

## Feeling Better

by Mark Mandel

You're finally starting to feel better. Maybe just a bit. Maybe by a hair. Maybe by the narrowest of margins between cells or molecules or atoms.

Your quarks are tending up.

Two quarks for master Mark.

You've known almost all of it before, you think, as you watch two immaculately dressed young Mormon men in their pressed black slacks and off-white shirts stride by on the path before you.

Yet there is something new that you can't quite put your mental fingers on.

You've dreamed of giving the mental finger 🖐️ to all kinds of things and people. You laughed the first time you got together with an old friend after several years, seeing his black T-shirt with its white skeleton hand prominently flipping off the world.

He was so free to wear this so openly.

Had you ever been so free?

When alone, of course, you've yelled out loud and cursed many things and even a few people, sometimes at them directly. But this had only been after a roiling anger had built up within you so much that you had to vent it in release or else your inner pressure cooker would have exploded instead of rocking around back-and-forth steadily letting tiny bits of steam out with every angry jiggly motion.

To just acknowledge precisely when and how you feel the world is totally fucked in real time would be something new for you. To release that immediate anger or frustration by direct expression then and there and then let it go, opening your heart, that would be new. Refreshing.

You have of late slowly been looking at a long-held belief you'd adopted early on as a young man: that waking reality was constantly and you irrevocably fucked, no matter what. At best a losing proposition from the get-go.

Yes, that viewpoint was at least logically sound. You'd studied enough world religions and spiritual traditions to agree with at least your understanding of the first Noble truth of Buddhism: Life is suffering.

And, going on to the next Noble truth, that "following" desire was the cause of that suffering, not the desire itself. It's similar to the biblical saying that "love" of money is the root of all evil, not the money itself.

But recently you've been somehow able to relax into the overall joy of life. In fits and starts. Longer than you ever would have considered possible. You've been finding, to your surprise, that every moment can always really be felt through deeply to a core of inspiration, unless you constantly block it with resistance and firm beliefs otherwise.

And now you're finally starting to feel better. To feel the outshining joy of existence in almost any moment, whether it's a fucked circumstance or not.

Certainly not constantly. But more and more here and there. In between moments while you slowly walk the path of your life.

And you know what? That's enough. Wherever it might lead.

Selah...

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