a writhing mass creating its own chopped up surface of bodies and water, almost only in that it is not real. With signs of light and dawn I turn around to look at them, and they are no longer there...

Result tired and shitty... could do with taking a day off to get my mind straight but that just causes more problems... work keeps flowing in.

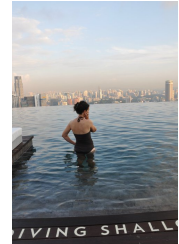


- Stella going through a creative burst. Putting together a book on dragons amongst other things.
- Feeling some distance, separation in my relationship. Feeling it as I need some love and contact in my life.
- Every 15 minutes in Australia, someone attempts suicide, and every 4 hours someone succeeds... (35,000 attempts per year, 2,000 successful). How many minutes, hours, days, weeks of pain and suffering go on, unheard.

Said goodbye to Ange and the kids again like it could be the last. Don't think that will ever go away – wonder if it was the accident or if it would have been like that anyway.

- Sold Park St for \$860k. Agent talked us down in reserve expectations of 670k, we were thinking 720k and a likely value 750k! We did well by tenants and they had place presented really nicely...

Some time practicing soccer with Ewan – was a really nice time – not keen at all but ended up doing it. We took frequent breaks to sit on the warm concrete path and look at animal shapes in the clouds in the sky (much nicer than playing soccer dad!).



...pondering Skypark

- Had my photo on the front page of the Business Times yesterday. A bit embarrassing to tell you the truth. "First he made the flyer fly, then with the Skypark he touched the sky". cheesy!
- I have always been extremely lucky most of life. Recent strong neck pain and thoughts around sorting out insurances (TPD etc.) started me thinking it might be time to pay. Was put here to accomplish something which I have, two beautiful children who would not have otherwise been, but time to go now that you have? There are so many things I want to experience. Accident outcomes still haunt at a level.

Kids are all sleeping together at the moment. Build a little cubby house out of chairs and sheets next to the bed, and talk to the wee hours of 9-10 pm and then fall asleep. Usually one of them finds it a bit uncomfortable and retreats to their own bed.

- Recognising it's been eight great years now, time to get back to a bit of normality for a while. – For a while. Even Ange is talking about another move somewhere in ten years or so.

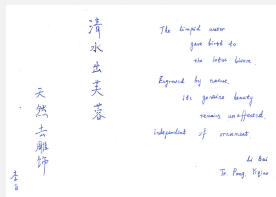
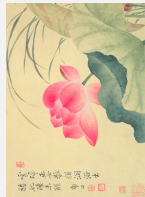
Google led me to Ghandi searching under struggle. I am not quite sure why but I feel his photo here is appropriate. Honest in life with a cause, and the composure to stay true and work through it.

Give me the strength to get to that place.



Leading water from the clear pond to plant the lotus root,
Your clothes are wet with dew in the spring breeze.
Till the lotus blossoms like a full moon,
Who will think of whom, behind the marvellous spectacle?

Poem by Pang Yiqiao (intern), on leaving Arup.



Received the above card and poetry/sketch from Pang Yiqiao an intern who left last Friday. Really like the poetry – something about Chinese poetry that is far more visual than western poetry – maybe it is an inherent implied mysticism through coming from the East – making everything that little bit exotic...?

- I can sense (rather scarily), that art and poetry was greater than life in China back then – when life was precarious and times more turbulent.
- Somehow stumbled across my name coming up on a Chinese social media website. In translating it was some commentary by a mother about her daughter and waiting for a response from Mr Brendon re work. Strange echoes like the above I don't fully understand but choose to leave...

- Presentation or two where I got feedback on mumbling and being soft. Agonise over these things. Not confident enough.
- The thoughts that these are the best days of our lives. Maybe it is not going to get better than this.
- Ewie starting to deal with the world, not sure where some of the frustrations/questions are coming from. Spending time with him, trying to support him and let him know we are there.
- Small things but being treated nicely by the Muslim guys at the blue café. Giving my rice to some guy down on his luck, being offered ice in my beer and getting a comforting 'tap tap' on the shoulder when I said I was ok. Feels good, feels real, sort of transcending cultures and stations in life.

Worthwhile turning the sound off on the TV from time to time and surfing the channels. Makes you realise we are all just a seething mass of pink things. Fat, short, long hair, short hair, no hair, pink things. Some pink things move quickly shaking and jumping, or manoeuvring and thinking, others slowly and methodically or shyly, some pink things show off, others are liked, or talk a lot about other pink things and the pink thing messes they get themselves in! Pink things of all sorts all over the place all with their own little plight in it, rubbing up and down against, fighting with, arguing with eating with doing all sorts of things with other pink things.

What would an intelligent alien race think if they were to land here – you couldn't help but be slightly amused me think... All of the plights and things we do and hold dear... We are like a billion and more little spinning tops, all let off at birth on a random spinning path to do this and do that, bounce off this and that and eventually come to rest in a place they know no where...

I need to grow worthwhile now.
Philosophy and observation of life.
Think about the real questions and how to make real accomplishments.
Understand and meet life and the human condition at the level it is supposed to met at – not this distraction of work.

Priding yourself on maintaining a level of naivety, and childhood is all very well, but it doesn't make you untouchable. You too will feel the edges creep in on you, feel dark nights and decay, and ultimately feel death around you with your family passing, and then around you whilst you pass.



Feels like all of my jobs are going off the rails, all of the time. When you image search 'The abyss and the plain' you get this little Japanese kimono warriorress pop up – I like that she inhabits that space somehow. Brings just the right degree of absurdity and energy, and moral tone to the argument?

- Leaving Singapore. Lots of dinners, lots of goodbyes and ends or truncated starts, lots of feelings, generally happy and excited to be moving onto another chapter.

Books read / Exhibitions seen / Gigs seen, TV Series / Movies watched:

- Mao's last dancer, Li Cunxin.
- Les Misérables, Victor Hugo.
- The Toilers of the Sea, Victor Hugo.
- Letters from Vincent Van Gogh.
- The Owl and the Pussycat, Edward Lear
- Haiku, Basho et al
- The Picture of Dorian Gray, Oscar Wilde.
- Foreign Devils on the Silk Road, Peter Hopkirk.
- A Journey in the Hadramaut, Freya Stark.
- A Fortune Teller Told Me, Tinziano Terzani.
- Book of Tea, Okakura Kakuzo.
- Freedom from the Known. J Krishnamurti.
- The Art of War, Sun Tzu.

- The Power of Now, Eckhardt Tolle
- Kontiki Expedition (Again).
- Wilson of the Antarctic (continued?)
- The God of Small things, Arundhati Roy.
- The Inheritance of Loss, Kiran Desai.
- Ketna Patel exhibition, AustCham hosted, Coffee Connoisseur Boat Quay.
- Joja Wendt (Alex Melchers wedding).
- The Wiggles (Singapore Indoor Stadium)
- Entourage.
- Yes Man, Jim Carey.
- Julie & Julia.
- Up in the Air, George Clooney.
- 500 Days of Summer.
- The Runaways (Story of Joan Jet).
- The Boat that Rocked.

Diary 19

2011

Melbourne (back into...)

- Whirlwind of activity arriving back. Lots of family focus (weekend Venus Bay for Dads 70th).
- Looking back, Singapore still feels surreal – I could never have imagined. Incredible work and feel a lot more connected and informed about the rest of the world now.
- Struck me today that happiness is in movement, in doing things you can be proud of at the end, and that we really did find ourselves there during that year away travelling. It was the most deeply spiritual thing (personally), ever. I really feel like we touched perhaps not nirvana, but we were there in the same place things like that go on.
- Get super frustrated with kids at times and bad behaviours. Ewan wore a couple of smacks as a result. Agonise over it and disappointed in myself but after a bit of research know we are not alone in this...
- Doing well comparatively on personal finances, according to Steven Enticott. He was quick however to steer me away from reducing work hours – forties is when you need to be accumulating...

Immediately he was insistent that we try now. We did the loop down to the Koonung Creek bike path and back. The whole way he did trying two wheels.

I would stabilise him send him off shouting to pedal, pedal, pedal, and off he would go wildly turning this way and that. The first leg of the park connector he just consistently veered left and ended up in the grass. By the second and third he was getting it.

Constantly falling off – mostly grass luckily but getting back up again and again to try. More persistent than Stella if I remember. He even skinned his knee at one stage with blood showing and just got back up and kept going. Little ‘die hard’ :).

The way back up was tougher going as mostly up hill and on the return leg he was at the stage of starting on his own. I was under strict rules not to help – which was difficult as it was slow going! Stella and Freya disappeared into the distance losing patience.

Both I and the bike copped quite a bit of abuse! We were ‘stupid’, I was too far away or too close and stabilising him. We both got punched and kicked from time to time, but he kept on going. The initial successes on the way down had given him the belief he could do it.

A big factor was to get home and tell mum that he could now ride without training wheels.

Eventually we got back and he was as proud as can be – calling Ange out to show her. He was quite concerned he might forget how to ride overnight during his sleep. After querying me telling him telling him that you never forget how to ride, he cautiously accepted the argument that you don’t forget how to walk when you learn that.

The next morning he was out in the driveway better than ever doing little circles and riding.



EWIE learning to ride after feeling left behind by Jacob, Bernie & Harry. Impressed and slightly reassured to see the self-starting determined side of Ewan come through.

‘The seasons of a Mans Life’ was saying that by the time you get past 40 your powers of abstract thinking start to decline – along with most other things. I had never really thought about abstract thinking being a skill.

Cognitive decline – age 44...

- Trips to Loch Sport and the purple house, thinking if we ever were to own a holiday house, this would be nice.
- Amazed at what a loose grip on the future I (and the rest of the world) has. Seemed simpler in the days of reading Asimov sci-fi novels...
- Worries about the kids, see so many strengths in them and so many weaknesses, compared with other kids who all seem so well adjusted and coping with reading spelling etc.

[I admire] the nurses. You are totally in their hands. They are masters of that place, the people to whom you place yourself and rely upon again. They are all there with you, your family and visitors as well, all around you with the doctors etc in an unbelievable spinning.

And yet the thread of the journey is yours. You travel and lean and get pulled through somehow.



On visiting The Alfred for the fist time since the accident.

