



# *The Silent Messenger*

Silent Mora–Ray Goulet Ring 122

[www.Ring122.com](http://www.Ring122.com)

May 2020

## Ring 122 April 2020 Meeting Report

*Our first online lecture is a success!*

### Meir Yedid's Bag Of Tricks Lecture

In April we had the pleasure of Meir Yedid as a guest lecturer. Meir has mastered the art of Zoom as he held a flawless lecture/vendor show. Members were entertained as Meir not only presented several magic effects, he also offered a two free downloads via his website



for participating members. One of

those was a die effect where he seems to change the places of the faces of the die. Another download was a version of Nick Brown's Wonderbill that uses a cut out rectangle in a dollar bill to seemingly turn the bill inside out (sort of), Other effects Meir performed (and sells) included Capitulating Queens (an Elmsley count packet effect) Royalistic which offers the magi the "best poker hand in the world," 52 Thoughts Effect which is a joke effect with a surprise ending, Customized Twist, a version of Twisting the Aces, and he demonstrated a

"Spring Pam Technique" that was interesting. A fun filled hour for sure! If you sign up for Meir's free newsletter, you get access to a couple of free downloads and 150+ available downloads.

After Meir's lecture, members discussed performing on Zoom and considerations to be made (lighting, virtual backgrounds, music, angles, etc.), we admired Alan's stuff (my notes say this, but for the life of me I can't remember what I admired!), and Bob Filene did a card effect where a deck with a selected card (5 of diamonds) turned into a deck that was all the Ace of Spades (if I remember correctly).



This month's meeting theme is a Teach In! I know that if you have 2 matching bandanas Debbie can show you how to make a Devil's hank, and there will be much, much more! Challenge yourself! What effect could you teach a member via Zoom using materials you might find around your house? Card effect welcome but creativity is encouraged. Remember, it's a Teach In so feel free to type up your notes or post a video link. See you May 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm on Zoom!

## *President's Message – Ryan Lally*



When I was in graduate school, I noticed a trend that I've since come to learn has been around before I was born. It's a trend that is similar to a man who goes for a long excursion into the jungle, guided solely by his state-of-the-art GPS. After several days of trekking, he comes across a group of explorers who have been lost for a long time in the jungle. They lost their way immediately after they lost every GPS among them. You would think that they would ask this new explorer to guide them to safety with his GPS; that is what any rational person would do. But instead, they persuade him that it's better to wander around the jungle without it and convince him to throw his into the river. He had something that they so desperately needed --- something each of them began with but lost along the way --- and instead of asking for his help, they made him one of them. This hilariously absurd scenario plays out daily among modern explorers of the corporate jungle. The GPS --- crucial for successfully navigating and flourishing in an ever-changing landscape --- is creativity. The fictional explorer's introduction into the wild jungle was probably a boat or a plane; the actual explorer's introduction into the corporate jungle is through school, and it's here where the vital tool of creativity begins to seem unwanted by others. The jungle explorer might have even called the unforeseen party a "school." In this institution for learning, children learn that their imaginary friends are actually conspiring against them, and fantasy should be left to those who can't handle reality.

The purpose of school is to act as a sort of boot camp, training children to enter the workforce armed with the tools needed to build up society. Once they step off of the boat and into the jungle of corporate America, they can begin their fabled trek. Armed with an education as their backpack and their creativity as their GPS, they venture into the unknown. But it isn't long before they encounter the group of lost explorers who are appalled that this new one hasn't lost his GPS yet. Peer pressure is what causes a young adult to throw away his compass of creativity. Peer pressure can't do it alone, though; it has a friend in anxiety. It's from our anxious peers that we learn creative anxiety. This is the ratty little voice we hear inside our heads, telling us an idea isn't good enough to share with the world. What a turnaround from when we were kids and would share every thought with anyone who would listen! This anxiety too is learned from our peers, who have already mastered such anxiety from their peers. But, as with all good lies, the belief that we aren't good enough is built upon truth.

We know that Satan does this. He takes what is good and true, given to us by God, and uses it to temp us towards evil. Anxiety takes a beautiful piece of art and turns it into "proof" that we aren't good enough to have creative ideas, since there is no way we can produce such a wondrously creative piece of art.

What makes a creative work of art something to admire isn't the technical touches, but the creative ones; it's the artist's own unique creativity that shines through a work of art. It's the beautiful fact that the adventurer through the jungle found the school of lost peers, and instead of relenting to their cries for him to drop his GPS, he instead forged ahead and led them to safety through his art.

### **Art Isn't Perfect**

Every piece of creative thinking starts off as something messy and imperfect. It has to; if not, all of the editors and proofreaders would be out of the job. Contrary to what one might believe about himself or herself, rarely does someone ever create a masterpiece in the first draft. The editing of

a thought --- revising it with trusted friends and colleagues --- will help turn a cold, lifeless block of marble into David himself.

But everything that is at once good can turn into a burden when done in excess, and editing is no exception. From a purely technical standpoint, there's nothing wrong with over editing; and once you hit the brick wall of sheer artistic perfection, you've done a good day's work. But what is lost is the initial, raw creativity that overpowers every technical aspect of the work. It looks good for a museum piece to have some rust on it to show its authenticity. Anyone could buy a pristine knife, but a dagger from the civil war would certainly show its age. An extreme contrast between the pristine knife and civil war dagger *On The Road* by Jack Kerouac. The manuscript was written in 1951 when Kerouac returned from the last of a series of road trips with his friend Neal Cassidy. Kerouac had been playing with the idea of a novelization of his adventures with Cassidy for years, writing down bits and pieces before promptly discarding them. He sat at his typewriter and began a three week writing spree, typing 100 words per minute. Instead of the typical paper, he used a 120' scroll.

