
THE ON __ING SERIES

On Finding

*Becoming Coherent, and Feeling
the Passage of Jays Through Time*

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Dedicated to all the friends I've "found" on my timeline. My family is well recognized in my work, but there are far too many others to name. If you know me personally, and you're reading this, you were one of my "Jays" — and I thank you for that.

When was the last time you realized you lost your keys, stopped to think about where you left them, and found them all inside the same ten-second window?

Never happened?

Me either.

If we as humans can't even logically find our car keys, how are we supposed to find purpose? My friend the reader, that's a question I won't have an answer for... for you.

But I have several answers for me.

I fear this may be the most "egotistical" piece of the On ___ing series. But that's okay, because this journey is going to be an explanation of the Jays I "felt" in my lifetime, and how they carved and shaped me into being a good person.

On Arriving and *On Counting* give very non-logical descriptions of "why" I was born.

Why I was born was: my parents made it so. There's no truth more important than that one for you to hold as we continue.

I'm just a normal person, like you. Some of you reading might even have a degree. I don't have one as I write this, but as you can see from my words, my intent to finish school this time is almost divine in the design of how it all fell into place for me.

These works? A very detailed accumulation of the Jays I've absorbed throughout my life.

Lessons learned. Victories earned. Emotions felt.

Existence measured through experience.

The human condition. Existentialism.

So ugly, and yet so beautiful. Why do we push away the things we don't understand? You'll search forever if you skip the answer. That's a part of the paradox.

Let me get back to the point.

Me.

What makes ME so special.

Nothing.

Plain and simple, that's the truth of it. I'm just a clump of cells, made up of O, H, N, and C. Walking through time like nothing matters. Well, almost nothing.

By my math, about half of the possibilities in front of us are good, and half bad. We can understand the bad ones exist. That part matters. Just lean a little more toward the good every day, and you'll align.

How quickly the mind can get off track. I'm sitting here trying to write a brief history of myself, and I can't even accept the fact that it doesn't matter to the reader.

So I'll keep it short.

I'll talk about the most important Jays I found during my search for purpose.

Early in life, it was books. So many books. As a child, everything from *Goosebumps* to *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, all the way to *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. Later in life I grew my love for fiction to J.R.R. Tolkien, Stephen King, and Michael Crichton.

And here most recently, Dan Brown — what a genius that man is.

The ability of a fiction author to create a story inside another person's mind with words... is absolutely magical. Every lover of books knows what I'm talking about. Bibianna showed me books like *Siddhartha*, *Contact*, *Dracula*, and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Later, moving on toward introspective fiction — almost pseudo-fiction, if you look at current affairs — Ayn Rand, Hunter S. Thompson, Timothy Leary, George Orwell, and Kurt Vonnegut all wove their messages through my brain. Later still, when I could really absorb what I was reading, I began to explore the works of Carl Sagan, Carl Jung, Plato, and Aristotle, and took a nose dive into history.

I spent a lot of time learning about the American Civil War, and World War II. On a deeper level, it feels like some other version of me moved through these two wars. Not a memory I could lay my hands on, nothing I could point to in a book — more a feeling that hums underneath the morbid fascination, and would go a long way toward explaining it.

I also spent a lot of time learning about the Egyptians. Not sure if “past-life” me spent time there, but I can somehow understand how they built without recourse for the greater good. That says more than I'm willing to admit to myself.

The lens gets blurry after school. Let's just say I took a quick trip through the psychedelic universe, and also spent a considerable amount of time learning about the American legal system. We don't have to go into detail — just know, as I've said, that today my mind is unadulterated, and my lessons were learned. I'm also very happy to see the amount of research being dumped into psychedelics as antidepressants. This is a new science, and as an “old hippie,” I know this is valid and pure research for the human mind.

Let's move on to music.

After that explosive experience in my life, I quickly fell into a point of creation that I didn't understand. Music around me resonated deeply. There was meaning in songs that made you feel good.

I was going to be a famous musician. I was sure of it. I was actually quite successful — until I took success for granted and reached for more.

