



GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"10 minutes a month that could liberate you.TM"

YOU'RE NOT READY FOR DEATH

Issue 25-05, 3 March 2025

298 people engaged in conversations with me over the last 30 days.
Read past newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive here](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

People aim guns at your head and start squeezing their triggers to end your life. Are you at peace with that? If not, you might not be ready for death...or life.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

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and click each of these to follow me there:



TWO THINGS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

What fears or unfinished matters prevent you from being at peace with death? Are you truly living in a way that aligns with your deepest values and purpose?

Recommendation: Use this as a journaling prompt until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Engage in a **death reflection exercise**.

1. Imagine you have one month to live. What would you prioritize? What conversations would you have? What unfinished business would you resolve?
2. Write down what stands out. Are there fears, regrets, or unfulfilled desires? Are you living in alignment with your values and purpose?
3. Take one action based on your reflection. Reach out to someone, start something meaningful, or let go of something unnecessary.

This practice can help bring peace with death by ensuring you are fully present and engaged in life.

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WHY . . .

...this topic today? It's just me continuing my calling. Read my blog post of a brief speech I just gave related to the topic [here](#).

Remember: "We only got 86, 400 seconds in a day to / Turn it all around or to throw it all away / We gotta tell 'em that we love 'em while we got the chance to say / Gotta live like we're dying" Pop Artist Kris Allen, from his song "Live Like We're Dying." [Listen to the song here](#).

STUDY. PRACTICE. TEACH. LIBERATE.™

As always, send me your latest dance moves by replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

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YOU DON'T WANT TO LIVE LONGER

Issue 25-04, 17 Feb 2025

258 people engaged in conversations with me over the last 30 days. Read past newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive here](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

What are your rituals? If you don't know or don't have any, you don't want to live better or longer. Science show rituals improve health, healing, and longevity.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

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TWO THINGS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

What rituals already exist in your life? How might you create new ones—small or large—that bring greater peace, healing, and purpose into your world?

Recommendation: Use this as a journaling prompt until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Create a simple ritual according to [my blog post here](#). Let me know how it goes.

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NEWS UPDATES

Forgive Me: I know I missed an issue. OBE (Overcome By Events). New job, bad weather, health and computer issues combined to create the perfect storm. I'm back on track. Thanks for your understanding and grace.

Remember: "All great spirituality teaches about letting go of what you don't need and who you are not. Then, when you can get little enough and naked enough and poor enough, you'll find that the little place where you really are is ironically more than enough and is all that you need." Richard Rohr, Franciscan friar, quoted in [Goodreads](#).

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BRIDGING DIVIDES

Issue 25-02, 21 Jan 2025

304 people engaged in conversations with me over the last 30 days.
Read past newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive here](#).

Thanks, Alpha Readers. You helped me get my Introduction to it's Beta version, which you may read [here](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Divides get bridged by quieter moments of connection, *not* by louder arguments.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

Don't keep us a secret: [click here](#) to forward this to friends,
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ONE THING TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

How can you show someone with different views that you see them as more than their politics?

Recommendation: Use this as a journaling prompt until next time.

TWO THINGS FOR YOU TO TRY

1. Think of someone with whom you disagree, perhaps strongly; compliment them on their admirable qualities unrelated to politics—such as dedication to family or a skill they possess.
2. Acknowledge their imperfections as you do your own. Exercise patience and choose to prioritize the relationship over the need to be right.

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NEWS UPDATES

About Me: I am excited to announce that George Mason University has asked me to teach the class, Spirituality and Healing (Religious Studies 341). I'm scheduled to start Wednesday. Wish me luck!

The Dance: With that, The Dance Newsletter will focus entirely and intensely on this topic. I describe the course like this:

1. A cross-cultural investigation of human understandings of the relationship between spirituality and health.
2. We will examine beliefs about spiritual causes of sickness and health and spiritual techniques of healing in a variety of world cultures placed in the context of the religious beliefs of those cultures.

Remember: "I am human because you are human. My humanity is caught up in yours. And if you are dehumanized, I am dehumanized." Desmond Tutu, Archbishop and Nobel Laureate, quoted in [PBS News Hour](#).

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GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

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RITUAL & HEALTH

Issue 25-01, 6 Jan 2025

348 people danced with me at [GilGilbert.net](#) over the last 30 days.
Read past newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive here](#).

Three more friends started following the development of my nonfiction book, [Radical Respect](#). That brings the total to seven, with some assisting as **Alpha Readers**. **Thank you all!** On the holiday break I didn't prepare any new Alpha drafts. If you haven't yet, you can read my last one [here](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Recent scientific research affirms the profound connection between rituals, health, and healing. Apply that to being healthier in 2025.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

In your email message, [click here](#) to email this to friends. Follow me [here](#):



TWO THINGS ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

Is your dance mature or childish? Mature people accept the scientific connection between sound rituals and improved health. They then seek to create new rituals or develop existing ones. Childish people dismiss rituals as "silly" or "superstitious." They fail to appreciate their potential benefits due to a lack of open-mindedness.

