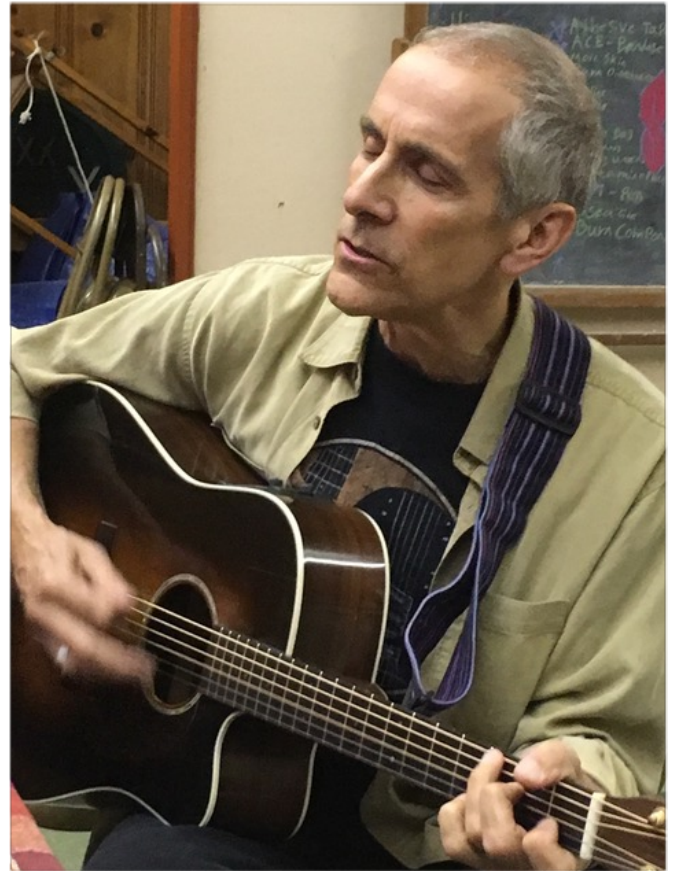


How lucky I was to find Max Cohen when it came time to undertake this new project. When we first sat around to play guitars for a couple hours, it hadn't occurred to me to bring him on board for this, but in no time at all the idea grew in my mind, ears, and heart. When we were done I knew I wanted him fully involved - more fully (it turns out) than I'd imagined, and I'm thrilled for it. Thank you Max, for your commitment, friendship, and artistry.

Speaking of collaboration, 11 of these 12 pieces are co-written, and this too is a newer exploration for me. These are people I know, love, respect, and hold in the highest regard for who they are, what they do, and how they move around on this complicated planet.

I offer this music once again with deep gratitude to my family, friends, supporters, purveyors, and everyone else who carries the intention of a better world for all. As poet W.H. Auden (who was born in England and became an American citizen at the age of 39) said, "We are here on earth to do good to one another. What the others are here for, I don't know."



## **IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK**

© 2016 David Roth and Anne Hills

*Anne and I were on tour in Michigan when news of Flint's undrinkable tap water came over the car radio. We wrote and sang this that day at the West Bloomfield Public Library. And often since. She alone came up with the first two lines of the last verse. I responded with the next two.*

**David:** Martin nylon string guitar, vocals

**Max:** Peter Rodman baritone guitar



Is it too much to ask you to turn off your texting  
Is it too much to ask, too much fuss?  
Will the world stop revolving if you're not connecting  
How 'bout connecting with us

Is it too much to ask that you use your turn signal  
To let someone know if you're turning or not  
Is it too much to ask that you don't honk your horn  
When it's obvious that traffic has stopped

Is it too much to ask to be gracious  
Is politeness a thing of the past  
Is it too much to ask to be warm and kind-hearted  
Is it too much to ask

Is it too much to ask to have safe drinking water  
Or clean air to breathe every day  
When we're taking a walk is it too much to ask that  
We don't have to walk the same way