Flew too close to the sun, in another form of the words. But in reality, I demanded money I knew I didn't deserve. I expected things to happen.

They didn't happen.

But what of the music? Jays exist in music. Even in classical music, that has no words. There exists an entire subject around it called *Music Theory*: the study of how music actually works — the grammar of pitch and harmony, melody, rhythm, and form, how tension gathers and resolves, how a piece holds itself together as a structure in time. But never before has it explored the idea that the creators may not have understood they were building things that would stand the test of time. Beethoven was a proud, irascible, increasingly solitary man who began going deaf in his late twenties and was profoundly deaf by the end, composing some of his most transcendent work when he could no longer hear a note of it. Chopin was frail and chronically ill, dead at thirty-nine, a Polish émigré in Paris who never saw his homeland again and poured that lost country into the keys — but somehow they made pieces of voiceless music that have outlasted the buildings they composed in.

Some of my favorite musicians are Atmosphere, Zion I, and Kill Paris, as of late. But I've also gone through many phases. I had a small

country phase; techno came early with the *Mortal Kombat* movie release, followed by bands my mother showed me like Queen, Kansas, Hall and Oates, Phil Collins, and Neil Diamond. Here recently she's really been into Trans-Siberian Orchestra. I've also deeply explored the Beatles, Grateful Dead, and Pink Floyd. Most recently I'm really into this artist named MDB, and I hope they see this. Amazing work with your remixes. Timeless.

Art was another exploration of mine that resonated deeply with me. In *On Seeing* I explored the power that old-world artifacts have on the human mind. This was not a feeling that escaped me through childhood, far beyond the “do not touch” rule of the museums. Touching those timeless pieces of art with my dirty little hands almost seemed inexplicably disrespectful, for other reasons.

Reasons unknown to me as a child, but which became clear late in adulthood.

I've long loved the works of Van Gogh, Monet, and Dalí. Van Gogh's perspective of the world showed me that the absinthe wasn't necessary to see the world the same way. And yes, I know the absinthe-vision story is mostly folklore — the science behind the yellow haze never really held up. But in my reality it happened, so I'll file the lore under Mandela effect and leave it where it belongs: irrelevant. Beautifully described in his brush, most starry nights look the same to me. Resonance. Monet's pictures of water lilies gave me an almost unreal sense of peace every time I laid eyes on one. There exist many, and I've seen many. Dalí explored the surreal — showed me things unimaginable by the normal human mind. He may have been a questionably immoral human being, but he was also timeless in design. His work was inspired by, and continued to inspire, surrealist artists over the course of history.

Let's side-step for a minute and explore the world's opinion of those artists.

Crazy.

Mad.

Throw them in a nuthouse.

Resonate with anything I've been saying over my works?

The creative mind is one that will always be perceived by science as crazy.

But fate knows not which human it will show up in, and when.

Besides these amazing artists, I've simultaneously held a special place in my heart for the timeless, nameless artists of history. The Greek, Roman, Middle Eastern, East Asian, and African artists of early humanity. Before humans cared about names. The ones who painstakingly carved their pieces into history through the intent of reaching the future, and not making a coin.

Timeless.

One last mention I'd like to add here: the last few bits of understanding how quantum mechanics work? I can chalk that one up to the creative minds behind *Rick and Morty*. Such a wonderfully orchestrated method of explaining the unknown — I don't even think the creators know the power their show has on an intelligent mind. Or maybe they do.

Timeless, nonetheless. This is a show that will be talked about in history books, I would imagine.

Let me tie this off before I send you on your way. I opened by saying these alignments shaped me into a good person. Here's what I mean

by that.

Morality, to me, is tied directly to ego. The moment someone feels superior to another — or feels they have something to gain from them — they go incoherent. Something breaks alignment.

I've always known that not one of the creators of this music, this art, would ever know my name. They had no reason to feel superior to me, and certainly nothing to gain from a nameless observer somewhere down the line. And yet they reached for me anyway. That's the tell. That's the philosophy of unity threaded through everything I've ever felt.

