



The Divine Grace

Anita Kumar

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Introduction

Our master, Our God and our beloved Guruji are all one and therefore needs no introduction. Divinity is not born and neither does it die but owing to our myopic human understanding and to satisfy the human mind I will share a few facts about God who came in the human form and whom we know as Guruji.

Guruji was born on 7 July 1954 in a serene village called Dugri in Punjab, India.

He was the second son born to Mata Surjit Kaur and Shri Mast Ramji. His father Bapuji, as we know him, ensured a sound education for his son. Guruji did Bachelor of Arts and later did Masters in English and Economics from Government College, Malerkotla. Guruji believed in education and constantly encouraged sangat to educate their children to the best of their ability.

Guruji left His mortal garb and attained Mahasamadhi on 31 May 2007. After He left His physical form, His following grew exponentially. This is testimony to the fact that God never leaves us and that He resides amongst all of us even today where our days can be challenging and far from certainty.

Each individual who bows before Him for the first time stays in His fold as he or she is accepted by His grace. Besides His physical presence, He is sensed by His lingering fragrance that is likened to roses. He appears in dreams, some feel His very presence in their homes, their hearts and in the very core of their lives that are constantly changing for the better.

Guruji, our guiding force and our protector is here balancing our karmic account. Merely sitting in His darbar at His lotus feet, listening to the shabads and consuming the chai parsad and langar parsad heals us on many dimensions. Physical ailments are cured, mental tensions are eased, and spiritual paths are elevated.

Bade mandir is suffused with His energy and aura and is so powerful that on entering it sangat is filled with a sense of calm and confidence in knowing that Guruji has already taken over their lives. The issues we worry about are

taken over by Him as He and only He resolves them for us.

In His words, 'Aya Karo.' Keep coming. 'Tussi sirf aana hai, bakhi ta mein twanu bless karna hai.' You need to just come and I will bless you.

Prologue

An American walked into a yogi's humble home and was aghast at the sight of it. He saw a plain, simple room with only a mat and an earthen water pot.

On facing him he asked, 'Yogi, with all due respect where is your furniture and other household items?'

'Where is yours?' asked the yogi.

'I'm only a visitor here.' replied the American.

'So am I.' responded the yogi.

In addition, each one of us are visitors on this earth plain and this journey of life. Amidst our day-to-day routine we forget, 'this too shall pass' because we are tightly entangled in the web of our attachments to people, places, and possessions, personal and professional aspirations and so much so that our final exit slips our mind. The other profound truth is that we are a human being and not a human doing who most feverishly focuses on doing to accumulate more than being more in terms of our personal and spiritual growth.

Doing more for the good of others is an exception, however, in the context of doing more. Usually we do more in the context of inundating ourselves in a routine that removes us from our real purpose leading to our soul becoming famished. We often burn the candle at both ends of the social and professional front without the realization that we are becoming spiritually depleted. This eventually leads to emptiness that we fill with what proves to be unsavory and sometimes harmful. People may drink more to quench the unquenchable thirst of the corners of their soul, shop more to fill the empty cupboards of their heart or fall into shallow relationships that spiral into the room of disillusionment, dejection and heartache.

When invasive issues permeate our lives and threaten our happiness we look to something that either anaesthetizes the pain or eradicates it from the root. So some are bound to succumb to substance abuse while others seek

the deeper meaning to their suffering. When we delve into our suffering in relation to the deeper meaning of life and see pain from a new standpoint then the answers fall into our lap. I am not consciously aware of whether or not I was open to receiving on first meeting Guruji but on doing so I felt peace permeate me and that was evidence for me that a higher and greater dominance was taking over my life. I was thrilled and relieved because if I had not allowed that grace to descend over me then I would have; most definitely, in my ignorance taken the wrong turn. Guruji, for me, was a presence I entrusted my life to but that is not to say I was not resistant to some of the things He conveyed for me to do or not to do. My mind crept in to create conflict that led me to be only partially in acceptance. I would get rattled while I battled with some life changing issues that I believed He wasn't resolving for me. I, more than once, got into a tussle with Him over matters concerning my personal life and in spite of Him having resolved my critical health issues; I believed His grace to be futile until He fixed matters of the heart.