The end result was a single paragraph that took up the entire 120 feet of scroll, littered with typos and lacking punctuation. This was the draft that he attempted to sell to publishing companies with no success. The book was eventually picked up and published in 1958 and has since become an American classic. But the seven years spent between the initial manuscript and its publication was full of heavy editing. The published novel has the same amazing buddy story about Kerouac and Cassidy's road trips, but packaged up in a far more sterile box.

Reading the two version of *On The Road* can teach us two important lessons. The first is the magic of editing; the second is how raw, unfiltered creativity is a masterpiece in and of itself. While the former either requires years of experience or enough money to hire someone with such experience, the latter is something we are all capable of. This was one of the first lessons we learned as children and one of the most important we will ever learn. It's the GPS helping us survive an ever-complex jungle.

## **Embracing Imperfection**

It's so difficult to get started on a creative endeavor because it will be incredibly flawed in the beginning, and it's a hard thing to accept our flaws. Pride has always been seen as chief among the deadly sins, from which the other six flow from. Pride tells us that we are perfection at its best, and so a work of art that is anything beneath perfection is a terrible blow. Instead of allowing our pride to tempt us away from the flaws of our creative works, take the opposite stand and embrace imperfection. The imperfections will always be there, so fighting them will do no good. In fact, a creative's true genius initially makes itself known through flaws. It's the aspects of a creative piece of work that don't seem to conform to the world that can grow into something new and admirable.

These flaws are different from technical flaws. Technical flaws should be avoided whenever possible, but should never deter you from beginning a creative work. These are the flaws that will diminish over time with practice and careful editing, but will always present themselves whenever you try something creative. Anything great --- anything worth doing at all -- - has issues and discomforts that will never go away. It's up to you to accept them, minimize them whenever possible, and plow ahead.

There is a way to overcome imperfections and create a wonderful piece of art without the appropriate experience, and that is to copy the works of others. This technique is a great way to learn from the masters as you can dissect their skills from carefully reproducing their works.

Benjamin Franklin used this to perfect his writing style in his early years, as have many other great writers. But the sin is when the imitation is the end itself.

I see this often in magic. A truly creative magician will spend years inventing a trick, building a routine around it, and perfecting every detail. After the work of art is considered complete, the magician will then sell the entire routine to other magicians. These other magicians will buy the routine and perform it verbatim in their own shows. The trick works and the audience is fooled. But the audience is deprived of the creative side of the magician presenting the trick. There is nothing of his or her personality and creativity to be seen; they aren't artists, but imitators of the inventor of the trick. It's the difference between seeing Elvis and seeing an Elvis impersonator. The impersonator is only welcome when it's impossible to see the original.

### **What this Means on a Large Scale**

I hope I've conveyed the personal importance of opening yourself up to creative thinking even if the end result is flawed. But what's most important about doing so is how it can effect the world around us, especially our impact on the world.

A piece of creative art --- whether it be a painting, comedy bit, novel, blog, magic show, etc. --- is a person's unique contribution to the world. Nothing like it before has ever been done, and nothing again will be done like it. It represents a person's contribution to the world outside of something purely capitalistic.

When art of this nature is shared with the world, we can not only see the artist's genius, but also the artist's flaws. We see that the creativity behind such a work comes from a mind that isn't a master in the field, or someone who has his or her life completely figured out. The production quality may be on par with an iPhone and the artistic level hovering somewhere between a high school talent show and an introductory college class. And yet it is beautiful. The beauty of the artist's authenticity shines through all of the flaws. The world doesn't need another perfectly crafted piece of art, it needs true authenticity.

In the past, creative work had to be a lot more polished before the gatekeepers would allow them an audience with the general audience. These gatekeepers were the publishers, producers, and agents who creatives had to rely on to distribute their work through TV, movies, radio, bookstores, and the stage. We are much luckier today thanks to social media and the internet. If you want to publish a song, you can simply upload a video to any one of the video sharing platforms; if you want to write, it takes only a few minutes to set up a blog. Amazon is even making it possible for anyone to publish anything with their Kindle Direct Publishing service. All of these services are for free. The barriers to entry that held so many people back for centuries have suddenly vanished. Joshua blew his horn and the walls turned to dust.

### **Conclusion**

What holds so many people back from trying their hand at something creative is the fear of not being good enough. This anxiety is the damper that slowly extinguishes the creative flame. We aren't born with this anxiety, but learn it from others who are silently suffering from it. When this anxiety enters the corporate environment, it can quickly jump to others as well; it reaches every part of a company's mission.

The cure is to create. Create art --- music, magic, painting, drawing, writing, and a hundred other things --- that speaks to your authenticity instead of your unachievable image of perfection. Start small and perform each creative activity with your full attention and great devotion. You'll soon see that, although what you create won't be perfect, it will mysteriously radiate with perfection. This small spark is what you need to ignite the creative flame once again.

# **Zoom Membership Meeting this Tuesday, 5/26, at 7:30pm!!!**

Copy and paste the following Zoom link into your internet browser:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78026509517?pwd=Tm40ZXNWQlJmdEVSellYeU15K0FrDz09>

Meeting ID: 780 2650 9517

Password: 8km

*April's theme is Member Teach In Night!*

*Teach a fellow Ring 122 a Magic effect!*

## **IBM RING 122, Silent Mora–Ray Goulet Ring**

Website: <http://www.ring122.com> Meetings take place the last Tuesday of every month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown, 35 Church Street, Watertown, MA.

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