How does your behavior appear? Do your actions show your acceptance of the evidence? Rituals reduce stress. They improve physical health, enhance social connections, and increase emotional regulation & resilience. Do you live like you believe it.

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Research the topic to find an appropriate ritual to add to your life or pick one from the list below. Try it for a while & let me know how it goes.

1. Group rituals: Prayer, meditation, or communal celebrations. These foster a sense of belonging and shared identity.
2. Personal rituals: Yoga, tai chi, prayer, or mindfulness meditation produce measurable health benefits. These include improved cardiovascular health, enhanced immune function, and reduced chronic pain. Other personal rituals have helped people process grief, sadness, or anger. That contributed to their emotional healing. These include things like lighting a candle for a loved one or journaling.

- 3. Traditional and indigenous rituals: These often serve as mechanisms for intergenerational healing. They help people address trauma that spans lifetimes.
- 4. Secular rituals: These include things like pre-performance routines or personal habits. They create focus and meaning that enhances performance and emotional stability. Pre-performance routines might include things like the following:
 - A speaker spends five minutes in a quiet place. There, she engages in mindful breathing, shadow rehearsal, and visualization. She imagines a successful and engaging speech with an attentive audience.
 - A basketball player always listens to the same playlist or laces her shoes in a specific order. She may always bounce the ball three times before a free throw.

Want to know more? See below.

In your email message, [click here](#) to email this to friends. Follow me here:



MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS:
SOME WHY ANSWERS

Rituals: Provide us with a sense of structure and predictability. That can reduce stress and anxiety by helping us feel more grounded and in control. Rituals activate the parasympathetic nervous system. That promotes relaxation and lowers the levels of cortisol (a stress hormone).

Group Rituals: Have increased oxytocin (the "bonding hormone"). That reinforces trust and empathy within communities.

Individual Rituals: Encourage regularity and discipline. That promotes healthy behaviors, like better sleep, consistent exercise, or healthier eating patterns. These rituals also provide a method to navigate challenging life transitions or traumas. That fosters psychological resilience.

Spiritual Rituals: Give individuals a sense of purpose and transcendence. That contributes to lower rates of depression and greater life satisfaction.

Secular Rituals: May include pre-performance routines or personal habits. These create meaning and focus that enhances performance and emotional stability.

Remember: "A daily ritual is a way of saying I'm voting for myself, I'm taking care of myself." Mariel Hemingway, actress, author, and health advocate. (Attributed, no definitive source.)

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Cindy and I wish you the absolute best in the New Year, whatever that looks like for you!

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422 people danced with me over the last 30 days. Read past newsletters in the archive at [GilGilbert.net](#).

4 more friends agreed to follow the development of my non-fiction book, *Radical Respect*—some assisting as **Alpha Readers**. **Thanks gents!** You can read [here](#) **today's latest draft Introduction** at your leisure.

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Curiosity: ask hard questions, explore new ideas, adapt to change.

- It fueled the American Revolution.
- It led to countless scientific & technological innovations.
- It brought jazz & rock; Hollywood & Silicon Valley; the Berlin Wall's fall.
- It sparked the civil rights movement.

We thrive when deeply curious.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

TWO THINGS ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

What people or groups hold views that fuel any fear you may have about the future? What do you think would happen if you tried to get to know them?

Recommendation: Use these as a journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Stop saying, "goodwill toward men." Instead, deliver goodwill to people who differ from you by showing some genuine curiosity about them. See below.

CURIOUS?

Read "How to See Humanity in Anyone," available online [here](#).

Read the Wikipedia entry about the impact of Daryl Davis, an African American blues musician who befriended a KKK Imperial Wizard [here](#).

Watch a 10 min video on an interview with Davis [here](#).

Watch the full one-hour interview with Davis [here](#).

Remember: "Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization," in *Peace: The Words and Inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi* (2007). Auckland: PQ Blackwell Limited, 34.

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As I celebrate my Christmas faith, I wish you the very best happiness as you celebrate your Holidays—whatever they are!

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352 people danced with me over the last 30 days. Read the last newsletter in the newsletter archive at [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Practice Radical Respect. True respect is not a passive acknowledgment. It is an active, transformative practice that builds bridges, connecting people who have differences and growing in them deeper understandings.

It starts with **recognizing** the inherent value and dignity of every individual as a fundamental principle of human interaction. Do we? Can we improve?

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

TWO THINGS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR DANCE

Listen Actively: When engaging in conversations with those who hold different views

- focus on truly hearing what they are saying without forming rebuttals in your mind.
- Ask clarifying questions to ensure understanding.

Acknowledge Common Ground.

- In moments of tension or disagreement, actively identify and affirm shared values or goals.
- Use this to strengthen your basis for dialogue and connection.

