A while back I was posed with the question “What inspires you to write?” I pondered this question for some time and during this day I had observed several movies being watched on television along with one old sit-com. I noticed that all of the leading men had the same ethnic and religious background in common and it came to me that “Jewish Boys are Kinda Cute.” I thought I had received divine inspiration for a title, but no story, essay, nor poem ever followed.

I tore this inspiration apart trying to find a story. I noted that though these men were all “kinda cute” and cuddly, they did not inspire passion. You know? The kind of passion that comes with the twang of Cupid’s bow. I realized that though I tried, this effort would either give me the shaft or light my senses on fire, but nary the two would meet. It was the effort of trying to create inspiration that was the problem. Well, that and trying to create something that was just not there. Same thing actually.

How could I create a passion where there was not one? Generally speaking is a horrible way to speak. It creates prejudices and biases that should be avoided, so I tried to break down my generalization about Jewish boys. Adam Sandler, for example is flirtatious, but considering my only experience with this was when he flirted with my then two year old granddaughter, it does not inspire passion. Personalities could be passionate, but then I thought of my dear friend, Naftoli Piccard, and decided against that argument.

A man walking away has often elicited passion from the women watching the view, but as I considered this I thought of a man I know from Jerusalem who walks like a duck. Is he kind of cute? Yes. Would the sight of him bring on a passionate response? No. In the 1950’s a whole generation was brought to a passionate frenzy by one young man’s dancing. As I thought of this though, the image of Topol stomping and shaking to “Deedle diddle deedle diddle dum” came to mind. Try as I did I could not create an inspiration for a passionate piece titled “Jewish Boys are Kinda Cute.” Actually I could not come up with any piece, passionate or not, and this helped me recognize the problem and the solution.

Be here now. This is common advice from many spiritual leaders. They want you to live in the moment, but not all of life is in the moment. We often live in our memories, fantasies, imaginations and hopes. There is nothing what-so-ever wrong with this. In fact I encourage this. Inspiration for writing is the same thing. One can not create inspiration. One must be inspired. It comes to you in many ways and you must be open and ready for its appearance. Perhaps if I cannot be passionately inspired by those cute Jewish boys, I should instead consider those hot Italian men. I will try as soon as I get the nasal sound of Ray Romano’s voice out of my head.