Is it too much to ask to be quiet and listen  
Too much to ask to be heard  
Is it too much to ask to allow an opinion  
That isn't the same one as yours

### CHORUS

Is it too much to ask that you sit there and listen  
To long-winded songwriting nerds

Is it too much to ask to have instruments only  
Or songs without so many words

Is it too much to ask when you're walking the poodle  
If Fifi goes poo poo to clean up the mess  
Is it too much to ask that you put on the suit tonight  
Baby, I'll put on the dress

## HOME OF THE BRAVE

© 2017 Karen Drucker, JD Martin, and David Roth

*JD, Karen, and I flew in a day early for the 12th Annual Positive Music Festival in Tampa to hang out and do some co-writing. This topic was on all our minds. Guadalupe and Kamal are real people.*

**David:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

**Mark Dann:** bass



For the past four years Guadalupe checked in  
To the Phoenix office of immigration  
Both of her kids US born  
But everything changed the day they took her away

In the home the brave and the land of the free  
We are immigrants and pilgrims and refugees  
From every nation, one family  
When you come for Guadalupe ... you come for me



For the past two years Kamal made his rounds  
Interfaith Medical Center, New York City  
Went to Sudan to visit his mom  
But everything changed, he couldn't come back, he was stranded

## CHORUS

Give me your tired, your poor, huddled masses  
This is America, built by dreamers  
Yearning to breathe free

If I had to leave my country what would I do  
If the way I dressed was a trigger for you  
If I'm not welcome here where would I go  
Could I sail away on an unknown ocean of hope

## CHORUS

When you come for Guadalupe...for Kamal...when you come for my neighbor  
You come for me



## **CREATE AND ADJUST**

© 2017 Sloan Wainwright and David Roth

*With thanks to Roger and Carole Tomhave for hosting a songwriting retreat at their beautiful home in Virginia, here was an opportunity to explore a phrase that my dear friend Sloan brought to the table from her family.*

**David:** vocals

**Max:** guitar, ukulele

**Bruce Abbott:** clarinet

**Lisa Brown:** udu



All I can do, do what I must  
All I can do, create and adjust  
When I am open, willing to trust  
All I can do, do what I must

All I can say, say what I can  
Time to speak up, oh this is my plan  
When I am open, taking a stand  
All I can say is say what I can

I can do this, I can do this  
I can do this, yes I can

All I can be, be who I will  
I am a brand new two dollar bill  
When I am open, oh what a thrill  
All I can be is be who I will

### CHORUS

All I can do, do what I must  
All I can do, create and adjust  
When I am open, willing to trust  
All I can do, do what I must

When I am open, taking a stand  
All I can say is say what I can

When I am open, oh what a thrill  
All I can be is be who I will

When I am open, willing to trust  
All I can do, create and adjust



## **SOME PEOPLE SAY**

© 2016 David Roth and Reggie Harris

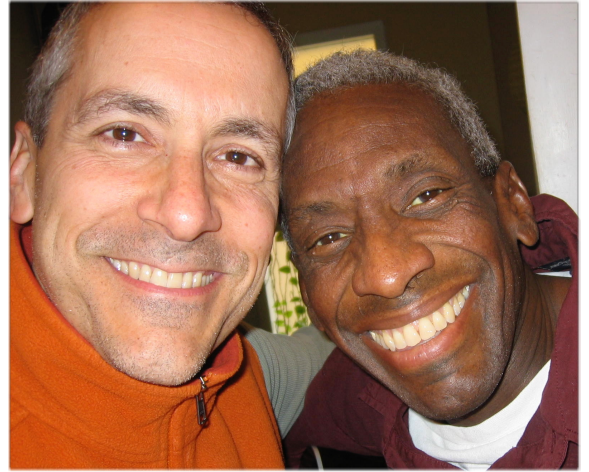
*Reg and I met in the early 1980s and our friendship continues to this day. Just prior to our tour that fall, we were rehearsing "You Can Close Your Eyes" by James Taylor, and after the last chord rang out, our hands kept going, chords kept coming, and words were flowing.*