- Emotional visit to the Alfred, tears in the stairwell when asked by a nurse about my injuries. Reflective enjoyment of food in the cafeteria, a place I could never go to.
- At 19 I was a straight laced boring predictable dork. I am the direct extension of that now, with some travel and the accident mixed in there (showing a need to become a person not a series of events)...



Loch Sport, The Purple House.

I can feel this slow mist coming in and around me, full of expectation or something I can quite put my finger on it.

Feelings after reading of a series of high-level execs etc who traded their fortunes for total life changes...

- Not about a lot of exercise. People who live longer do their own work, use manual tools etc. Walking is the only thing proven to stop cognitive decline.
- Financial security is more important than income.
- Long term actions rather than short term - eat simply and not to excess.
- Unhappiness takes around eight years off of your life.

Longevity lessons from people who study the Blue Zones

- Things heating up again at work.
- Stella sleeping in our bed for a few nights after watching a movie on witches (Roald Dahl) and scaring herself.
- Peter Davison dropped into office after his stroke. Had been meaning to see him recalling what rehab was like, spent some time with him...

He responded by setting up the 'office of can't be dones'. Anything that proved too hard was given to these guys who hit it with all their might to overcome it.

JFK on being told by scientists a moon landing could not be done.

'May those who live in the shadows be seen by those in the sun.'

From A Prayer for the Twenty First Century – words to live by...

Couple of little things caught my eye walking to work this morning, a red feather on grey concrete littered with twigs, and a gumnut flower? I like a world with scale, lots of places/levels to be in.



- Feelings of misalignment. I want to not be at work, I want to be out exploring the world. I look around at others raving about food and whatever. I just can't get into it, want bigger things.
- Being asked to be Office Leader – few alarm bells about it not aligning with natural talents but thinking I am probably better than the other options...
- Couple of renos on the house. Kids all back sleeping in the same room together. Love that.
- Embarking on the year of living dangerously, trying different changes to my life to see if I should be making them.
- Both Ange and I working and at the moment (Ange studying?).
- Thoughts and notes from reading on how to improve living of life...
- Dreams of being submerged under breaking waves unable to surface. Of another life in Singapore with a brown skinned girl but ending with white scale over everything. Violent aggressive dreams, subconscious in overdrive?

The Year of Living Dangerously...

<i>April</i>	Meditation for half an hour each day. <i>Not as easy as I had thought. Good but just as good spending time in quiet consciousness, small movements etc...</i>
<i>May</i>	getting up at 4:30 (two hours earlier) each day (and going to bed two hours earlier (with the kids). <i>More about what you do with the time. Staying away from television is a plus. Going to bed with the kids is good too.</i>
<i>June</i>	Cook a meal once a week. <i>Unexpectedly enjoyable, taking the time to do the shopping and then an hour or two by myself in the kitchen. Romanian Stew, Thai Beancakes and Asparagus, Corn Fritters, Red Lentil & Wine Lasagne, Indian Potato and Pea Curry, Mediterranean Chickpea and rice.</i>
<i>July</i>	No alcohol at all (dry July) <i>Give your system a break to clean itself out a nurse was saying. Don't think it did me any good physically</i>
<i>August</i>	Write a poem a day. <i>Nice when I manage but difficult to make the time ...and difficult in terms of poetic inspiration. Makes me realise I must weave things into my life that are good.</i>
<i>September</i>	No television at all. <i>Didn't prove that drastic. Good however.</i>
<i>October</i>	No dairy based food. <i>Really missed chocolate, cream, milk, butter, cheese... No real physical effects I noticed</i>
<i>November /December</i>	Sketch a sketch a day.
<i>January</i>	Not say no (as opposed to saying yes all the time). <i>Subtle difference – about trying to be positive in all things.</i>
<i>February</i>	Spend 10 mins of dedicated time each day with Stella, Ewan and Freya.

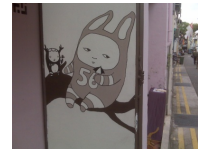
- Leadership course (Mt Eliza) ‘what is the most likely reason Brendon would run off the rails’. Thought Brendon is most likely to run off the rails through sheer boredom, through not caring as much as he should, through deciding there is more to life...! Through wanting more love and romance and mystery in his life. What as silly question really, and just the wrong side of the line in terms of demeaning.

- Stella on the outer with other kids at school. She says because of her messy hair. Ewie a little cutie.
- Still reading kids stories to go to bed with, They like it and get upset if we miss. At the same time Stella is growing up to be a teenager, learning about sex etc and telling Ewan.
- Few strained pains around my chest. Self promises to do more exercise.

Kids are still finding it tough at school. Ewan has been teased about having nits. At first I thought it was just kids in his class – the teacher made a few of them write notes of apology. Stella now tells me it is the whole school – because he quite often scratches his head.

I asked him if he had friends (he had been telling me he had three or four), and he replied ‘yes but I’m losing them’. Broke my heart.

Must get Stella to support him a bit. Perhaps organise a birthday party for him and the kids in his class to help him get accepted?



“Let me make a clean breast of it here, and frankly admit that I kept but sorry guard. With the problem of the universe revolving in me, how could I – being left completely to myself at such a thought-engendering altitude, - how could I but lightly hold my obligations to observe all whale ships’ standing orders, ‘Keep your weather eye open and sing out every time’.”

Herman Melville
Moby Dick

- Did the StVinnies CEO sleepout raising almost \$2k. Felt a bit of a fraud being office leader and not CEO but then realised I was the one creating conversations and meeting people, not them who should be the more accomplished!?

- Sydney put in a fee of \$750k for Singapore Sports Hub connections, I said \$1M, got argued by contractor down to \$850k, then still got criticised for fees being low – short fucking selective memories... I don't fight these things. My end call and life is too short...
- Thinking about Karma Yoga and Buddhism.



Overnight camping cross country skiing Mt Stirling.

- Passed out on a flight MLB-SIN. Probably overdid it drinks wise thinking kids would appreciate little bottles. Liked the feeling of waking on the floor to people looking after me, little bit trippy, people caring and giving a shit...
- Thinking more and more I disagree with the whole detachment premise of Buddhism. Life needs some living about it. Taoism and balance it brings more attractive to me.
- Feeling out of phase
- Get enjoyment from small things. Seeing a small turtle ladder in a pond to help turtles climb out. How good is that.
- He said she said office politics. Need a break, a week off to get my head back straight.



Gunnamatta.

- Few different work things. Interviewing Shannon from Vue de Monde, a talk on Ange & my travels through Torres del Paine , appearance on RRR with 'The Architects'. Enjoyable.



- Tough going, listing reason to or not to resign. Mini breakdown over SSH connections.
- Studying philosophy and enjoying.
- Starting to swim.
- Enjoyed releasing a butterfly that was caught in a tram. Watched him take off up into the city.

Struck me today that I am a linear thinker where Ange is a parallel thinker. She hears the first few bars of a song, the first few notes even and can jump straight to the name of the song. I on the other hand hear the notes, know the song but have to let the whole thing play out in sequence...

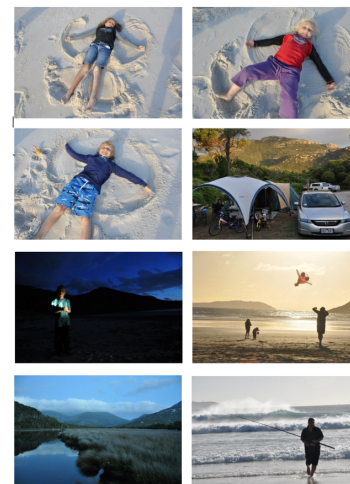
- Thinking a bit about Hinduism and the caste system. Merit in fulfilling your station in life.
- MRI on sore knee after swimming. Hamstring rubbing on outside of knee. Fell asleep on MRI table.
- Enjoying Plato and the Republic, more life philosophy to think about.
- Talking to Tim Jarvis about joining him on an adventure. Peter Bowtell not so happy about it I feel.



Feeling I am grappling with mid-life transition...

Books read / Music seen / Movies watched:

- The Singapore Story, Lee Kwan Yew's memoirs.
- The Book of the Sea, edited by Aubrey De Seincourt.
- Leaving Microsoft to Change the World, John Woods.
- Moby Dick, Herman Melville.
- The Buddha (an old book)
- Brave New World, Aldous Huxley.
- Bhagavad Gita
- The Jungle Book, Rudyard Kipling.
- Mawson, Tim Jarvis.
- An Introduction to Buddhism, Peter Harevy.
- Beyond Reason, Brian McNiven.
- Seven Engineers (The Felix Candela Lectures).
- The Unforgiving Minute, Tim Jarvis.
- The River at the Centre of the World, Simon Winchester.
- The Republic, Plato.
- The Heart of the Matter, Sunday Reed.
- The Seasons of a Man's Life, Daniel J Levinson.
- Steve Jobs, Walter Isaacson
- Australian String Quartet – with Moshe Safdie and work
- Lost in Translation
- Romeo & Juliet, Baz Luhrman (again)
- Midnight Cowboy (again)
- National Velvet (dude time with kids).
- Black Swan.
- It's a Wonderful Life, James Stewart.



The Prom has become a Christmas standard :)

Diary 20

2012

Melbourne

- Difference of opinion yesterday over the neighbours kid, Ruben, coming over to play. Takes the conservative withdraw road a lot in anticipation of things going wrong, I am the opposite. Like openness and activity.
- They, Peta and Dale, are into Falun Dafa (or Gong). I actually like the idea of the religion or philosophy. Meditation and slow-moving exercise, a high emphasis on morality. Funny the morality I think I could take or leave.

- Slow moving exercise was particularly good after the accident, feeling the body, feeling its place in the flow of the world.
- Inspired by Steve Jobs 60's / 70's drugs and experimentation, the idealism. I would have liked to have lived my life during that time (wars etc excluded of course...), but reality is I probably wouldn't have gone there...
- I hold close a desire to do some proper thinking as to why we are here. Figure out in small steps, something about the collective and what it means or relates to.

meaning of life:

1. be happy

2. help others be happy



Kids absolutely love him. Stella just comes out 'he's a great dog' from time to time, and Ewie spends a lot of time with him just grinning and scratching and patting him, observing, Freya is all smiles and does her best to put on a serious voice in trying to control etc.

On the arrival of Bronny.

