

All These Words



ALL THESE WORDS

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| to be..... | 2 |
| leslie..... | 3 |
| all these words..... | 5 |
| now that i'm learning..... | 6 |
| so strange..... | 7 |
| beneath the soil..... | 8 |
| feel..... | 9 |
| near..... | 10 |
| protected..... | 11 |
| undeniably..... | 12 |
| only..... | 13 |
| very deep..... | 14 |
| this craft..... | 15 |
| turning..... | 16 |
| granola la-la..... | 17 |
| archipelago..... | 19 |
| heck..... | 20 |
| of golden boy..... | 21 |
| color..... | 22 |
| and light..... | 23 |
| shine..... | 24 |
| peace distinct increase..... | 25 |

For my teachers and fellow students of Vipassanā Meditation • Some new poems and a few rescued from old drafts • Photos and layout also by me • Thanks to Ben and many friends for read-throughs and editorial comments • Craig D. Miller • August 8, 2014 • Write to me at cdm@craigdmiller.com • Revised Oct. 2015

T O B E

to be like the babe
sweet smelling
with soft pliable flesh
if what comes next
is arrogant youth
may i regress

no short term goals
for me
i wish to go back
to simple
receptivity

for Julian

CDM March 5, 2013

LESLIE

Leslie!
we had a little laugh
a little smile
when we used to cross paths
at a not so little
meditation center
that grew

Leslie!
you worked so hard
so quick to praise –
exactly, precisely
you would say
even if we were
discussing
– the hard stuff –
the goo
the poo

so now Leslie Anne Jennings
even now that you
have gone
you are helping us
remember exactly,
precisely
what to do –

to find the Dhamma
grow the Dhamma
to renew
and renew

*For Leslie and all of her helpers,
may you be happy, peaceful, liberated!*

CDM May 14, 2013

ALL THESE WORDS

all these words are redundant
everything has been said before.
others know this already
– so what?

shall we who were dumb
speak up
and say a little of our experience
and risk repetition
of the universal lore?

all these words are redundant
everything has been said before.
others know this already
– so what?

we keep on forgetting
that now is the right time
to speak up
and say a little
from our own experience
of what is coming now
and has come
before.

CDM September 25, 2013

NOW THAT I'M LEARNING

now that I'm learning
to assist Goenkaji,
Goenkaji has gone away

sabbe sankhāra aniccā ti

he kept on pointing out
the Dhamma
now what can I do?
serve selflessly
energetically

sabbe dhammā anattā ti

so many have helped us
how can I help keep
the Dhamma
flowing?

sabbe sankhārā dukkha ti

with such joy
I keep on reaching, learning
how to move
how to assist Goenkaji

*how to observe
and serve*

who has gone away
but keeps on
pointing out
what to do

with wisdom?

CDM October 17, 2013

(and Dhammapada 277-279)

S O S T R A N G E

so strange to be on
the Dhamma seat

when i feel i should
be at the teacher's feet

the learning curve
of the trainee -is- steep

like being smooshed
against the ladder
up a rung or two

gratitude for
every course
i sit or serve
that seems to shift
the landscape

each time falling,
falling down
to someplace new

CDM November 15, 2013

BENEATH THE SOIL

I wish to hear the song, feel the notes, the warble, the plaintive tone.

I wish to see the earth, every inch of ground, that leads up to the chasm, to know precisely the shape of the edge, the width of the gap between us and our happiness.

Eyes open, I wish to see, to help, to act. Eyes closed, I wish to feel, so that the observer is part of the observed, another point in the great undoing, sunk beneath the soil, marked by happiness, liberation, peace.

CDM November 11, 2010

F E E L

There is a great illusion in life
that brings us sorrow
that brings us strife

It is not that tomorrow is not real
it is just that tomorrow
we can not feel

CDM May 5, 2010

N E A R

i would not rely
on my own checkered past

and i put forth no faith
that tomorrow's sky will be clear

instead i recall my teacher's smile,
and punt with the ever-sliding present

as i gather sila, samādhi, and paññā near

CDM August 14, 2011

PROTECTED

How can you stand it?
I was once asked
having briefly refrained
from passionate pursuits

How can you stand it?
I was once asked
having sat for an entire
hour without moving

How can you stand it?
I was recently asked
having helped my wife
during a life-threatening
illness

And I wonder
about where I stand
having the support of my parents
and the support of my teachers
and the support of my friends
and the support of my family
and the support of the Dhamma
and the support of those unknown
forces that brought me to this
elevated ground, where I somehow
have been protected from
the more miserable aspects
of a hard life indeed

CDM January 28, 2010

UNDENIABLY

undeniably
we are habit forming
creatures

habitualizing
where ever
we go

(ok some people deny it.
predestination,
external determination
and all that)

our teachers say the
accumulated habits
with consciousness flow

yet they taught me
to surf the feeling

what is it,
that rides along
forming, building, dissipating?
i am trying to catch
the feeling...just feeling...

and learn the transport
methods – what makes the
habits come and go?

this surf board is crowded, man!