**David, Glen Roethel, Sloan Wainwright:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

**Mark Dann:** bass

**Lisa Brown:** Moroccan finger drums, cymbals



Some people say there's not much we can do, some people say that we're going down fast  
And it feels like it's true, it feels like it's true  
Some people say that there's no reason to care, with everyone shouting we'll never get there  
And it feels like it's true, but I know it's not true  
There's so much frustration, but we have more in common than we know  
There is so much connection that we overlook as we go, as we go

The talking heads they don't make one bit of sense  
From channel to channel it's anyone's guess and  
Our leaders are leading to heaven knows where  
They cannot lead me, I must lead myself to my truth  
Can you and I open ourselves to the risk of hearing one another?

I am searching through this fear and doubt  
I am learning, I am reaching out...I'm reaching out

Some people say that it's time for a change, one out of two people voted that way  
And I must be aware of the change that I seek  
To refugee, Muslim, and LGBT, to people of color and people with disabilities  
I sing for you

## CHORUS

Some people say there's not much we can do, but I say there is, I believe that it's true  
If you meet me halfway, I'll meet you there too  
To all of the doubters and all the nay sayers  
Who believe that we don't have a chance and we don't have a prayer  
I say take heart

## CHORUS

## **TAKING OUR TURNS**

© 2013 **Megon McDonough and David Roth**

*When I was an undergraduate college student way back when, a remarkable singer would come down from my home town of Chicago to the University of Illinois in Champaign: Urbana and mesmerize us. Years later, Megon and I sat down together to see what we could write and found a common chord.*

**David:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

**Mark Dann:** bass

Saturday, half past nine, 29 friends of mine  
Couple of coffee pots, no smoking allowed  
Leftover sandwich crèmes, mending our broken dreams  
These are our weekly themes

Taking our turns to talk, learning to walk the walk  
No graduation here, this is clear

Someone has raised their hand, they must be new cuz all you  
Do is take your turn when it comes round to you  
That's when you say your peace, finish and keep your seat  
Then wonder if what you said made sense to anyone

Taking our turns to talk, learning to walk the walk  
No graduation here, this is clear

One and a quarter hours, searching for higher powers  
Powers that offer up some sanity  
We make our decisions here, everything changes  
That's so clear to anyone brave enough to take a step

Taking our turns to talk, learning to walk the walk  
No graduation here, this is clear

That's all the time we have, please put the chairs all back  
Unplug the coffee pots, rinse out your mug  
Climbing down 19 stairs, back to our cars  
Or maybe the bus stop, just a few blocks down

Taking our turns to talk, learning to walk the walk  
No graduation here, this is clear



## **HOW MANY WAYS**

© 2017 David Roth and Glen Roethel

*My younger brother from a different mother is an amazing person on many levels. Neither one of us has any qualms about knowing how lucky we are.*

**David, Glen Roethel, Sloan Wainwright:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

**Mark Dann:** bass



How many ways can I be grateful  
How many ways  
Given the chance, I'm gonna tell you now

How many ways can I give thanks  
For the blessings I have known  
I've got a list and I will tell you how

Grateful for each breath awake  
Grateful for each step I take  
Grateful that I'm here to play my part

Grateful for the morning sun  
Grateful when the day is done  
Grateful that I have you in my heart

Grateful for this Universe  
For the better and the worse  
Grateful that the world keeps spinning round

Grateful for some memories  
Grateful for my hopes and dreams  
Grateful for the blessings I have found

How many ways can I give praises  
For all the gifts I have  
Given the chance I'm gonna shout out loud

Grateful for each breath awake  
Grateful for each step I take  
Grateful that I'm here to play my part

Grateful for the morning sun  
Grateful when the day is done  
Grateful that I have you in my heart

How many ways can I be grateful  
How many ways  
I'm grateful now



## **CHANGE THE LAWS**

© 2017 David Roth and Roger Tomhave

*When something horrible happens, it's not always my first response to write a song, but in the aftermath of the Las Vegas shootings (and before Parkland, Florida), I made a simple statement. How hard can it be? Roger added a couple of great ideas for lines, which made this piece complete for me.*