- We need to be idealists and aim high. We need to challenge ways of doing things and to be clever. I recall Peter Bowtell saying if you want it hard enough, you will work the weekends to deliver it – you know what, there are other things that I want more – time with kids, and myself etc. Steve Jobs was brutally honest with what he wanted, and lived his life to that end. I need to do the same.
- I don't think I have enough original vision to be a CEO or to make mind blowing changes to an organisation or industry. Mind you not many people do I think.
- Not certain why an understanding of space time and universe is important, I just feel it is. A primeval need for physical orientation?

"Known to the simplest savage – that peace of God..."
(Keats?)

- Doing a lot of reading / thinking about life, stages in it, its mechanics.
- Feeling I need more love in my life.

Freya nonchalantly asked if I could stop Mo (Cams dog), from chewing on the rabbit. I get half-way back And there is Mo chewing the hind legs off of a rabbit! I ended up bashing its head in with a brick to make sure it was dead and then unceremoniously dumped it in the bin in plastic bag. A fact that was not lost on Freya who managed to come out at the wrong time. To witness the bagging not the bricking I hope.

Loch Sport early morning at The Purple House.

I don't think there is a being or a force anywhere guiding us however I would accept there is an inner something that is there. Something that interacts with inner something's in others, in nature and the universe, something that draws upon pools of energy and ways of being, ...old on an evolutionary scale. Our psyches must have grown up and formed with strong preconceptions and influences.

Thoughts on God while reading Autobiography of a Yogi (Using 'God' as I never would have ten years ago...

- Kids seem really happy at the moment – Stella is back sleeping in the same bed as Freya for the moment (Ewan on the bottom bunk). Dropped in on them a couple of times over the past few nights – the picture of serene. Expressionless calm faces out to the world.

Walked Bronson last night with Stella, what would you do if someone gave you a million dollars Dad? ...Stella's list revolved around numerous Littlest Pet Shop sets and dog things for Bronny – gold plated food bowls and leads etc. My list was less well formed.

- Genuinely shocked by Ange pre-emptively asking me not to hit Bronny after we pulled over to stop him tearing up the floor in back of the car – is this the sort of person I am? I hope not but maybe need to pay more attention to my frustrations and reactions.
- Bought Lochsport 50:50 with Beck & Mick, \$297,500 (advertised \$320k). Hoperfully the scene of happy relaxed times to come.



Lochy (Lakeside)

- Ange was telling me tonight she feels everything is a bit full on – a bit too indulgent all of this spending etc. I agree with her actually.
- Enjoying Plato (The Republic), similarities to Hinduism. Merit lies within following the profession and nothing more, nothing less. My view is people are far too complex and life too unpredictable to be constrained by rigid paths such as this?
- As most men I suspect, I think about sex an almost disturbingly number of times a day. Fantasizing is an integral part of that. Is that bad? It feels bad based on society's expectations of me.
- Monogamy feels immature but polygamy feels impractical (from a human nature perspective).

The above image reminds me of an array of scary monster heads I imagined to myself when I was young. It is amongst [my] earliest memories – perhaps when I was five to seven years old?

I recall this vividly, I conjured it up when trying to go to sleep and scared myself!



"Creativity is almost a mortal sickness. It's not easy to be happy and creative: With creativity comes great anxiety, great effort, great desire for love. To be creative, you have to be curious, generous, to want to try to understand. You also have to want to be loved."

Phillippe Starck.

- Decided against the Shackleton trip. I would prefer to spend 7 weeks of my long service leave and \$16k on an experience with the kids and Ange. Not disappointed in that context.
- I am generally pretty happy. It's a funny thing, you need the interaction with people and the world to be able to navigate and come to that point. Yet at the same time it is most compromised when I come into contact with others.

Happy Birthday young Bean. Eleven years old – starting to come of age and the presents we bought her start to reflect this. A fishing rod, a survival kit complete with pocket knife and fire starter flint, a microphone for use at the computer or stereo, and a diamond encrusted skull necklace.

All reflect Stella in some way shape or form. Bit of a tomboy, reasonably independent, still a girl growing up.

...Constantly amazed at people's indifference to the whole flying thing. ...incredible to be accelerated to huge speeds and then lifted into the air, the ground below gradually receding to reveal views we never get to see in normal day to day drudgery. Ever expanding ...clouds and birds and ships and coastlines and countries ...unfolding horizons with adventures ahead waiting.



The Sub-Continent.

- Liking Mother Theresa's *The Final Analysis*, it is not about you and the outside world, it is never between you and them, at the end of the day it is all between you and God whatever that God may be.
- I like philosophy. There are much smarter people and groups of people than myself who have asked these questions and spent time thinking on it. I need to take on from where they have gotten to.
- Drink, drugs don't appeal to me, empty short-lived experiences with reality coming back more hopeless than before. I want longer burn things that have something to show for it at the end.



Enjoying Melbourne cafes, Von Haus Crossley St, near Pelligrini's

- Enjoying 'The Mind of God' not for the religious side, which I find disturbing, but because it demonstrates how deeply pervading the idea of religion, dei-ism worse, is through mankind. That intelligent beings need to battle this within is a sign of sickness and weakness.
- Still thinking on space-time. Thoughts from Mind of God and reading re Brian Schmidt. We could be observing the creation of a mega-universe, a chain reaction of ever increasing space.

Ange was talking with Freya this morning about four plus four equalling eight. Freya asked rather insightfully what would have happened if they had not invented eight? :).

Kids driving me crazy – constant mess, screaming from Ewan, laughing, giggling, stupid sounds, not listening. There are times I could take them or leave them!

- The 'uncovered' exhibits (part of work art show), were absolutely fantastic. Really diverse with great thought. Really uplifted me, drove home the depth in people and society, perhaps because of the narrowness I feel in my life at the moment.
- Annoyed by Mind of God, felt like Paul Davies pushing a bad argument, unable to break free from his need for there to be something.
- Few odd pains etc including what felt like a stray electrical current down one side of my face...
- I am anti-conspiracist. I believe in the random and the convenient instead.
- Really vivid dream about a girl with mousy, shampoo smelling hair coming up and resting her head on my shoulder.



...a few relaxing Japanese scotches before going to bed ...while I was drifting off I heard this soft voice calling daddy.

...it was a definitive 'daddy, daddy, daddy...'. Spooked me quite a bit ...it seemed so clear, and a little wraith like as well at the same time.

I started to get all supernatural in thought thinking it could have been some unconscious telepathy or something similar! I went and checked on the kids all of whom were ok – in different poses of out of control raging sleep!

Ewie is always the funniest, twisted in his bedclothes normally, a small frown on his face vaguely aware of something but not there at the same time.

Freya is usually bunched up off to one side of the doona head against the railing sound asleep. She has been forced that way through sleeping with Stell for so long.

Stella is all arms and legs and elbows and knees subconsciously owning the space.

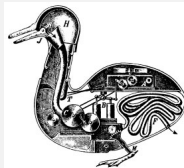
- Seeing this parallel universe of business networking like a club of the rich kids you need to be a part of to get on. So removed yet drawing you in, defining peoples self-worth.



An iteration of the Mt Stirling trip. All older and less dexterous than the year before...

- Saw Dolphins close to shore at Lochy, as Ewan said, they must be good luck!
- World Architectural Forum, WAF in Sg, people actually miss my leadership style, some to the point where it was a factor in their having left. Brendon the person who people doubted and who struggled and second guessed himself and agonised over stuff and who was criticised from time to time and could always in his own mind have done better. He did good. No one can take that away from me.
- Winning work in Melbourne and feel like doing a good job with office leader role also.

The walk in [to work] this morning was very much observation of all the people walking in the streets. All with their own little stress lines and concerns overlaid on their expressions. Lots of automatons moving about within their own worlds amongst the bigger machine...



Coaching Ewan's basketball team and the poor kids haven't scored a goal yet! 44-0, 10-0, 16-0! Must spend some time with them tonight dribbling and shooting!

- After all these years I am still quick to anger and frustration:
 - i) I am uptight (suppressed feelings/emotions?), and,
 - ii) I have a strong sense of justice, right & wrong.
- Not sure why but looked at images of stonings on the web, horrific where we go as a race. What to do with that knowledge? Pray for the world, I really don't know. Meditate for peace maybe.
- Moods rise and fall regularly drawn by how tired I am, how things are going. Overall however I am not enjoying it, it is a drag. I think Chris thinks I am doing a good job but am unsure. Peter Bowtell tells me I am but I need more...

- Slammed my laptop lid down after an argument with Ewie about sailing lessons while on holiday! Lost all of the entries for the months of November/December! Funny, I am really pissed off. I had found some great images and written some good stuff from memory – I feel (perhaps a little unhealthily), that a short section of my life has been denied me, cut away so that I cannot look at it.

Books read / Music seen / Movies watched:

- Autobiography of a Yogi, Paramhansa Yogananda
- South, Earnest Shackleton.
- Meditations, Marcus Aurelius.
- Man's Search for Meaning, Victor E Frankl.
- Books on Chinese Poetry, Wang Wei.
- Mind of God, Paul Davies.
- The Happy Prince and other Stories, Oscar Wilde.
- On The Road, Jack Kerouac (again).
- Be Here Now, Ram Das.
- My Journey, Jim Stynes.
- For Whom the bell Tolls, Earnest Hemingway.
- A Brief History of Time, Stephen Hawking (again)
- The Muppet Movie, Amy Adams.
- 56 Up

Diary 21

2013

Melbourne

- More leviathans of the night. Pressure to give up the office leadership to take back leadership of structures. Haven't got the stomach for it, all of those years of hard slog and lack of appreciation in Singapore, I could just as well leave work right now and do something else if I had something else to go to.
- Dealing with staff issues in a senior leader (who I used to count as a friend - JB). Went to extreme lengths to do the right thing by him, even mediation. Not just me, he is a basket case of paranoia
- Enjoying looking at other things, more on space and time, more on psychology. Would love to be able to explore at leisure.

