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 News from Ellis' World: February news and update

Hello Diana!

I'm so excited about everything that is going on that I'm sending the Feb email a little earlier than normal!

Today, I'm hopping in the car to take a little midwestern tour with stops in Rockford IL, Fairfield IA, and Lawrence KS. But before I go, I wanted to share a link to my [newest videoblog entry](#).

In it, I share a song I wrote for my granny called "[You Are Royalty To Me](#)". I really love it, but that may be because it's about MY granny! I'm hoping it will touch you as well! If you have a chance, please listen to it and [let me know](#) what you think.

In other news....

I went downhill skiing for the first time last month, and I've been thinking about it quite a bit. Some wonderful friends invited me to come to Vail, so that's what I did!

I should first tell you that I do not know how to downhill ski (even though I cross country skied in High School) and I'm also a little (a lot) afraid of heights... so I signed up for a beginner class. The instructor of my class was very laid back and I liked him a lot. He made all kinds of goofy jokes and really emphasized the fun of skiing.

By the end of the day, I was impressed with not only how much I had learned, but also HOW I learned... with lots of joy and ease amidst scary stuff like getting on and off the chair lift! It was so much fun that I was ready to take on the mountain the next day, and I signed up for a second class.

The next morning, my instructor wasn't there. Instead, we had a new instructor who had a "push yourself" approach. He emphasized speed and quick improvement over having fun. During the lesson, I did my best to follow along anyway. We made it down the mountain, but I noticed that I was not enjoying myself at all. Instead of feeling triumphant, I had become more doubtful about my skiing potential. This fun ski trip had suddenly turned into a test about Ellis' abilities as a skier and even as a person.

In the past, I would have fully embraced this approach and strived to "make the grade". It wouldn't have mattered if I wasn't enjoying myself. In fact, even if it made me so discouraged that I would have avoided all future skiing, I would have made myself prove that I could do it.

However, this New Years Eve I was on a meditation retreat and I made a resolution that I would "allow" more and "strive" less in my life. Who knew that I'd get such a clear opportunity to try out that commitment so soon!

So, despite my old habits, instead of trying to push through it or treat it like a test I had to pass... I decided to call it a day. I mean, I was on vacation! :)

That was such a great decision - I really made my own day by walking away! I felt almost giddy... letting go really was a huge gift I gave to myself... and I cannot wait to go skiing again!

Since then, I think of those ski lessons as a clear example of the rewards of letting go and choosing a more gentle approach. Instead of racing around with a sense of urgency and striving, I'd like to cultivate an open heart that embraces ease. I still get tricked sometimes, but I keep coming back to what I learned on the mountain.

Thank you for reading this far! :) I so appreciate being able to keep up with you on this email list.

I hope to see you very soon!

So much peace love and music,
ellis

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Thanks for listening! :)

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Feb 12 JustGoods, Rockford, IL
Feb 13 Cafe Paradiso, Fairfield, IA
Feb 14 Folk on Mass, Lawrence, KS
Feb 19 -21 Folk Alliance, Memphis, TN
Feb 27 Coffee Hag, Mankato, MN
Mar 5 Little Lou's House Concerts, Highland Park, IL
Mar 6 The Dash-In, Fort Wayne, IN
Mar 7 GLBT Resource Center, South Bend, IN
Mar 9 The Empyrean, Spokane, WA
Mar 11 Bombs Away, Corvallis, OR
Mar 12 Alberta Street Pub, Portland, OR
Mar 13 Firefly Concert Series, Seattle, WA
Mar 14 Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, Bellingham, WA
Mar 23 Scripps College, Claremont, CA

More dates at <http://www.ellis-music.com/shows>

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