**David:** vocals

**Max:** guitars



If anybody tells you there's no politics in guns  
And that now is not the time to change the laws  
Just meet the gaze of those who lost family or friends  
And tell them how we justify the cause

It's well and good to send out loving thoughts and loving prayers  
But by now these thoughts and prayers are not enough  
All the good intentions and the cries to make a change  
Must be followed up with action and rebuff

Change the laws, change the laws  
Change the contract, change the clause  
Change the mind and change the cause  
Change the laws, change the laws

If politicians say do not politicize these things  
Or get caught up in the moment or in haste  
I say it's precisely what we need to talk about  
Before another single life is wasted

### **CHORUS**

I will not be silenced  
Though silencers abound  
I will not be led by those  
Opposed to common ground

If anybody tells you there's no politics in guns  
They're the ones who know that money runs the show  
And as long as nothing changes they'll be happy and content  
And they'll do their best to keep the status quo

### **CHORUS**

## **TRAIL OF TEARS**

© 2014 David Roth and Freebo

*I began taking annual musical tour groups to Ireland in 2014, and that very first year I heard reference to this story at the Skibbereen Heritage Centre in West Cork. Three years later in a castle in Donegal, we saw a shrine to the Choctaw people commemorating this amazing generosity.*

**David:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

**Freebo:** bass

**Lisa Brown:** Moroccan finger drums

**Bruce Abbott:** native American flute

1830, Congress had a meeting  
Andrew Jackson went before the House  
They took a vote to relocate some people  
The ones they didn't want there in the South

Sent them on their way  
One dark and cloudy and day  
Little food or clothing, out the door  
Fifteen hundred miles, Oklahoma bound  
Little did they know what lay in store

That winter was the coldest one on record  
Many of the Choctaw passed away  
Those who did survive did so just barely  
The ones who never really had a say

Trail of tears, trail of tears  
Crawling down a trail of tears

1845, the Irish Famine  
The Brits decided they would get the food  
All the healthy crops from their green neighbor  
Everything imported that they could

The only crop that wasn't for the eating  
Potatoes were diseased and everywhere  
But no one in that country dared to eat them  
And many in the other didn't care

Those starving years will never be forgotten  
A million people died in utter pain  
More painful is it might have avoided



If not for those so selfish and insane

Famine years, famine years  
Suffering through the famine years

What would I do in such a situation  
Could I find it in myself to survive  
Is there healing to be found within injustice  
You might be surprised

1847, Oklahoma

The Choctaw now were settled on their land  
Even after such atrocious journeys  
They kept their noble values close at hand

This is when they learned about the Famine  
That took so many lives across the sea  
They knew that they could not ignore the anguish  
The same that they endured so recently

A leather sack went passed around the village  
Donations were collected one by one  
A hundred eighty U.S. dollars later  
This collection was sent off to Ireland

Trail of tears, trail of tears  
Rising up, trail of tears





## **MY VOICE MATTERS**

© 2014 David Roth and the Florida SAND (Self Advocate Network'D) songwriters

*When invited to close Florida's statewide disabilities conference with a Saturday night concert that year, I also lead a songwriting workshop earlier in the day, and this song is the result. About 50 of us created this in less than an hour, and it's as meaningful as any song I've ever been part of.*



**vocals:** David, Sloan Wainwright, Glen Roethel, and the Cape Cod Songwriters Retreat Singers

**Max:** guitars

**David Lange:** piano

**Mark Dann:** bass

### CHORUS

My voice matters, my voice counts  
Get to know what I am all about  
No more labels, fears or doubts  
My voice matters, my voice counts

We're all different, we're the same  
We all have challenges, we all have dreams,  
My dreams are important just like yours  
We can teach each other, we can teach the world (that)