- Things seem to be getting more distant at home. I think there is still still love but feel there is some withdrawal in a lot of ways. I want to and have tried talking about it but not received with a lot of interest.
- Feel the draw of a life unhurried and enjoyed, of getting to the soul in what you do. Considering the attraction of starting again from scratch, living of a little. Or an adventure, sailing or travel.
- Quite taken (briefly), with a children's book author I met at Abbotsford Convent (Elise Hurst). Green piercing eyes, she told me she was disappointed as a child from adventure promised in children's books that never seemed to come about. She used to wait at the front letterbox outside of her house waiting, in hope of being kidnapped.
- This desire to be important, to leave a lasting legacy etc, it always surprises me. Our time here is so fleeting, we are not going to be around, how can life be anything but what is in the here and now. Yet we (I) keep focusing on legacies...



Sketchbook Elise Hurst...

I feel like I have wandered unwittingly into this place, and it is not very nice. ... and I suspect that this place is in a lot of places and whether you end up there or not; is some semi-random thing. I need to keep my head in here and trust that things will right themselves eventually?



- Coaching Ewan's basketball team. He struggles but tries. Feel he is appreciating having me around supporting him at the moment, nice :).

There is no God, but there is a lot of other things I feel. ...sub-conscious, ...some form of way, whether it resides within or without (of us), or both, I am not sure.

So what is going on – dark moonless night, breeze blowing intermittently in the trees giving an approaching feeling to something I know not what. An ever circling weather pattern I imagine to be blunt.

- Financial challenges at work on jobs I am director for. Stretched with office leader role, not many people I can rely on to run for me...
- Feeling pretty let down by behaviours at work. JB but also other leaders who let this stuff go on for so long. Feels like I am wearing the wake of inaction, being the patsy to sort out. In Sg we paid attention to the fundamentals and addressed them as we went. Bad behaviours also extend to protecting patches etc. Really poor reading in retrospect, I was in a bad environment not all of my own making.
- Feel like I am dancing around the edges of depression. Difficulty in getting motivated, suicidal thoughts, paranoia at times...
- Tibetan Book of Living and Dying inspiring me to explore the inner most self and basic nature of mind more. I feel I understand a lot of it but there is something else to be gained.
- Visited Jonathan Black and his new place in Anakie. House exquisitely designed as expected but Helen had left him. Sad as Jonathan very self aware of the whys. A slow silent separation he was really feeling...
- I like Jonathan's take on life, timing money to run out in his words, at the exact same point he 'flames' out. In reality he has done very well property wise and not short a dollar I think!?



Anakie

The Thing I am missing at the moment is some real enjoyment of the journey ...feel like I have lost my Mojo. Or more accurately that it has been eaten by the subversive forces around me. Angst and a lack of faith or willingness to understand.

- Feeling a little like my life has become trivial, something I didn't want to happen all those years ago when travelling in Nepal/Tibet...
- Seeing life from different lenses. The abhorrent raping and pillaging after the war in Germany, prompted by conversations with Brian & Gretel our elderly neighbours in Loch Sport, to uplifting love and compassion in the next School of Philosophy class...

First session with a counsellor [EAP] over my concerns around depression this morning. Was good but limited...

A bit of unexpected therapy on the way back to the office over lunch. Sitting outside the Golden Tower café in Swanston Walk people watching the passers-by.

Watching, assessing, forming an opinion, judging! Good for self worth. People have to deal with a lot in terms of who they are it is plain to me. I have it pretty good by comparison. The father in a wheel chair, the young pimply kids with all the challenges ahead of them, people with stranger looking heads than even me, the homeless, the poor, the fashion challenged, the depressed, the tired...



Swanston St people therapy

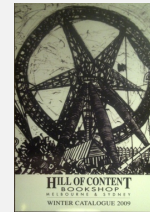
- Work an endless series of small pieces of crap. People crap, client crap, project crap. Lots of thoughts of other things I could do.
- If didn't have to work
 - Become an artist
 - Psychology
 - Philosophy
 - Astronomy and astrophysics
 - Sailing
 - Exploring/Travel
 - Helping out in aid work,

I cannot understand people who do not have ideas and wants when they retire



A Freya drawn love heart

Everything we say and do comes from the pretext of how it is going to affect ourselves. It is a very self-centred world in which we all live...



Melbourne Star (from 2011),

Hishikawa-san from the Melbourne Star (...Sanoyas Rides Corporation), donated to the CEO Sleepout. When I thanked him he sent a reply saying thank you back for giving him the opportunity to donate to the homeless cause through my partaking in the event. ...How lovely and how Japanese.

I managed to lose the paua shell Tiki I bought back from New Zealand with me yesterday. I have been keeping it my pocket along with my change in the vain hope that it will bring me good luck.

...I dropped it on the marble floors of the Orica St lift lobby. It skidded towards the lift and I watched in slow motion as ...it neatly dropped down the crack in the elevator/lobby floor threshold.

I briefly thought of asking the building management ...[but] I thought, it is what it is and no more. ...it will sit there perhaps emanating a small good luck force contributing to the buildings mojo.



- Took kids to Monet (NGV). On asking them what the felt when they looked at the picture, calm, serene, uplifted, warm... I got a 'I feel bored from Freya' :).
- Realise I problem solve by immersing myself totally in an effort often to wrestle it to the ground. ...I need to be quiet, to detach and to deal with things in the moment.
- Stepped down from Office Leader role after more than two years. Was struggling to make headway, I did a good job within the constraints of the fact it was a part time role, however it could do with new eyes and energy. Also wanted to get back to Buildings which I enjoy.

- Giving up a PA (Bridgette) more difficult than I thought. Email and appointments ok, but had not realised how much I had come to rely on emotional support. Someone to understand the crap I have to go through, to know that I am trying my hardest and have all the right principles in mind when I act on things.
- Realise work and Office Leader role has become woven into my identity. Needing to work hard to dis-associate. Less money, less help, less status, ...but right thing to do.

'Neti – Neti',

(Not this, not this).

A useful (Vedic?) exercise to remind myself that I am not the circumstances and actions that are happening to me.

From time to time I like to [go outside] do this at night – and sit, usually in the cold, and connect with the present. Inevitably I get drawn to the stars and the universe. Made all the more effective against the backdrop of the backyard. Grass, few trees etc, fences, the house, kids sleeping inside, faint noise of the freeway and general urban enviro, and then the stars, up there in a sphere of their own, limitless, timeless.

I feel the depth of where they are, the light years and the distortion as to what I am seeing against where they are now. I sense the scale and the importance, the embodiment of our future and the solidity and physical nature of what they are.

It seems everything is manageable in the context of that arm of our galaxy up there. Everything seems to shrink to its rightful perspective and place somehow.

Winters onset,
I feel left alone.
Tangled in feelings
I am left to unravel...

Stepping aside.

- Thoughts around human nature and the need for love interests in life. Core to emotion, understanding and feeling understood, non-serious fantasy, hope, alternatives, coping...

Stop obsessing and get some sleep

Trust it will be fine in the light of the day – it has been previous times and it will be in future times.

- Things are what they are, you can only do so much and people must understand this. If they do not then it is not your fault and you can move onto other things if required.

- You have brought immense value previously, and you can again.

- You have people around you who will support you. If they do not, then they are not worth having around you and you belong somewhere else.

Note to self to read when waking in the middle of the night

- Appreciating having Dad around to have the odd chat to on finances and kids etc.



Few select photos from an iPhone essay through the city.

- JB finally leaving. 18 odd months of a total shit show, so much damage. Despite Peter Bowtell's words, this is not something I wanted. It is necessarily the only way forward however...
- I think though painful, it is a good thing to tear down the stuff around you from time to time. The accident, Singapore, office leader role... Expose a few misheld truths, strip back to some core traits.
- Met a competitor from 4d – capable energetic. Went on about how he was CEO for a bit (Winwards) and then left to start etc. Struck me as a small time dick of a person in reality and wondered how much of him was in me. Added to the feeling of being removed here, not quite fitting, not being in the right job.

I don't think I am stupid – the opposite in fact, but I do overthink, over analyse and am subject to boredom, melancholy and depression – in that order.

- Bob (Canadian guy from Arup) died. His daughter who he loved more than anything committed suicide, his wife died from other causes, Bob went shortly after, nothing left to live for...? Christian and nerdy/daggy, he came on a ski trip once, we did our best to include him but it didn't really translate to him fitting in...



Lake Mountain trips and flowers on the car, enjoying the kids...

went outside to site for a bit late one night last week [and] had a Tawny Frogmouth fly up and sit on the back fence not more than a metre or two away from me.

I think he/she was initially planning on sitting on the chair as he flew up to me and seemed to pull away at the last moment in a spread of wings ending up on the fence.

A little embarrassing perhaps but I ended up singing him a little song softly as I wanted it to be an interesting experience for him also, in the hope he might come back from time to time.

He sat there quietly for five or so minutes and was still there when I left to get up go inside to bed.

Absolutely beautiful the whole experience.

- Kids camping in the back yard. Ewie ended up inside, opened blind in the morning to Freya wandering around the dewy grass brushing her teeth with an electric toothbrush and Stella sleeping in to rise dishevelled a fair bit later.
- Negative thoughts in my relationship. A little resentment on my side on a couple of fronts.
- Reflections of misalignment between work and life, exploration of alternatives (other work and other things I would like to do personally), getting stronger.

There is a little bit of feeling left behind in there also... Or maybe a touch of being alone, I would stop short of loneliness, it is not that type of feeling, it is a no kindred spirit type feeling instead. No one to share or understand with?

Thoughts on challenges on the work front.

I agree it is a storm, but I would not say a non-violent one. It is difficult to describe, it rages with violence but it is a quiet violence, an internal vacuum, sucking, deadening, smothering, from who knows where...

Thoughts on depression from the handful. Of times I have felt it.

"And it isn't that I'm so unhappy I don't want to live anymore. That's not what it feels like. It feels more like I'm tired and bored and the party's gone on too long and I want to go home. I feel flat and there doesn't seem to be anything to look forward to, so I'd rather call it a day."

Nick Hornby, *About a Boy*

The other night Ewan came in from sleeping and told us that he had heard a big buzzing in his head – like a rush and a buzzing sound. I remember that from being a kid also. I can only put it down to static electricity, which is what we told him. Too much thinking, all of those thoughts running around your head building up little bits of charge until they group together and buzz off into the atmosphere...

More likely your brain entering deeper phases of sleep and you being aware of it according to Google.

Heavy
When the gods die
The myths
Are lifted off our backs.
Peace be with them.
They were heavy.