Recommendation: Use these as a journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Pick One of the Following.

1. *Engage with a Cultural or Belief System Outside Your Own:* Attend an event, read literature, or have a conversation to learn directly from others' perspectives.
2. *Practice a 'Radical Respect Challenge':* For one week, consciously approach every interaction with heightened respect and reflect on the outcomes.

Remember: "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools," Martin Luther King, Jr. (22 March 1964 Speech in St. Louis, MO; reported in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on 23 March 1964.)

ASKER

I need your help with a few things.

1. Go to my Social media links at the bottom, follow me, and get someone else to follow me, too. The numbers matter!
2. Get someone else to a) create an account on [gilgilbert.net](#) or b) subscribe to my site [here](#).
3. **Be one of my Alpha Readers and get cool stuff.** Go to my blog here to see what that means: [Alpha or Beta?](#)

I can't do this without you; with you, I can! Thanks for your partnership.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Engage. If you chose to try #1 (above, Engage with a Cultural or Belief System Outside Your Own . . .), here are some options for the holiday season:

- African American Cultural Observance: Kwanzaa 26 Dec-1 Jan
- Buddhism: Bodhi Day, 8 Dec
- Christianity: Numerous (try an internet search)
- Humanism: HumanLight, 23 Dec
- Judaism: Hanukkah, 28 Dec + 8 days
- Paganism/Wicca: Yule, 21 Dec to 1 Jan

You can do an internet search to find related events local to you. And if you wonder how I, a believer in Christ, can suggest this, it's simple: **Radical Respect.** Learning about, befriending, and loving people does not mean we agree with them.

Think with me for a moment: with whom does the universe (or your higher power or philosophy or God) interact every day? In my faith, believers accompanied folks into other temples with God's blessing (read 2 Kings 5:18-19 in context (or access it [here](#)). I can't count the number of people of divergent faiths, cultures, and political views Jesus interacted with *regularly*—often with a smile.

Respond to any or all of my assertions above (email me). I'm curious, and disagreement is just fine!

React to any of my email newsletters and submit a success story to share and encourage others in the next newsletter. You can remain anonymous; just say so.

Remember to check your junk email folder and change your email settings so you don't miss my newsletter or blog updates.

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More than 282 people engaged in conversations with me over the last 30 days. Read the last newsletter in the newsletter archive at [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Spirituality and religion are different (so said 70.27% of people polled).

Respondents tended to see **spirituality** as marginally more personal and positive, e.g., one sample said, "being self-aware...so that I love

others...." **Religion**—also marginally—was seen as more organizational and negative, e.g., one sample said "A mechanism...to subjugate [*sic.*] and control...."

Reflect: *then consider sharing this with others.*

[*Share this*](#) *with friends.*

TWO THINGS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR DANCE

Wonder *Why*. People have reasons for their opinions, rooted in their experiences. Understanding doesn't mean agreement, and sincerely *wanting* to understand is valuable relationship currency. Why the different answers?

Mindful Listening. As you answer the *why* question, practice deep active listening to each of these assertions and to your own answers—listening *to understand*, not to formulate a response or an argument.

Do you affirm that spirituality and religion *are* different, or that one or both of the views above stem from truth? Wonder *why* you do and engage in mindful listening to your own responses.

Recommendation: *Use these as a journaling prompts until next time.*

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Respond (in your journal or to me via email) to the quote from Franciscan, Brennan Manning, below. Why do you think he says that? What might have influenced his conclusion?

Remember: **"The institutional church has become a wounder of the healers rather than a healer of the wounded,"** Brennan Manning (Author of *The Ragamuffin Gospel*).

A REPEAT OF MY "ASKER"

First, let me say thanks for your support, readership, and encouraging comments about the newsletter, the website, and my writing. Knowing that I have encouraged you to some degree makes me feel *helpful*. Now I need YOUR help.

A brief background. You may not know that traditional publishing *today* (vs. self-publishing or hybrid publishing), looks for an author to have around 5,000 to 10,000 social media connections before they'll even consider them for publication. As my book manuscripts near readiness for pitching to publishers in 2025, I need help boosting my social media numbers.

So **here's my "Ask."** If you would follow me on all my Social Media platforms (see the bottom of this newsletter), and then try to get 10 others (or more!) to do the same AND subscribe to my site, I would be very grateful.

I can't do this without you; with you, I can! Thanks for your partnership.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Church is dead; long live the church. Consider that a pure and cleansing spirit is not defined by going to, membership in, or alignment with an existing church as popularly defined today.

Don't believe me—I am a chief screw up—so search for yourselves. But in *my* faith, a pure, unpolluted spirituality (or religion)

- Personally acts to liberate or meet the needs of our communities' most vulnerable, (James 1:27) and does so secretly (Matt 6:3-4)
- Is a personal, continual growth of the *mind* that comes from *thinking*, (Romans 12:1-2)
- Is ***not*** something that harms others—though we will always have people who pervert it into evil in the name of religion or spirituality and science or knowledge (2 Peter 3:16; 1 Tim 6:20)
- Actively avoids such perversions of spirituality (or religion).