### CHORUS

I am gifted, I am strong  
We are powerful, one and all  
we are determined to make a change  
All are equal, all the same

### CHORUS

## **TO FORGIVE**

**© 2010 Glen Roethel and David Roth**

*Glen brought Desmond Tutu's "The Book of Forgiving" to my attention and we were off and running.*

**David, Glen Roethel:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

**Mark Dann:** bass

Just a small child, he was playing  
In the backyard of his home  
Sun was shining, clouds were drifting  
And still clearly something wrong

Mother crying in the kitchen  
Father raised his voice and hand  
Little children learning lessonS  
Things so hard to understand

As a grown man he remembered  
How he willed this pain away  
In forgiveness he found healing  
Which he shares with us today

He confronted painful memories  
He reflected, he forgave  
Desmond used this for his country  
Showing love will lead the way

### **CHORUS**

To forgive, to forgive  
Letting go Of that which does not serve  
To forgive, reconcile  
To the love we all deserve

Just a small child I was playing  
In the backyard of my home  
Parents fighting in the kitchen  
I thought I was all alone

Tell your story, name the hurting  
Grant forgiveness, release the pain  
Then you'll come to a sense of healing  
And to being whole again

### **CHORUS**



## **LAST DAY ON THIS EARTH**

© 2016 David Roth

*I was teaching a weeklong class in North Carolina called "Writing the Traditional songs of the Future" and wouldn't you know it, I became one of my students at the same time. A couple months later I took the song for it's first "test drive" at a local fundraiser in support of the Standing Rock Protectors in North Dakota. When I was done, a woman came running over to me and said "David, I just love that song! I haven't heard it in years!"*



**vocals:** David, Sloan Wainwright, Glen Roethel, and the Cape Cod Songwriter Retreat Singers

**Max:** guitar

**Eric Lee:** fiddle, mandolin

**David Lange:** accordion

**Mark Dann:** bass

If this is my last day on this earth  
I'll say I sang, I'll say I sang  
I'll say I sang for all that it was worth  
If this is my last day on earth

If this is my last day on this earth  
I'll say I laughed, I'll say I laughed  
I'll say I laughed for all that it was worth  
If this is my last day on earth

### CHORUS

I took one step, I climbed a hill  
I said I won't, then I said I will  
I'll say I lived for all that it was worth  
If this is my last day on earth

If this is my last day on this earth  
I'll say I cried, I'll say I cried  
I'll say I cried for all that it was worth  
If this is my last day on earth

### CHORUS

If this is my last day on this earth  
I'll raise my voice, I'll raise my voice  
I'll raise my voice for all that it is worth  
If this is my last day on earth



## CHORUS

If this is my last day on this earth  
I'll say I loved, I'll say I loved  
I'll say I loved for all that it was worth  
If this is my last day on earth

## CHORUS

### **I SURRENDER**

© 2007 David Roth, Karen Drucker, Faith Rivera

*While waiting to go live on the radio at Unity Village near Kansas City with Karen and Faith, I stepped outside for some fresh air and heard the first line in my head. I came back, typed it into my laptop and slid the Mac over to Karen. "What's the next line?" She wrote. Then we passed it over to Faith (who cleverly put her own name into her line), and it came back to me to complete the chorus.*

**David:** vocals

**Max:** guitars

I surrender to my greatest highest good  
I release any fear that blocks my way  
For every step I take is taken in pure faith  
And I am stronger every moment every day

My mind is willing and my heart is open wide  
I trust my instincts and let loving be my guide  
I vow to live a life that's real and true and free  
As I continue moving in this mystery

(Where) I surrender to my greatest highest good  
I release any fear that blocks my way  
For every step I take is taken in pure faith  
And I am stronger every moment every day

There may be walls, there may be roadblocks I may find  
But I can choose to take a higher path each time  
And now I know that what I thought was safe and sound  
Was only habit and regret that held me down

I surrender to my greatest highest good  
I release any fear that blocks my way  
For every step I take is taken in pure faith  
And I am stronger every moment every day