Tom Clarke

- Spent a night in a hostel in Elizabeth Street. What am I doing? I don't know... Something is awry within me. I am at the centre of Sylvia Plaths fig tree.

"I ask where are the demons that that have bought me to this place, but I only know I needed an out, and that they are not here to talk to, ...and now that I am here, I feel no desire to chase them down."

Lines from a poem I wrote about that night later... and a few diary notes from the day

Chatted with the kids [about not coming home last night]. Ewie hesitant but ok, Freya curious but non-plussed. Ange tells me that Stell quite upset. Gave her a cuddle.

It is what it is, I could not go on. Home tonight things still in a mess –wiping up [what could be]mouse droppings from the food prep benches. Throwing out masses of vegetables bought and stuffed within fridge drawers. Bottles of sphagetti sauce with one centimetre in the bottom – expired food left right and centre.

Really pisses me off I have to say.

- Reading a lot of stuff reflecting on small aspects of life. Social media through to books (Walden etc.)
- Couple of wins at work, projects with half reasonable fees. Note to self that I enjoyed the chase.



Finding paw prints painted on stones in the garden.... Life around the house nice at the moment.



Images from a week in NZ touring mainly South Island.

- Ange decided not to come down to Lochsport for New Years. Not totally comfortable with all of the activity preferring a quieter time. Ange time to sort a few things out, it has been a big year for her with Uni and now work at Deakin. I hope this is all it is and she (and we), are ok.

Louanne Brizendine wrote a book called the female brain. Depression is 2:1 more common in women than men. The ratio is pretty even up to a certain age largely before hormones kick in. She did some research :

- Mens brains 10% larger but have the same number of cells.
- Womens brains have 10% more neurons in the areas dealing with language and hearing. Similar in the hippocampus (related to memory), observing emotions and expressions, speech, emotional intelligence
- Men have more in the region of regulating fear and aggression.
- Men think about sex once evry 52 seconds,women once a day.
- Up until 8 weeks male and female brains in feotuses are identical. At this time testosterone floods the male brain killing off cells dedicated to communication and promoting cells related to sex and agression.
- Girls come into the world wired to notice faces, eye contact and mutual gazing abilities grow by 400% in the first 3 months. They don't grow at all in males.

Books read / Movies watched:

- Boy, Roald Dahl.
- Going Solo, Roald Dahl.
- Inside Wikileaks – My time with Julian Assange, Daniel Domscheit-Berg.
- The Thirty Nine Steps, John Buchanan.
- Captain Cook, Vanessa Collingridge.
- Life of Pi, Yann Martel.
- The Philosophy of Andy Warhol.
- 50 Psychology classics
- On the Trail of Genghis Kahn, Tim Cope.
- Autobiography of a Supertramp, W.H.Davies.
- Walden, Henry David Thoreau.
- The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying.
- The Narrow Road to the Deep North, Basho.
- Krakatoa
- Scarface
- Life of Pi (the Movie)

Diary 22

2014

Melbourne

- Kids having a great time at Lochsport. Loving spending time with Beck and Mick's boys.



Time spent growing up.

- Feeling life is too complicated, want to slow and simplify. Spending time looking at quality of sleep. Spending avg 8.17 hrs in bed, 5:59 of those asleep.

- Shying away from philosophy. It seems to result in quietness, almost an induced state of misguided self comfort. Feel any philosophy on life should be more participatory. There is value in pausing but just a jigsaw puzzle bit of the bigger picture...back to my personal Tao.
- I don't travel for work often but like it when I do. A chance for time to myself to think, and to experience wherever it is I am.

I walk to work thinking of ducking off into a hotel room and spending the day watching movies and relaxing, contemplating...

And that's thing about people who mean what they say. They think everyone else does as well.

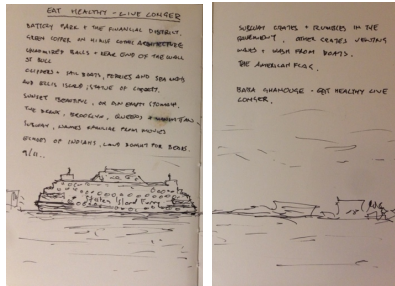
Tumblr quote (Moon-Lit-Tides)

- Communication in my relationship not great. A lot left unsaid. Feel I am excluded (probably not consciously) from a lot of activities around the kids, concerts parent teacher nights...
- Not enjoying work. I don't like not being the best we can be and that is the case in light of fees at the moment.



Cathedral Ranges (kookaburra stole a sausage from Stella as she was eating it).

- Feel a release of tensions in my writing. Think I have mentally made the decision to change. Must have asked uncle Brian who replied you have it good, stick with where you are (except that I don't have it good!).



Luxury of time to myself travelling, round the world trip to Anup AGAM, how fantastic.

- Loving the architecture in my travels, Rockefeller Centre, Grand Central Station, The High Line, and Brooklyn Bridge seen from the back of a taxi standouts :).
- The act of going from one place to another has something about it. Gives things purpose. That is why I am less inclined to racing (sailing). Going in small circles can only ever have limited meaning.
- DJS's retirement dinner. As many people there that hated him with a passion as there were that called him a friend. That whole end of the corporate world thing is pretty disappointing. I have been lucky to be away from much of that, in Singapore in positions where I can honestly say that I have tried my best to be a positive influence. In the vast majority of cases putting myself second to the task at hand.



Loving flying.

I have spent well over a week now travelling. All this time to myself. To think I suppose but also a lot of it to just be different to home, to not have the family stuff, the hard work stuff, all the demand stuff that gets made of you day in day out.

It is a slightly uncomfortable feeling I must admit. Many quiet patches with lots of room for questions. Also lots of room for observing, which is as we know, one of my favourite things.

What I am finding comes of this is a slow separation from the world. I start to notice things for what they are and lose any real attachment to them. I can watch television with mild interest but really have no care for any of it.

I can appreciate this or the other but again, have no deep seated care for it. It is as if there is this jumble called life going on around us incessantly. We are obligated to take part in it to survive. We do it on the rules of the particular culture and place we were born into. But that is just out of politeness, out of conforming with those around us.

How much is necessity and how much choice. So much necessity that when it comes time to choose we feel isolated and alone. To choose is to go against the overwhelming necessity driven behaviours crowding us on all sides. You might look up, look around to see if there are others out there who have woken up from the necessities but they are all asleep ...sheep. And you end up drifting back into it because you have commitments – other sheep are relying on you to play your role and it would not be fair to not do this. Sheep are people too.

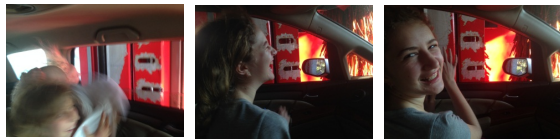
So as I get older I feel I am leaving bits of life around me on the way. Strewn along roadsides. I need to see what will come in to replace. I need to feel life and live in the gaps between necessity – and maybe one day those gaps of living will join up. All the more important to make sure they are filled with something worthwhile.



“Men are so necessarily mad, that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness”

Anonymous Tumblr quote

- Had a nightmare running scared of some sort of oppressive regime. Part of it was in a house high up looking out over a great bay. A great laser did sweeping circles picking up (& destroying), anything its path ...all about revolution and the distrust of anything to do with free thinking or wealth. People were taken away and disappeared presumably tortured to death.
- I reckon discarding some things (feelings, or whatever), and not others, is not right, there should be a place for everything ...and not succeeding should be fine too – as long as you stay pure through the process. We should live for the living and not the success.
- Job list and relative profits looking a lot better with new work won on my terms...
- Still having fun with the kids :). Bright spots amongst all the pressures at work.



Going through the carwash windows open (dry cycle)

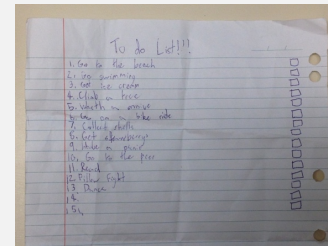
Fathers Day presents from Freya – ‘Dad’ Frisbee, a bag of marbles, a card not written on in still in its plastic sleeve, an icy pole stick (...with ‘you are a winner’ stamp[ed on it], a pink pencil split down its length to show all the lead (with someone else’s name on it), and finally a 50 cent piece (jubilee version...).

Lovely and funny.

- Von Haus my favourite café closed down :(The girl who ran it whom I really liked, always calm and together and an eye for design, went off to have a baby I think.... Yes it does warrant a mention...
- Accept that I am a part of the problem at work, but seem continually disappointed in those around me...!
- Planning on 3-12 months off. Ange happy as long as I make a list of things I am going to do. It is a matter of must not just want...

I see people covering up all sorts of things, things they wish were different. Their jobs, their appearances, their childhood, their work, prospects, financial positions. People are thin façade skins holding together jumbly messes of scribble. And no one is really talking about it. They all conjure up just enough energy and bottle to keep the façade going one more round.

- Saying no to going to the 25 year award dinner for Arup, a cry for help, a shot back, self sabotage...?



1. Go to the beach
2. Go swimming
3. Get ice cream
4. Climb a tree
5. Watch a movie
6. Go on a bike ride
7. Collect shells
8. Get strawberries
9. Have a picnic
10. Go to the pier
11. Read
12. Pillow Fight
13. Dance
- 14.
- 15.

'To Do' list for Lochsart holidays (from Stella). Almost too perfect!

- Above from Stella just gorgeous. At the same time she is going through growing pressures of starting high school. Social, expectations wise. Telling us she has black out episodes amongst other things. Quite scary, trying to stay with her, alongside her...

Freya mentioned to Ange later in the day apparently how she liked having me around. At first I thought it strange as we had hardly spoken however I started to remember all the little things. A conversation about yes's and no's where she got me to ask her questions she could say true or false yes or no to. That led to searching for images of animals swimming on the web as there was some disbelief that elephants could swim! I sat with her cooking a bbq and watching her blow bubbles in the afternoon, and played basketball with her and Stell a little later on. Had a great day all up. She also noticed her made bed and asked enquiringly about it – such a beautiful little soul. They all are...

After a few days off at home, not doing much just being there.