Respond to any or all of my assertions above (email me). I'm curious, and disagreement is just fine!

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ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

We often have inner conflict or conflict with others because we often don't *know* why we think what we think. But every major philosophy, spiritual or non-spiritual, stresses the importance of this *knowing* to our well-being.

For example, several New Testament passages highlight the importance of self-awareness and critical examination of one's beliefs and reasoning. My favorite is Romans 12:2. When translated literally, it says to *be continually transformed by the continual renewing of [our] minds*.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

ONE THING TO CONSIDER IN YOUR DANCE

Observe your thoughts. As you grow your personal *mindfulness* this week, pay attention—purposfully and without judgment—to your thoughts. Observe them as they temporarily pass by, realizing that they are neither good nor bad, they are just real. Awareness of your thoughts is the key.

Recommendation: Use this as a journaling prompt until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Once you have become fully present with your thoughts, select one, write it down, and try to answer *Why* questions about it. (Why do I think that? Why is it important to me? Why is it on my mind? Etc.).

Remember: "Realize deeply that the present moment is all you ever have," and "The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it," Eckhart Tolle (Author of *The Power of Now*).

AN "ASKER"

First, let me say thanks for your support, readership, and encouraging comments about the newsletter, the website, and my writing. Knowing that I have encouraged you to some degree makes me feel *helpful*. Now I need YOUR help.

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MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

If you're in Northern Virginia, **enroll at George Mason University and register for the in-person spring course, "Spirituality and Healing"** (RELI 341). If you're 60 or older, you can attend for FREE (see the [Virginia Law here](#)). January 21st to May 14th, Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m., Horizon Hall, Room 2017.

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ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Develop your take on "the big question" (mentioned in the last newsletter, What's the meaning or purpose of life?) by *cultivating mindfulness*.

Develop is synonym for *grow*—and we all want that.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

TWO THINGS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR DANCE

- Practice being fully present in each moment through mindfulness exercises, meditation, deep breathing, etc.
- Let go of dwelling on the past or worrying about the future: focus on now.

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

TWO THINGS FOR YOU TO TRY

Mindful Breathing. For five or ten minutes, focus on your breath as you draw it in and release it out of your body. Pay attention to the sensation of air moving through your nostrils, your chest rising and falling, or the feeling in your belly as it expands and contracts.

Mindful Relaxation (with guided imagery). This is a 15-minute relaxation exercise I've used with great success in helping people grow from traumatic stress. Find a quiet space free from interruptions; turn off the lights; lay down; then play [this recording](#) and follow the instructions.

Remember: "We must slow down to a human tempo and we'll begin to have time to listen to the music of the real world—the subtle harmonies of being and presence which are lost in the noise of human busyness." Thomas Merton

THANKS FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

I am on the mend with medication that's working wonders and a follow-up in a couple weeks. Thank you all for your positive thoughts & prayers.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Read my blog post on many ways to mindfulness [Here](#). Let me know what works for you.

Respond to any of my email newsletters and submit a success story to share and encourage others in the next newsletter. You can remain anonymous; just say so.

Remember to check your junk email folder and change your email settings so you don't miss my newsletter or blog updates.

STUDY. PRACTICE. TEACH. LIBERATE.™

If you haven't yet, take a look at some of my [Syllabi](#) from past courses. The Spirituality and Healing syllabus and more poetry will be up this week (apologies; my medical condition caused a delay.)

As always, send me your latest dance moves also by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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Until next time,

Gil

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GIL GILBERT
&
THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"10 minutes a month that could liberate you.™"

432 people engaged in conversations with me over the last 30 days.
Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Revisit the big question everyone asks: What's the meaning or purpose of life?

Whether atheist, theist, or agnostic; whether religious or not, all have asked this question of existence in some form at some point in their lives: *Why am I here? What is my role in the universe? Is there something greater that guides us? What happens after death? Et cetera.*

Revisiting the question deliberately is part of finding the *peace* we desire.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

TWO THINGS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR DANCE

When is the last time you thought seriously about the big question? Describe what your brutally-honest, authentic answer says about your next steps.

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Embrace Self-Compassion & Patience. Accept that finding answers to big questions is a process, not an endpoint. Be gentle with yourself along the way. Give yourself the same kindness and patience you would give to a friend.

Remember: "The meaning of life. The wasted years of life. The poor choices of life. God answers the mess of life with one word: 'grace.'" Max Lucado

NOTE: I FACE SOME CHALLENGES

My apologies. You may have noticed I have posted little over the past three weeks. I'm grappling with some health issues which have slowed me down considerably. We still don't know the cause and more exams are in the works, but we're narrowing it down. Thanks for your positive thoughts & prayers.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Thousands of free ebooks are available from the following searchable websites. I have used them for years and recommend them, so . . .