When you treat people kindly, karma really does return the favor. Sometimes you won't catch it happening — because, like I said, we don't know what the effects of Jays look like. But we all know what they feel like.

Being a good person is the answer. In action, and in thought.

If thoughts have power, don't let your mind build a reality that hurts people. Duality and Schadenfreude tell us we can't always control the negative thought when it arrives. Fine. But suppress it quickly, turn your Jays back outward, and the world heals a little.

Like I said.

It starts within.

What does this all mean? To me? Everything. To you?

Quite possibly nothing.

Maybe some of my “points of learning” also resonated with you. Maybe they didn't. But the real point of this piece is: I can sit and talk all day, month, year, and decade about the things that make me... me.

But what's the point? I'm a nobody. You're a somebody. So what are you waiting for?

Go find your purpose. Keep searching if it doesn't turn up. Don't give up.

Open your ears — the Jays are singing to you.

Open your eyes — the Jays are shining.

Open your mind — the Jays are trying to get in.

Open your heart when you search, and maybe you'll find your own "Jays."

But how are you going to find anything, if you keep looking in the same places?

Repetition of a mistake is considered insanity — but the civilized world calls the artist crazy?

Irony.

You'll find out who you are. You're human, just like me, just like the person next to you.

That's the simplest piece of the puzzle to find.

The rest comes naturally. Let time pull you through it, instead of the other way around.

You'll no doubt be pulled to where you're supposed to be.

The only one fighting it is you.

That goes down to the very moment you're reading this.

So if you haven't found it already, go find it.

Purpose. ♥

If you've found it — call me. I'm still looking.



A last little resonance, just for me.

I've been a Hitchhiker's Guide fan most of my life — and one morning I woke up forty-two years old, the Answer to Life, the Universe, and Everything staring back at me from a birthday. Douglas Adams meant it as a joke. I'm not so sure it landed as one.

And somewhere back there is the moment Sheldon Cooper almost solved string theory on a sitcom, and a younger me thought: man, it would be really cool to do that someday.

So let's see if that feeling resonated strong enough. ♥

Colophon & Sources

On Finding is an entry in the ongoing *On ___ing* series of lyric–philosophical essays. It reads the author’s own life through the “quantum lens” of the series: experiences as superpositions, collapsed into meaning by memory and attention — the legible traces, or “Jays,” that a person aligned with the present moment leaves through time.

Echoes & parallels

The keys–and–purpose paradox shadows Plato’s *Meno* (one cannot search for what one does not already somehow know). Hesse’s *Siddhartha*, named in the text, is itself the parable that seeking can block finding. “Flew too close to the sun” is Icarus. The madness–and–genius thread runs back to Plato’s “divine madness” in the *Phaedrus* and Aristotle’s note that no great mind lacks a touch of melancholy. “Let time pull you through it” carries the spirit of *wu wei* and the Boethian acceptance of providence the series has drawn on before. The closing ethic — that ego and the sense of superiority break a person’s coherence, and that suppressing the *Schadenfreude* impulse and turning outward heals — runs alongside Jung’s work on integrating the shadow and the non-dual unity the framework keeps returning to.

Works named

Books — *Goosebumps*; *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*; *Silverstein, Where the Sidewalk Ends*; *Tolkien*; *King*; *Crichton*; *Brown*; *Hesse, Siddhartha*; *Sagan, Contact*; *Stoker, Dracula*; *Bach, Jonathan Livingston Seagull*; *Rand*; *Thompson*; *Leary*; *Orwell*; *Vonnegut*; *Sagan*; *Jung*; *Plato*; *Aristotle*. *Music* — *Atmosphere*; *Zion I*; *Kill Paris*; *Queen*; *Kansas*; *Hall & Oates*; *Phil Collins*; *Neil Diamond*; *Trans-Siberian Orchestra*; *the Beatles*; *Grateful Dead*; *Pink Floyd*; *MDB*; *Beethoven*; *Chopin*. *Art* — *Van Gogh*; *Monet*; *Dalí*. *Screen* — *Rick and Morty*.

Deposit

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