Few assorted sketchbook sketches

Books read / Movies watched:

- Teen Spirit, Jessica Watson.
- A Clockwork Orange, Anthony Burgess.
- Mathew Flinders (Journals).
- Cook's Last Voyage, Ledyard.
- Picnic at Hanging Rock, Joan Lindsay.
- The Book Thief, Marcus Zusak.
- The Taoist Inner View of the Universe and the Immortal Realm, Ni Hua Ching.
- A Tea Cup in a Storm, Mark Conefrey.
- Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy and Meditation, Wendy Finster.
- Napoleon Dynamite.
- The Secret Life of Walter Mitty.
- The Lego Movie
- Wolf of Wall Street
- The Unpublished last chapter of Picnic at Hanging Rock
- The Velveteen Rabbit (or How Toys Become Real), Margery Williams

- Feeling a bit more upbeat. Went to the 25 year dinner (and enjoyed), doing some sketching, a conscious decision to start repairing things in my life. New car, new phone...

Diary 23

2015

Melbourne

- Big Christmas, both at our place, Prom kayaking Tidal River, Loch sport, 19 people, Ange bought Fairy Penguin. Felt reverted to Brendon of the moment. No meditation as nothing to resolve...
- Dealing with other things at work better also. Listening to the cosmos and hearing that whatever the answer is, it does not involve working harder.



Freya's sketch of a Gurnard after a short description from Mick.

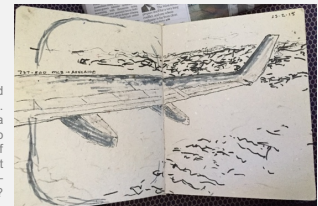
- Replaced a battery in a watch I had gotten attached to – right tool, right battery found in our drawers. Feel good factor – high.
- Ange is not keen on sailing, not in love with the whole 'chance of drowning' thing.

...how nice ...to experience the water and the lake on the little Fairy Penguin. You don't cut through the waves like you do on a larger boat but rather sail over them up and down the crests. I cannot think of a term to describe it but it is a very intimate feeling of knowing the water. You are right down at the water level, see every wave and particularity about the surface. You sail through, across, on and in case (although not to many), even under the water with waves washing alongside and over the deck.



Late call to go camping after basketball, Warburton Bridge, dogs allowed!

- I love seeing music at the Salon (Melbourne Recital Centre), it is the purity and intimacy of the experience as much as the actual music.
- Ewan into his archery, we don't see much of Stella between her bedroom and the mall, and Frey heavy into sketching, Kids are good :).
- A fair bit of holidaying and travel at the moment. The Prom, Lochsport, Coastal road trip to Adelaide, Bower studio Central Australia. Enjoying myself.
- A few interactions with academia lately which have been inspiring.



Back and forth to try and help sort out Adelaide. Immediately warned to a girl in front of me who spent the last 15 minutes of the flight just looking out the window – a kindred spirit?

Serious scare at Lochsport with the kids on the ocean beach. Took all six swimming while everyone else out somewhere. Must have been some bar break open or something as all of a sudden really strong current like a plug hole draining. I could barely hold my own. Recued a couple close by, one of whom (Stell?), got in trouble again by going out to help.

Thank God some shark fishermen with kayaks came down to help out bring all including one or two other people back to shore and safety.



- Reading Freya Stark. Fantastic, all about the experience and the atmosphere – which all good travel is after all.
- Work is hard. Trying to see as just that, hard work, and not a mental health problem. Lines get blurred.
- The trial and execution of the two ringleaders of the Bali Nine are being played out at the moment. Feel criticism of Indonesia is unfounded, this is their country.



Coached kids to a Grand Final win
Henry, Lachlan, Ewan, Reece,
Johbert, and Pantelis

Amoonguna Indigenous community
10-20km East of Alice Springs.
Super engaged kids at the local
school, some local jobs but limited
opportunities later in life – a
generational cycle of alcohol abuse
and worse apparently...



Winx club on tour to
Adelaide.....

- Noticed a couple of kids walking along Hoddle Street on bus trip into work, not more than eight or ten years old looking like had run away from home. Over before I knew it. Need to be quicker and make an effort to help in future.

Rat Park: A study between two groups of rats showing if you provide reasonable living conditions, rats choose not to partake in drugs, take them away and they do...

Bruce K. Alexander, Simon Fraser University.

This is perhaps the scariest thing I have read in a while. I feel I am battling with stability, feel the presence of mental illness perhaps half a step away from me on all sides.

On reading a short poem about how depression can seep into your life.

...if I was to be living for the moment I would be doing other things, sailing, studying, psychology... Instead I am choosing to live for the next ten or twenty years by continuing to work, keeping the money coming in... because that is what I want, more.

I need to gradually introduce these things into my life...

I am thinking what do I want?
Everyone at ARF seems to be in this back slapping have a drink laugh at how we are so great and conquering the world type.

Thoughts on who (Australian /Regional Forum)



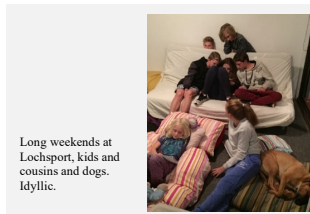
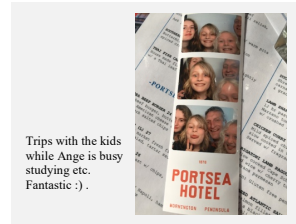
The leviathans are back it seems.
Haunting my nights, swimming in deep circles beneath me instilling paranoia, dwelling on my faults and questioning everything else.

- Having a great time as a family at the moment. Camping, dinner out for Ewie's birthday.
- Marty Veal shot (& killed) himself. Caught between a wife that didn't really love him, and another who did, and his want for family. Ended up compromising job prospects left with limited options. Such a caring, positive guy. Incredible and incredibly sad to me. Michelle (his wife) didn't want Diane (girlfriend) at funeral, she wasn't mentioned in the service, shocking to me how removed from the reality of Marty having just taken his life this is...



Camping Warburton Bridge
(dogs allowed!)

- Stella going through a few issues. Not liking the city, wants to live in the country, doesn't like her friends, Amber excepted.



Long weekends at Lochsport, kids and cousins and dogs. Idyllic.

- Starting to talk about how intertwined work and person is, the need and what it would mean to move to other things, taking a pay cut or leaving Arup altogether...

Timber room sea breezes 'Conrad' jungle tumbling to the rocks below. A bed and a desk, I could spend the rest of my life in a room like this, reading writing...



Casa Nemo, Pulau We (Sabang),



- Trip to Banda Aceh with David O'Brien, enjoyed the travel and academic side immensely. Although conscious was along for the ride.
- Never seem to think I travel much but trips to Sydney, Auckland, Adelaide with work.
- Observing senior people like Barrie Harrop and Roger Poole good at what they do but all encompassed by work in senior years. Not for me, feel there are loftier peaks to be scaled at that time of life.

Everyone has thresholds on what they are prepared to give, we have to decide what this is give it, and do the best we can at it. Letting work envelop us, becoming miserably unhappy is no good for the individual and any goodness for Arup will likely be short lived.

Tim Jarvis happened to be around and agreed. The task of raising funds and organising adventures is immense. You can give everything you have it will be there to ask for more. You need to decide what you can give, give it, and succeed or fail from there...

Talks with people in Adelaide on Work-Life balance.

- Talking to Arup about reducing time, Peter Bowtell, who is trying to talk me out of it. Something has to change sometime...

All work and no play makes
Brendon a dull boy.

- Wayne (Meeg's ex husband passed away). Feel a lot for Jess (and for Meeg in dealing with it all) , but surprised how little I felt about Wayne.

Books read / Music seen / Movies watched:

- The Home of the Blizzard, Sir Douglas Mawson.
- East is West, Freya Starck.
- A mid-summer nights dream, Shakespeare.
- Playing the Great Game, Michael Edwardes.
- The Consolations of Philosophy, Alain de Botton.
- The Art of Travel, Alain de Botton.
- Book of Longing, Leonard Cohen.
- Jack de Crow, A.J.MacKinnon.
- Flinders Quartet, Mozart, the Hunt really good.
- Wild, Reece Witherspoon
- Tomorrowland, George Clooney

Diary 24

2016

Melbourne

- Sensing my time at Arup is at an end. Negative feedback even though was putting in hard. Not upset with that and now drawing a line, obvious Joe, Peter, Paul (Sloman) been talking (likely led by Peter), to a self-reinforced opinion. Don't intend to be hard done by in the separation.
- Escaping to cafes to do some thinking and take time out. Arguments at home as I get more stressed about everything going on.



Trips with kids to NGV
always good :).

There is a higher calling out there somewhere to explore to link to higher causes. Causes of knowing, of happiness?...

Don't we all have some responsibility to explore that?

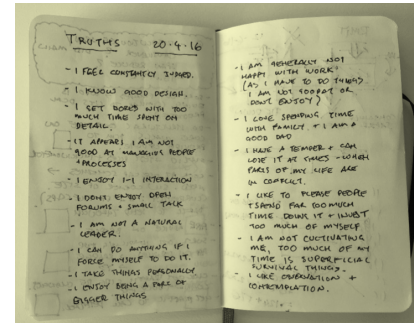
- Stousses between Arup and James Murray Parkes people on work I bought in for them to do together. Disappointing how poor people are at communication and making things work. An engineering trait!?
- Feeling the fact that my body is showing wear from the years, feeling strong but carryovers from various injuries. ...generally from good times and adventures however.
- Easter holidays at Loch camping on LJ, and a Singapore Trip with Ange's teaching job over there through Deakin. A lot of fun and excitement with the kids.

If we solve things through analogistic thinking, putting things into forms we can understand (which I think we do) then by giving our kids more and more complex concepts to use as analogies, we are better equipping them to solve problems we can't.

Ditto with diversity ...more diversity, the analogies available to a pool of people with which to solve problems are far greater.

after noticing Ewan playing a game on the iPad

- Gave \$50 to a distressed woman muttering about abusive partners and restraining orders etc in a cafe, felt good to be in a position to help.



Home truths jotted down in a cafe

- Started Introduction to Psychology (on-line course). Feels good to be doing something I am interested in, like a proper human being.
- Coping better with work but not enjoying, scenario of it crashing and burning doesn't scare me.

[Feels like the desert] leaves you in no doubt as to the law of the land. Desert first, humans [second] by permission and force. The desert is happy to bide its time ...it is patient and timeless and it will persist



Dubai trip with work, fantastic.