Find and Read a book at [Project Gutenberg](#); maybe something on the meaning of life. Or . . .

Find and Read a free ebook that may interest you at the [Internet Archive](#).

Respond to any of my email newsletters and submit a success story to share and encourage others in the next newsletter. You can remain anonymous; just say so.

Remember to check your junk email folder and change your email settings so you don't miss my newsletter or blog updates.

STUDY. PRACTICE. TEACH. LIBERATE.™

Gearing up for the online classes I plan to start offering here in 2025! Take a look at the syllabi I've uploaded from my past courses [here: Syllabi](#). (The Spirituality and Healing syllabus will be up soon.)

As always, send me your latest dance moves also by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"10 minutes a month that could liberate you."

388 people danced with me on love, spirituality, and poetry over the last 30 days. Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

TWO THINGS TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Trusting your gut instinct or intuition can enhance your life and the lives of those around you. But that doesn't mean trusting your gut in a vacuum.

First, train your gut (exposure & education). Intuition is something we develop from years of experience and training. When I was in the Army, it was part of what we called developing *muscle memory*.

Second, have a trusted sounding board you can bounce your ideas off of before you either accept them as fact or implement them.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

THREE THINGS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

If I have trusted my intuition about spirituality, how have I *developed* my intuition to arrive at my conclusions? Have I bounced them off *sounding boards*? Have my views contributed to tensions or trust in my circles?

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Exercise: "A bat and a ball cost \$1.10 in total. The bat costs \$1 more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?" Did you answer 10 cents? Most people do - because they followed their gut. But that answer is wrong. This simple failure of gut instinct illustrates our need to *develop* our intuition. [explanation below]

Remember: "Over two decades of study and 30,000 published articles say that spirituality has a significant, measurable impact on human health. But the gut reaction of most doctors, health-care practitioners, *and people in general* is to avoid it. We neglect the development of spirituality to our detriment." Gil

EXPLANATION

When you slow down and read the exercise again carefully you see that it *doesn't* ask for the cost of the bat - it asks for the cost of the ball and only says that the bat costs \$1.00 more. We need to solve for the cost of the ball to get to the correct answer. Here's how:

- The total cost of the bat and ball is \$1.10.
- Let x represent the cost of the ball.
- The bat costs \$1.00 more than the ball, so the bat costs x + \$1.00).
- A written equation to represent the total cost of bat and ball looks like this: x + (x + \$1.00) = \$1.10
- after simplifying the equation it looks like this: 2x + 1 = 1.10.
- now solving for x looks like this:
 - if 2x + 1 = 1.10
 - then 2x = 1.10 - 1
 - which means 2x = .10
 - and if 2x = 0.10
 - then x = 0.05
- Therefore, the correct answer is: the ball costs \$0.05.

Yes, you could say it's a trick question, and it may be (for those of us who don't deal with narrative math problems and their algebraic equations every day or get the heads up that we need to take some time to think about this problem seriously). But how many important topics do we draw conclusions about that we don't deal with every day? Spirituality may be one of them.

Going with my gut, my feelings, my intuition, can be great for me and those in my circle of influence. **But I must train and develop my gut:** this

exercise show's the importance of doing just that.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Think on this: The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations requires those organizations to integrate spirituality into patient care ([go here for more](#)). How could you integrate spirituality into your relationship with family, friends, co-workers, teams, subordinates, social circles, etc., to enhance the well-being of everone involved?

Read my working "[Introduction to Spirituality and Healing](#)."

Read this *Fast Company* article on [Intuition in Leadership](#) for more on going with your gut.

Respond to any of my email newsletters and submit a success story to share and encourage others in the next newsletter. You can remain anonymous; just say so.

Remember To check your junk email folder and change your email settings so you don't miss my newsletter or blog updates.

NO SUBSCRIBER SUBMISSIONS THIS WEEK

Read and/or listen to one of my spiritual poems [here: Flatbread](#). Tell me what you liked about the poem or specific details in it by replying to this email.

As always, send me your latest dance moves also by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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GIL GILBERT
&
THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"10 minutes a month that could liberate a part of you."

1,818 people engaged with me via the website over the last 30 days.
Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Establishing or revising a routine can free your genius.

Beethoven, Freud, Dickens, and Maya Angelou all had a solid daily routine that focused their energies. (I found Maya Angelou's *unprecedented!*)

How might a deliberate routine help you achieve your goal—of finding the right partner, improving a relationship, or completing your book, etc?

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

THREE THINGS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

Do I have an identifiable routine? If not, how could creating one help me get what I want? If so, how could I tweak it so it better helps me reach my goal?

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Add one daily constructive or creative behavior to your life, then stick with it for a couple weeks. Tell me what happened and how you felt.

