

Meet Robert Grady

by Brian Lennon

Robert had chopped his hair and grown a soul patch since I'd last seen him. He was tanned, the hair on the top of his head was spiked, and some gray specks were creeping in on the hair on the side of his head.

Had Robert Grady matured?

We meet outside of Murt's. Robert is already seated, dressed in a white button down, sporting a pair of Jack Nicholson Ray-Ban Wayfarers.

"Howdy," he says, smiling. A delicious looking glass of iced tea with a slice of lemon sits on the table in front of him.

"Hi."

His appearance gives me a start and in the time it takes for me to compose myself, Robert stands, pulls out my chair and gives me a peck on the cheek.

"Oh, Robert." I feel embarrassed. I'm embarrassed for him too.

"Don't you just love the weather here?"

"It certainly agrees with you. You look amazing."

He's grinning as he sits back down at the table. "See what clean and sober living will do for you?"

"I hardly recognized you," I say, embarrassed, amused and still shocked.

"I sometimes don't even recognize myself," he says. "I've been hitting the gym, doing hot yoga, martial arts, meditation. You name it, I'm trying it."

And with that, I want to get up and stop him. Stop, right there Robert. Shout, "You don't need all of that! Can't you see? You're addicted. Still addicted, but just to other stuff."

Robert's smile slides away and I feel as if he's just heard every thought in my head. He leans toward me.

"I'm good now."

Good now, as in a new record in the can, a small role in a Vince Terramiglia film, a healthy body, and a healthy outlook on life.

How does it feel to be, at one moment, the biggest star in the world, and then five years later, unemployed and professionally irrelevant? That is the conundrum every rock star eventually faces somewhere down the road.

The other interesting part is, as they travel non-stop around the world playing in front of sold-out shows, all they do is yearn for some peace and quiet and anonymity. But then once the second album tanks and the stadiums turn in to half-filled amphitheatres, they can't adjust to the reality of their new normal.

The new normal is what every drug addict strives for. Unknowingly, they continue their addiction, the impulsive, growing, neurotic tendencies, except now they are geared toward a new, "clean" lifestyle.

My only question for Robert is: How is a meditation addiction any different from a drug addiction?