- Feel like I survive by knowing just a little more than the next person, but I am time poor and never get to understand fully.

"...honesty to function was all that mattered.
There was really no ugliness anywhere, just
eyes which refused to break old habits."

Robin Boyd
The Australian Ugliness

- I write resignation letters in draft, semi intending to send. It helps clarify what the issues are. At the moment it is RMIT New Academic Street. Manifestly inadequate fee (guess who put that in – JB!).
- June – effectively made up my mind to leave or take long service leave at least.
- Chairing VIEWS (Victoria Indigenous Engineering Winter School), learning about indigenous ways, a bit ad hoc and unreliable by European expectations, enjoying the academic atmosphere.



VIEWS (Victorian Indigenous
Engineering Winter School)

In other news, I saw a shooting star this morning whilst walking Bronny. Of the short and bright type, over before you have realised it is happening. Lovely to see however. Am enjoying the time with Ewie reading about the universe at night before we go to bed. Must get him a telescope for Christmas...

- Making use of counselling sessions at the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Some layers in the bigger issues I am
facing at the moment:

- Fatigued (and jaded)
- Others perceptions of me
- Career Change
- Meaning
- Finances
- Labels

- Notice I get dragged into the crap at work. I tend to take on the difficult things to make sure they get done. This served me well in Singapore, not so much in Melbourne where the trick is to float above it!

...the disparity between my
values and what I do at work
a has been growing.

Feedback from EAP counsellor.

Other aspects to issues I am facing:

- Frustration
- Yearning for internal Study
- Negative Statements

- Went to a 'The School of Life' talk last night about Jean Paul Satre. Room was full of people like me, interested, searching.

It is a machine this society we have created. ...and I am every bit a part of it. Work, struggle, creat[ing] meaning that is precarious and hollow. The human mind needs to feel that sense of mattering for its own sanity. I am bored and tired of it. I want to do things on my own terms ...I want to observe and experience and perhaps write about it.

- Seeing another psychologist, this time referred by a GP.

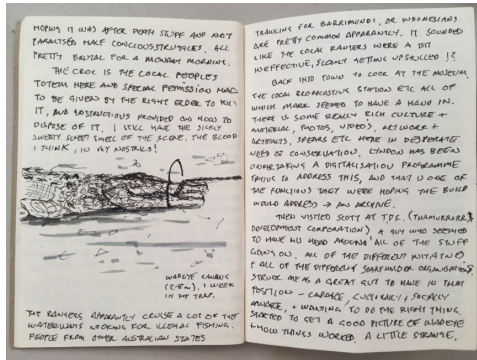
...not so much during this week of sailing. The cleansing was walking out the door of Arup, as sudden as that. It makes me realise what an all pervading negative influence it has been.

I don't think I have depression – maybe a light case but it is more disillusionment and struggling with getting what I need out of life.

On parting ways with Arup

- Commenced long service leave from Arup with the ultimatum that something must change on return. Reflection on the crap that is Melbourne office and the behaviours of people. Starting to do things

with David O'Brien and University of Melbourne, and enjoying it immensely.



Extract from mini diary kept on Wadey trip (Bower Studio).

- Trying to meditate and align myself with truths around me. Liking the idea of being a modern day mystic hippie.

On going to bed that night we had a conversation [with] Ewan [who] asked me [if] he thought differently to everyone else. I explained to him that it was a gift, that it was because he thought more deeply and creatively than most people could. I explained it was because he was an intelligent kid, far more intelligent than most other kids.

This preceded a dream of kids ganging up and bullying Ewan...



Bushland, out of Wadey, N.T.

- Reading The Mind of God. Silly to me to entertain a magical free will God. It seems natural that a set of laws will apply, the most basic of them being continuity (conservation of energy/matter). The real question is how did it start? Why is it here in the first place.

There must be something in how our minds and our thinking interacts with time, are related to... or something.

If infinite mass creates points where time slows to a stop, these feel like sticking points, how can these be expanding in sync with the rest of the universe – there must be a warping of some sort between three dimensional space and time, a stretching?

It is difficult to break free from three-dimensional fixed thinking...

I have strong feelings for adventure and change deep in me at the moment, they need to come to the surface and work their way through.

I want to finish a few projects – tidy up poetry on Sunda, learn an instrument, to web author, make a book on poetry through apple or similar. I need to re-read diaries and summarise them for a start!

What will it be – 3 ½ months – already feeling too short. 100 days of sunshine. Looking for enlightenment. Voyage to a new world (100 days passage from England to Australia?). Hermit-ology, Looking for Tao, finding a cave.

...on looming Long Service Leave.



Memorial stone for a Camelia tree we cut down. Made and placed by Freya in the garden without our knowing. Hadn't realised it was the first tree she could climb and they used the flowers to decorate the car. Very upset, the poor little thing...

- Reading the subtle Art of not giving a Fuck, Care about less by choosing what you care about, take a counter intuitive approach to life.

It also mentions our base instinct is to matter enough that we will be recognised when we are gone. I agree with this but also believe it to be futile and a red herring in life...

I need to piggy back off of others in a form. Millions of monks have meditated seriously for millennia, hermits have pondered the truths of Tao in exiled caves in the hills. Brendon is not going to achieve more than they have by setting out from the same ground zero.

... the other thing I did feel during the time away was nature. I found far more success in sensing and interacting with nature and the environment than I did in meditation. It is more of a syncing than a withdrawal. There is energy there, there is time, there is purity and depth to tap into.

Feelings meditation is not for me, nature (and perhaps Tao), is.



...extract from mini diary kept while sailing the lakes.



...Brendon sailing the Gippsland Lakes :).

- Potential career focus shifts:
 - Counselling suicide help line.
 - PhD (in teaching, volume, light, services, CO2, timber, participatory Design, Aid work?).
 - NGO start with David
 - Just be...
 - Write a Book

Books read / Music Watched / Courses taken / Movies watched:

- The Martian, Andy Weir.
- Tomorrowland, George Clooney.
- The Mind of God, Paul Davies.
- Foundations of Psychology, RMIT(Open2Study).
- Talking to My Country, Stan Grant.
- The Big Drop, James Rickards.
- The Australian Ugliness, Robyn Boyd.
- Into the Blue: Boldly going where Cook has gone before, Tony Horwitz.
- The Subtle Art of Not Giving a fuck, Mark Manson.
- The Fabric of the Cosmos, Brian Greene.
- Learned Optimism, Martin Seligman.
- My Family and Other Animals, Gerald Durrell
- Latitude 37, MRC The Salon, Bach (and his three sons).
- Modern Psychology and Buddhism, Robert Wright, Princeton University.
- Introduction to Psychology, University of Toronto Scarborough.
- Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind
- Lust for Life (Vincent van Gogh, Kirk Douglas)



The prom, a welcome constant in our summer holidays.

Diary 25

2017

Melbourne

- Time off, realising the less you have to do the less efficient you become. The important part is to have some time to explore and think.
- Three months off and I feel like a real proper person again. Am clear I do not want to go back to how things were.



...NZ family holiday, fantastic!

- Disillusioned with Arup and key people in Melbourne. Also recognise I have something to do with it also but I have taken an open approach to sorting sh\$t out.
- Starting to figure out what I can do. Intimidating, stressful, but nowhere near as stressful as Arup.

Everyone has this implicit assumption of bigger, faster, better.

I need ...some realism, ...calmness and things worthy of doing.

Fail[ing] is not really failing if you are true to what you are doing.
...there is a form of beauty embedded in that, infused through it.

Difficult to see on the receiving end. ...because we place so much weight on what others think. So much weight on outcomes. So much weight on everything.

Please just lay off for a bit. Be quiet, be accepting, be loving and nice and let that be enough.

Thoughts on the way forward.

- Met with Alan Pert (UniMelb). Liked him, how great would it be if I could get something like that to work. Feel I have things to offer...

- Negotiated **Leaving Arup**. They don't do this well. All the hallmarks of Peter Bowtell behind things. Lack of communication and dealing with issues openly, reinforced when I heard he had been espousing my failures at AGAM.

Played with a straight bat inviting him out to let him to raise things but he didn't. Pretty much confirmed it is the right decision.

Ended up giving me reasonable terms including 6m notice even though they had 3 in the contract, maybe they did the right thing, or maybe they were put off by me seeing HR lawyers and mentioning detrimental effects to mental health lol.

Paul Sloman ended up making the call which was good, a flash of leadership that was missing in Melbourne. Officially left on the premise of good terms (in the deal, in the surrounding feelings, and the public message), which was important to me.

Don't Panic

...on life after Arup.

Brendon, don't let yourself be small...

- Setting up Innate to do some private work.

innate engineering

- Industry full of loud people, not bad, just loud. I want to be above that but not sure if I have the strength of character, or intelligence.
- Like to think humans have an in-built sense of right and wrong, probably arising from treating others as you would like to be treated (thoughts after seeing Peter Singer).
- Getting a few raised eyebrows when I mention getting into academia. Fells right however. Expecting a wave of 'down' to arrive but very happy for the moment.

Be soft, Do not let the
world make you hard,
Do not let the pain
make you hate, Do not
let the bitterness
steal you sweetness,
Take pride that even
though the rest of the
world may disagree,
you still believe it to
be a beautiful place.

Tumblr poem (Tyler Knott?)
that resonates.

- Assisting the Australian Ballet Board (voluntary) with building advice, getting to go to the ballet every month with Ange, fantastic.
- Went to stay with Stella for a week in Tassie while she did work experience at IMAS. Loving this more diverse less working life.

...enjoying ...not be[ing] too confronting with
hard work and responsibility.

A dash of laziness, with a healthy shot of burned
the fuck out from Arup still. The whole Arup
thing affected me more deeply than I cared to
recognise, or maybe could recognise...

- Resonating with stories from Cooks landing in QLD and aborigines being distressed at seeing chickens etc held in captivity. Siding with the animists who see us as one of many animals inhabiting the world.

Less and less do I feel I have truly free will, the
more I read and consider what is out there. There
are too many external influences, our minds are
too weak to truly have independent free will.

Does it matter. I am not sure

- 50th birthday parties, everyone is adult, doing family things, coping with illness, physical and mental...
- Seeing and doing interesting stuff. Feels a bit like a renaissance in learning to live. Not that I didn't before but now I can appreciate it all.