Remember: "In the right hands, [a routine] can be a finely calibrated mechanism for taking advantage of limited resources... a solid routine fosters a well-worn groove for one's mental energies...." Mason Currey

NOTE: CHANGING NEWSLETTER FOCUS

The newsletter's focus will change from relationships because my focus must turn to the development and teaching of lessons for the college course, *Spirituality and Healing*.

- It is a cross-cultural investigation of human understandings of the relationship between spirituality and health. It will
- include a variety of world cultures and their religious beliefs
 - examine beliefs about the spiritual causes of sickness and health
 - investigate the spiritual techniques of healing in those cultures
 - look at the importance of the spiritual domain in holistic health for the individual, the workplace, in healthcare, and in society.
- I will devote a section of my website to it and welcome your participation.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

- Read or Listen to** the book [Daily Rituals: How Artists Work](#) by Mason Currey, or . . .
- Review** the illustrated information here about [creative routines](#).
- Respond** to any of my email newsletters and submit a success story to share and encourage others in the next newsletter. You can remain anonymous; just say so.
- Remember** To check your junk email folder and change your email settings so you don't miss my newsletter or blog updates.

NO SUBSCRIBER SUBMISSIONS THIS WEEK

Read one of my latest revisions [here: Epistle to the Waiting](#). Tell me what you liked about the poem or specific details in it by replying to this email.

As always, send me your latest dance moves also by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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GIL GILBERT
&
THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"10 minutes a month that could liberate a part of you."

353 people engaged with me on writing or relationships over the last 30 days. Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Fail Fast So You Can Succeed Sooner (Sutherland, *SCRUM*, p. 22).

You can apply this paraphrase to writing or relationships. Writers get more rejection slips than acceptance letters. If they want to publish, they accept the rejections and keep submitting.

To find the right publisher, or partner, we need to take rejection as a necessary step toward our goal—the blessing of redirection to something or someone better—and keep "submitting" our work . . . or ourselves.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

ONE THING TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

Reflect on your handling of rejection. How has your response to rejection helped or hindered you?

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY

Pick something you like but stopped doing because you felt rejected or didn't do well, then try it again—with a little twist or different approach. Tell me how it went and how you felt.

Remember: The poet Sylvia Plath said, "I love my rejection slips. They show me I try." Try these reflections and recommendations and reply to this email to let me know what you discovered about yourself.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Read: my poem entitled [Notice](#). Write what rejection the author might have seen as he engaged in the self-reflection that resulted in this poem, and what the poem indicates the author might do now.

Respond: to any of my email newsletters and submit a success story to share and encourage others in the next newsletter. You can remain anonymous; just say so.

Journaling Prompt: Respond to the following quote from Neeraj Agnihotri. "Rejection is more valuable than inaction. All that I have learned until now has been because of rejections. Inaction didn't teach me a thing."

Remember: To check your junk email folder and change your email settings so you don't miss my newsletter or blog updates.

NO SUBSCRIBER SUBMISSIONS THIS WEEK

Read one of my latest poems [here: Front Porch](#). Tell me what you liked about the poem or specific details in it by replying to this email.

As always, send me your latest dance moves also by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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Until next time,

Gil





GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"five minutes every two weeks that could liberate you."

344 people engaged with me this month. Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Want it? Stick with it. Whether finding love or new life, *DON'T GIVE UP*.

Some of us have a bunch of failed relationships under our belt. I'm one. Why? We didn't really know what we were doing when we got into them.

Some of us found our dream mate. I'm one of those, too. Why? I didn't quit.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

ONE THING TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

Think of your own quitting, to any degree. How have these moments of surrender prevented you from finding your dream?

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY THIS WEEK

Examine your own life for examples of giving up on working hard toward something you want. Pick one and start "un-quitting." Tell me how it goes.

Remember: I think it was Julie Andrews who said, "**Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding the 20th.**" Try these "unquitting" exercises and reply to this email to let me know your results.

MORE FOR YOU OVERACHIEVERS

Read: a synopsis and this poem by Ada Limon, U.S. Poet Laureate, entitled [Instructions on Not Giving Up](#).

Read one of my latest "working" poems about the art of poetry. It's how I see it at the moment, as a budding poet who dreams of getting better (hint: I sometimes think of quitting, but...): [Ars Poetica II](#).

It's difficult...but necessary. Sticking with something in the face of repeated failures is *hard*. But difficult is often *necessary*. In the words of Pelé, widely regarded in soccer as a GOAT (greatest of all time): "Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do."

The anonymous England-based street artist called Banksy sums it all up: "If you get tired, learn to rest, not to quit."

NO SUBSCRIBER SUBMISSIONS THIS WEEK

Read one of my latest poems (written as an exercise at the Virginia Writers Club Annual Symposium this past weekend), [here: Haiku #8](#).

As always, send me your newest dance moves by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"five minutes every two weeks that could liberate you."