CDM October 9, 2013

ONLY

only just before
it comes out of the oven
is the cake done
and even then
it needs to cool

only just at the end
of the hour of sitting
can i give my teacher
what he is due

so i can't stop now
tired and agitated as i am
because i'm not through

CDM February 28, 2013

VERY DEEP

very deep
very gradual
is the process i know

equanimity with sensations
which leads to a positive
and active life
without limitations

accepting the present reality
which leads to freedom
from conditionality

not quick
not easy
not selfish
is the process
i know

which is why
we are
taking the time
to get it right,
to share it with others
and go

CDM November 7, 2013

THIS CRAFT

Dhamma is not my co-pilot
because *i* is not in command

flying this wild craft
i must land
to inspect body
tinker engine
trying clumsy-vigilant
to follow liberation's
high demands

*In memory of Bob Cannon,
and with deep gratitude to all my instructors, I'll keep trying!*

CDM February 10, 2014

T U R N I N G

vividly our teacher says
the experiences pleasant
are always followed by the un-

like flipping the nickel repeatedly
every string of heads
is inevitably followed by the other one

so we develop equanimity
towards this frippery
knowing that the turning coin
makes no grand sum

CDM February 12, 2014

GRANOLA L A-L A

There was a time when Ben was little
and could not say his Rs
yet he tried
to repeat all his mother would say.

And there was a time where adult friends
would repeat his “cweggie”
and thought it was cute.

And there was a time when I
used to make granola,
and Susanne was labeling
everything in the kitchen sweetly,

And in these breakfast gatherings
of three,
the “cweggie's granola la-la” jar
got its name.

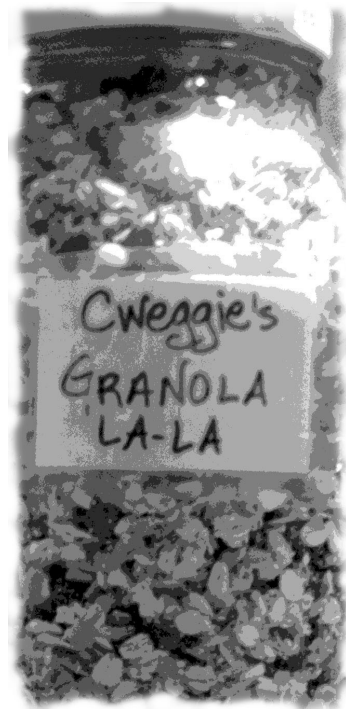
And then there was a time
where all of our family doings
were put on a medical hold,
then restarted,
then again,
medical hold.

And there was a time
where once again,
the recipe altered
three became two,
and all the old makings –
changed.

Cooking now,
I have fresh-made
granola
in the clean old jar
with Susanne's lovely label
of Ben's tender voicing
of mornings –

come and gone,
gone on to the next –

tasty breakfast cereal
home-made,
solo
and sweet,
with dark molasses
bitter sweet



CDM March 28, 2014

ARCHIPELAGO

as my life as a family man
is fading
changing
as my son is becoming an adult
as my parents are aging
as my wife has passed away

i am looking for my family
and i am finding
the family of all
suffering beings
the family of all
my Dhamma brothers and sisters

and for my most important relation
my partner
i am finding the Dhamma

Dhamma-dīpā
atta-dīpā

may this island be
bountiful
with fruits shared freely
with all beings

part of a Dhamma
archipelago
where we can all grow
unattached
to any domain

CDM February 9, 2014

H E C K

heck

has a way
of coming out

the blood and urine
that were inside
have a way
of coming out

anguish distress
bloom
not from the air
but from you know where
out

(expletive deleted)
has a way
of coming out

we were
not aware
not prepared

for creation
and destruction
mildness and madness

good
to properly know
the to and fro

how to clean up
the blood
and urine

how to deal
with the mania
and misery

when heck
has its way
of coming out

*With deep gratitude to my teachers, for pointing out the path of awareness and equanimity, for the lessons in anicca, anattā, and dukkha. A little knowing goes a long way!
CDM July 18, 2014*

O F G O L D E N B O Y

of golden boy
in the mud

see you glitter
please now the crud

you've seen the best
no bubble need burst

but we all know better
when we've seen the worst

CDM June 24, 2014

COLOR

the world is full of color
why call it black and white?

the shades
the tones
the muddy browns

broad spectrums and mixes
all around
why narrow it down?

the sun rises
falls
changing
bright

why fix it black and white?

CDM July 15, 2014

AND LIGHT

little we know
of the immense world
beyond our hearing
beyond our feeling
beyond the spectrum
of visible light

why say we know it true
why say it's right or wrong
up or down?

the dimensions three
ethics, awareness, experience
are not left or right

the world is full of surprises
why call it black or white?

CDM July 15, 2014

S H I N E

just as the stars shine
day and night

each a heavenly fire
burning bright

but obscured by the fog and mist
of this earthly plight

though today i may
act the fool

by tomorrow may
i set it right

with goodwill towards all
may i set it right

CDM April 8, 2014

PEACE DISTINCT INCREASE

is the battle
over pleasure and pain
a zero-sum game?

sandwiched i am
between foolish impulse
and actions proved wise

i am looking for peace
and happiness,
shared,
with distinct increase

CDM April 8, 2014

*may all beings
be happy
peaceful
liberated*

*may the road
to peace
and happiness
be found
be shared all around*

*may happiness grow
not a little
but distinctly
incrementally
with real increase*