- Troubles dealing with James Murray Parkes. Self professed Savant! Dealing with at arms length concentrating on my own lane. Others like Aaron and Neil great. Starting a few regular catch ups.

When I was growing up I was never the smartest. I did ok but was never top.

That set my approach to work – not the smartest but I will be the hardest working. What I lack in intellect I will make up for in effort. And truth. I always held to the truth, when I didn't know something I said it and took whatever came (which was usually understanding and appreciation at having asked!).

- Sue Cooper passed away (cancer). Such a nice individual, saw her a few weeks prior at Nic's 50th in good spirits and looking well. We weren't close but had one of those 'I get you' type relationships – easy to pick up at any time anywhere.

I believe in Tao ...and positive energy and karma
and all of that be it science based energy or just
the virtual equivalent that exists through the
unwritten rules of human interaction ...what we
can/should expect from others in a larger
community of consciousness'.

Teaism is a cult founded on the adoration of the
beautiful among the sordid facts of everyday
existence. It inculcates purity and harmony, the
mystery of mutual charity, the romanticism of the
social order. It is essentially a worship of the
Imperfect, as it is a tender attempt to accomplish
something possible in this impossible thing we
know as life.

Kakuzo Okakura
The Book of Tea

Day 3 of positive Bren. Still going well. ...feel I should give up
coffee, cant help but think it is not good for me.

...taking the opportunity to be inspired by tea-ism and introduce 5
minutes of perfection into my life instead – chamomile or green tea,
in a cup...

- I worry about how the kids will get on in life. I feel like we have been so incredibly fortunate.
- Feeling uptight at the moment.

At least I can tick off the Brendon is something else other than an engineer box in this life – quite a big one to be honest.

On becoming an academic.

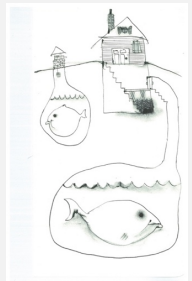
I have everything I have asked for, it just needs to play out now to see if it is what I was searching for. I have a good feeling about where I am and where things are going. Spider senses all feeling good...

There are two types of tired I suppose.
One is a dire need of sleep,
the other is a dire need of peace.

Anonymous
Tumbler (fyp-psychology)

Denizens of the Deep.
Everyone trails these
behind them. ...to varying
degrees of menace, of
darkness, anxiety, fear and
loathing.

From a Tumblr
blog, Arkories.



Four days on LJ, cut short
by rainageddon.

Books read / Events attended / Movies watched:

- Dark Emu, Black Seeds, Bruce Pascoe
- Sapiens, Yuval Noah Harari
- The Geography of Thought, Richard E Nisbett
- The Master and his Emissary, Iain McGilchrist.
- What are the Important Things, Peter Singer, The School of Life.
- Clive Hamilton on Waking Up , The School of Life.
- Christian Dior Exhibition, NGV.
- Hokusai Exhibition, NGV.
- Blade Runner (original)
- La La Land
- How to let go of the world – and concentrate on things climate change can't change

Common Threads (to be consolidated)

Of thinking:

not the smartest but I will be the hardest working. What I lack in intellect I will make up for in effort. And truth. I always held to the truth

I need to be able to feel I am better than the average.. I need something that gives status, that I can hold in front of me and be proud to say that this is what I am pursuing.

I like recording things, ...it is a derivative to producing things.

Like and believe in taking a counter intuitive approach to life.

Leading through external energy not a strength, relating to people and small group situations are. I engender confidence and trust. I know myself well.

Internal negative statements and lack of confidence common threads.

Take on first principle stuff at work and do what is required, even though don't enjoy it. Notice in hindsight others don't! Melbourne a mess when I came back people have been asleep at the wheel.

Always thinking, even when stressed, noticing the patterns of life and thinking about the human condition.

Always stressed at work, feel like it is killing me.

Always tired and in need of a long break / sabbatical to spend time understanding the world and me within it.

Visually and Feelings oriented.

Intense concentration or singlemindedness in getting something resolved.

Up and Down nature with depressive episodes, not particularly serious but includes non-serious thoughts of escape through suicide, the odd frustrated temper tantrum, destroying things close to me on odd occasion (cutting off my nose to spite face my father used to call it).

Appreciating humour and positive thinking without necessarily subscribing to it in practice.

Recurrent darkness, mainly around life in Melbourne (particularly after travel), experiencing the normalcy of everyday living.

Seeing cycles inherent in everything, feelings, attitudes to life, natural phenomena, financial markets, structures around ...everything.

Experiences connecting across the space and time in life. Continuous emotions around places and people, washing over me reflecting forward and back through time. Feelings of bigger things around me 'meant to be's and 'not meant to be's.

Appreciation of travel and observing the world and people in it. Fascination with science/philosophy/universe. Appreciation of being infinitesimally small in the scheme of things.

Interest in religion, philosophy, ways of living life.

Trying to do real things.

Want to work in a third world country for altruistic reasons.

Recognition I also want things and to live life on the front foot. Material things, money, renown, respect and satisfaction knowing I have mastered or conquered some things in life. Expending energy, anger even in my dealing with the world.

Always cognisant of the big picture, collecting thinking along the way in life that will hopefully be useful in the future. Bias to sacrificing the now for the future.

Up-tight around decision making. Need to find things out for myself, need to make the mistakes myself (can rarely be told!).

Always feeling like I am out of balance, needing to simplify and centre my being.

Dreams with repeating themes of huge waves, water, labyrinths, often times falling from heights.

Going over thoughts and things in life that caused embarrassment or regret, finding difficulty in letting them go. Usually late at night unable to sleep.

Always tracking things, finances, but also other things. The list growing with time.

Driven to be productive and get ahead.

Enjoying grass roots tuff of life around me. Streets and people in them etc.

Empathy and interest in others. Particularly homeless and people on the streets ,but never going the full way in doing something about (other than things like CEO sleep out etc). Thinking maybe one day?

Feeling I am not strong or smart, this has been changing with time I admit (getting better).

Like supporting the underdog, or something real thing, loyalty over many other things (capability, etc)...

Tendency to feeling platonic love towards others. Yearning for love and companionship, sharing, intimate understanding, caring (perhaps coming from the accident).

Life experience is full of past associations, feelings, atmospheres etc.

Seeing life from different lenses, from shoeshine boys on the streets of La Paz to the scale of the Amazon jungles and man and progress' ingress. Into them for example. Very Koyaanisqatsi.

I love flying and the perspective it gives you (not to mention the time to yourself to think and write).

Strong feelings of empathy to others and all life. Feel the need to protect or speak up for mistreated people, or animals cruelty.

Experience focused - I enjoy walking out into the cold at night to look at the stars, I also enjoy getting into the city early in the morning and experiencing it as it is waking up.

Changing values from strength and efficiency, towards weakness and vulnerability. In this however resilience (a form of strength) by living and thinking from first principles.

Questioning singular frameworks, love, working for a living in the same place.

Feeling like I have a guardian Angel looking over me. In so many ways. I am generally a lucky person.

1967 is the year of the Goat – Intelligent and reserved but also live tempestuous lives. Sounds about right but I imagine my life feels more tempestuous than it really is.

No such thing as an easy living a repeated theme. You get what you pay for in there also I think.

Travel and work risks don't seem so bad when you are in the middle of them, perceptions of risk increase with distance.

I love the feeling of salt drying in my hair after an ocean swim.

Feel the weight of looking after work and home, of having to make things work. Results in worry and hard work.

Wanting it all, everything life has to offer.

Philosophy and theosophy feels too complicated. Answers lie somewhere simpler, in nature or in-between.

Writing good intentions in my diary telling myself, one day...

I need a sense of work, and creation, and experience

I don't think I am that much smarter than the next person. I do think I am a little smarter though. I also think I am better adjusted and have a better view of reality.

I don't have drive but something similar, more harmonious, a gentle 'being' and contributing to the flow.

Ange & kids contribute greatly to my happiness.

Appreciating life after the accident, that hat may never have been. Experiences, Ewan, Freya!

Like to think I maintain naivety and childhood approach to life. Recognise this is not protection from it however.

Tendency for health issues to be concerning in light of my accident, feeling the long term is not guaranteed.

At 19 I was a straight laced boring predictable dork. I am the direct extension of that now, with some travel and the accident mixed in there, even at 44 I was feeling the need to become a person not a series of events...

Falun Dafa (or Gong). I actually like the idea of the religion or philosophy. Meditation and slow moving exercise and a high emphasis on morality. Funny the morality I think I could take or leave.

Slow moving exercises work for me. Tai Chi after the accident.

Odd stabbing pains or electrical shorts (or similar) when working hard and wearing stress.

I am anti-conspiracist. Believe the random and convenient instead.

A focus on creating things that will leave some sort of legacy. No matter how small, even if just this diary.

Tendency in problem solving to immerse and attach, wrestle things try to the ground. Tendency to obsess?

Having love in my life is important. Core to emotion, understanding and feeling understood, non-serious fantasy, hope, alternatives, coping...

The act of going from one place to another has something about it. Gives things purpose. That is why I am less inclined to racing (sailing). Going in small circles can only ever have limited meaning.

Of nature

Bashful and Shy.

Capable.

Likes to please.

Fear of refusal, failure / reprimand. This comes from my sense of self-worth residing in others and not me.

Empathetic.

Anal? Like to finish things, organise and arrange to be able to say that they are mine.

More right brain than left.

Not quick on my feet.

Short temper which can blinds my control but never to extremes.

Easily led.

Enjoy observing & appreciating the world around me.

Enjoy self-pity.

Little manic depressive.

Heart led in a good way but capable of hate also.

Don't like being sold things.

I am an excessive worrier and have trouble keeping things out of my mind.

Knowing I talk too much (on a personal level), wear my heart on my sleeve, am an idealist, I like to experience.

I have a strong sense of justice, right & wrong.

Need external affirmation of doing a good job (doesn't everyone?).

- Not about a lot of exercise. People who live longer do their own work, use manual tools etc. Walking is the only thing proven to stop cognitive decline.
- Financial security is more important than income.
- Long term actions rather than short term - eat simply and not to excess.
- Unhappiness takes around eight years off of your life.

Longevity lessons from people who study the Blue Zones