31 people had eureka moments this past week. Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Admitting your flaws leads to liberation, improvement, and authenticity.

When you work on this difficult task, you improve your ability to make healthy choices. It's difficult because of how our culture trained us.

American culture taught us to hide flaws when seeking a relationship...to *act*. That leads folks to fall for the character you played, not for the real you.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with friends.

TWO THINGS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

What personal flaws have you avoided admitting? How has that denial limited your growth personally or in relationships?

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY THIS WEEK

Identify a personal flaw that led to relational pain & tell it to a trusted friend along with one thing you'll do to improve. Let me know how it goes.

Remember: courage comes in small doses but taking them improves us. Try these things & reply to this email and let me know the results.

NEW THIS WEEK

[Website Reorganization.](#) After we got your VIP (Members Only) section up and running, our consultant advised us to simplify the landing page and move the "Subscribe" option to a more prominent place on it. If you haven't looked at the site lately, check it out.

[Chapter Expansion.](#) In addition to adding new poems, I have revised and updated the chapter of my book of poetry that I gave you as a gift for signing up. If you subscribed before yesterday, you may want to download the [newest version](#).

Newsletter style change. Thanks for the positive feedback. I had hoped you'd appreciate it.

MORE . . . FOR YOU OVER-ACHIEVERS

Some of you told me that you're willing to do the work necessary to improve an existing relationship or to find your *dream* partner.

Next question, are you willing to shell out some coin to do it? (I don't get any \$\$ and have no financial interest in these; they're the best books I've found for use in my relationship-education workshops, and you may find them in your local library.)

If not, let me recommend a couple of classics that I think are worth lightening your wallet for (both are available from Amazon):

- For those married or currently in an intimate-partner relationship they want to enrich, I recommend [*Twelve Hours to a Great Marriage: A Step-by-Step Guide for Making Love Last*](#)
- For those who want to find their *dream guy or gal*, I recommend [*How to Avoid Falling in Love with a Jerk: The Foolproof Way to Follow Your Heart Without Losing Your Mind*](#).

IN LIEU OF MEMBERS' NEWEST DANCE MOVES

In last week’s [newsletter](#), we got a look at Arthur's missteps and how he’s overcoming them. Since we had no submissions from readers this week, I offer the following related to this week's reflections and recommendations. I hope you find some value in it.

Healthier Relationships Begin with You

The first steps toward building a healthy relationship begin with you. Whether you envision your ties to a romantic partner, family member, friend, boss, or co-worker, you start with you becoming a better version of you. Your work toward that end will lead to making healthy choices instead of unhealthy ones. (If you worked the prompts in the last issue of *The Dance*, they prepared you for more success with this edition’s work. If not, consider revisiting them before proceeding.) Making healthier choices is not the only personal quality we want to improve, but it is one of the first ones to address. And don’t believe me: think about your own experience or do your own reading. As for me, after years of life in chaplaincy, in the church, in pastoral counseling, and in relationship education, I have seen healthy people become toxic after getting involved with someone who doesn’t make healthy choices or has unidentified or unresolved issues.

Don't be that person or in a relationship with one.

Read my Latest Poem: Haiku #7 [here](#).

As always, send me your newest dance moves by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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Gil Gilbert

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GIL GILBERT
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THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

"five minutes every two weeks that could liberate you."

3 people had eureka moments this past week. Read the last newsletter on [GilGilbert.net](#).

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT THIS WEEK

Self-awareness leads to success.

When your self-awareness is lacking – about your expectations for a date or a mate – you increase your chances for failure . . . and for casting blame.

"Blame is stupid," (Dr. Jeff Sutherland). Brutal honesty about who you are and what you want will increase your success.

Reflect: then consider sharing this with others.

[Share this](#) with a friend.

TWO THINGS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR DANCE

Where have you neglected self-awareness in your life? What consequences did that neglect lead to in a relationship?

Recommendation: Use these as journaling prompts until next time.

ONE THING FOR YOU TO TRY THIS WEEK

Choose to be more authentic; take responsibility for one thing that you've not been completely open about. Let me know how it goes.

Remember: learning in small steps improves the dance. After you try these things, reply to this email and let me know how it went for you.

NEW THIS WEEK

New VIP section. We finally created your VIP (Members Only) section of [our website](#). If you haven't yet, you'll have to establish an account with your name and email, then you can access exclusive content not available to the general public: original poems and essays (not in the blog), as well as helpful exercises, handouts, and worksheets. Audio, video, and educational offerings will come soon. Check it out.

Subject: I think I saw you today. Join me as I explore the Epistle, an ancient literary style applied to contemporary poetry composition in my latest "working" poem, structured as an email. Warning: though the poem is in its early stages, by the end of it, you may have some questions about you. Check it out.

Newsletter style change. As you may have noticed, we have simplified the newsletter. Explainer: finding, curating, and adding appropriate photos to the newsletter was too much work for our micro team. Without those tasks we can spend more time creating great content. Thanks for understanding. If you'd like to see the former style to compare, [you can see it here](#).

MORE . . . FOR YOU OVER-ACHIEVERS

Willing to work on improving your self-awareness for dating or relationship success? Have I got some cool *free chicken* for you.

Improve your preparation for better relationships using this [worksheet](#) to improve your ability to find the most compatible partner.

Review this *real* [online dating profile](#) (shared by permission) to see an example of how self-awareness helped lead to what is now a "dream" marriage.

MEMBERS' NEWEST DANCE MOVES

In last week's [newsletter](#), we looked at the missteps of settling for less-than-dream partners and complaining about them. *We* are the ones we should work on changing. That resonated with some of you.

For example, Arthur realized that he needed to change his mind about the relationship habits in his life that used to come easy for him:

This hit close to home. I never had problems dating, and I even married. I would meet someone, fall for them, and we'd have a lot of good times. I walked around grinning and friends would say how happy I looked ... and I really was. Each time it felt like I had found ... the one.

Today I have dozens of failed relationships under my belt, including a failed marriage. In every relationship I was happy ...for a while. Then I'd start to notice things that I didn't like in my partner and complain about them. I think lied to myself in order to shift responsibility and make them the cause of my unhappiness. I'd eventually end it and tell myself it was their fault. The fact is that they were just being who they were. I just never took the time to notice before I took my pants off and put

commitment on. I guess I really didn't want them as they were, I just didn't want to be alone. Maybe I just imagined them as having the qualities I wanted, and in doing that, wasted a lot of time and energy, and contributed to the pains of breakup.

I accept my part in those failures and will try hard not to repeat them. I'll resist my tendency to settle for someone who doesn't possess the important qualities that I want. I know that will require patience and hard work, but I've already started to see better results and have hope that my new approach will finally lead me to "the one"!

As always, send me your newest dance moves by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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Gil Gilbert

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GIL GILBERT & THE DANCE (NEWSLETTER)

The Biggest Missteps In Relationships (Corrected)

My apologies for sending out the wrong copy of this week's newsletter. As you recall from the typos in the Welcome Letter, I'm not perfect. Will do better going forward. Below is the corrected version. Cheers! Gil



Two Missteps For You To Think About

The second-biggest misstep in a romantic relationship is complain- ing about a (potential) partner.

The biggest misssstep is being the person who "settles" for a faulty partner in the first place.

Complaining about a (potential) partner, and settling for a faulty one, both mean the same thing: *companionship now* is more important than healthy steps toward forever.

- *Reflect: then consider shar- ing it with others.*



Three Things To Ask About Your Choreography

1. Do you want *forever* with your current partner, or do you just want companionship now?
2. Do you want a life-partner who's compatible with you, or do you just want companionship now?
3. How much more time do you want to waste tripping on the dance floor with someone who can't match your steps?

- *Recommend: Use these as journaling prompts this week.*

Two Things For You To Try This Week

Stop wasting time dating (potential) partners who don't match what you want in a mate. Stop settling for someone with qualities you do not want or do not like. e.g., someone less than your *dream match*.

- *Remember: small steps add up to a winning dance performance. After you try these things, reply to this email and let me know how it went for*

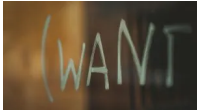
you.

For You Over-Achievers, Additional Things To Think On:



Do you know who you are?

Really? OK, define you. Write it down.



Do you know the things you want...

... in a partner? OK, make a list of them.



Are you willing to do the work?

Your dream relationship exists, so...

As always, send me your newest dance moves by simply replying to this email. Let me know if you prefer to remain anonymous.

Read my latest poem, *A Dusty Room*, [here](#).

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Gil Gilbert

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WELCOME TO YOUR NEXT DANCE

BY GIL GILBERT

Hey,

Thanks for signing up for your next *Dance*, a newsletter still in its design phase that needs input from you, namely, what *you* need or want.

I've called it "The Dance" because I want it, and me, to engage in the beautiful movement of life through poetry, prose, speech, and interaction with you, my fellow *dancers*.

As we dance with all aspects of life for these few minutes every two weeks, let it spark tiny-yet-meaningful steps as you choreograph the art of your life.

You'll receive it every first and third Monday mornings (US East Coast time). In response, you'll have chances to share your latest steps with me and read cool stories from other dancers in our small-but-growing community.

Our readers are some of the smartest, artistic, sensitive, and spiritual people in the world. My aim: to help them become more fulfilled, insightful, and contented as, day-by-day, they become who they are.

That will only come from admirable, sometimes unexpected, moves in the dance. So thanks for your help with that.

Before I go, I want to say thank you for signing up by giving you the first chapter of my next book of poetry, *In the Making of Sky Gods*. You'll find it attached in a subsequent email.

Talk to you soon.

Gil Gilbert

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