When He did not bless me on my schedule, my convenience and by my watch I turned impatient. I lost my sense of direction awhile, pausing from visiting Him recurrently. I turned defiant by abstaining from having regular langar that I have always believed to have profound benefits on my health and on my life in general. I suspected, I had to resign to my grim situation for life, as Guruji was not going to bless me for what I intensely believed to be beneficial to me in the larger scheme of my life. I was dejected and on lighting my candle routinely it would not light and on failing to strike the last matchstick in the box, I flung it against my mirror where Guruji's swaroop stood tall. I stormed to my bathroom and returned to a lit candle. That very moment I decided to break the sabbatical I had taken and visited Him that very evening. On entering He called out, 'Phir diya jal gay. Tussi pul jande ho mein nahi.' [So! The candle lit. You forget but God never does.] Then He uttered a few but firm words that gave me a sure indication of Him working on my karmas and with that candle was lit a flame of hope in my heart.

I turned patient and persevering from then on because I just knew that it was a matter of time when my life's tide would turn for the better. I had my moments of frustration but largely I gained a sense of equanimity. He was building me up as I was tearing the walls of my mistrust down. He loved me and by then I was certain of that. It was in His Grace and in His glance and I

knew without an iota of doubt that I loved Him too!

Slowly but surely I felt a stir in my inner and outer life. Then there it was; the moment when the skies opened up bringing about a huge shift I was waiting for.

The reason I share about the candle at the risk of repeating myself from the first edition of Divine light to this one is that it was a momentous moment when everything changed for me. I realize this only in hindsight. What I have learned from this experience is that no matter how grey the skies, the law of nature shifts the skies to reveal the sun with insurmountable faith and reassurance from the higher one. My attitude altered and that determined my altitude in life. With Guruji's grace, the clouds shifted sooner than I anticipated and the brightness of the sun is sharper today and the sky is bluer than it has ever been. What I have learnt is that no matter how difficult situations or people that descend upon our lives are; they come to teach us something incredible about ourselves. The learning can be spread across chapters but suffice to say, it is all for a good reason and when the time is up they leave. Be it with grace or without it but Guruji ensures they exit with our forgiveness and good will.

Another sentiment I must share is that during the rainy days when my spirits were dampened I continued to love Him like no other and it was that love that conquered much of my darkness be it the inherent or the environmental.

As He suggested in His divine parlance, 'Keep coming regularly and that's all you need to do and the rest I take over.' He genuinely takes over and knowing this, it is vital to get into a space of gratitude and not complaint, as He will do what is best for us in the right time, space and sequence.

Deepen your connect and keep it constant and focus primarily on your relationship with Him; Love Him from the core of your being and one day you will awaken to your truth. On making that realization we transcend the smallest to the most significant tearing issue. Faith then sustains us and reduces the intensity of any kind of challenge and hardship that stumbles on our path. Faith on occasions gets hurt but with Guruji's love and His unerring grace, we are able to cross the bridge of ambiguity and accept each trial as a

learning curve.

The duality of life states that everything exists independently of each other and yet is almost directly a part of it. We are all individuals and yet an essential part of the Guru family hence all one. Being with Guruji awakens us to many truths and yet truth is one; we are all equal in His eyes and He loves each one of us. He connects to each individual in accordance with the way we connect to Him. I for one being a writer and an artist connect to Him through my creativity and through my voice. He has blessed me with each of my attributes and I use my talents as service to humanity. I employ my voice to share the satsangs as a form of service, I employ my words to write satsangs through which the reader may gain a spark of hope for his or her life and I draw images of divinity with the intent of inspiring the viewer. Before I met Him, my life was most definitely flat and underwhelming and after meeting, Him He has indeed recreated it with astonishing purpose and passion.

We are planted on this earth plain to serve others through our work and the work is decided by our innate abilities and honed skills. Guruji knows where each individual's capability lies, herein, I have made my attempt at writing this book purely in the spirit of allowing the sound of each positive word here to echo in the blank pages of your soul. May you be inspired to compose, through these notes, your own meaningful symphony with His ever-flowing blessings.

Foreword

With Guruji's grace, Anita Kumar, has once again compiled a wonderful collection of sangat's experiences in the form of this book aptly titled *The Divine Grace*, as all satsangs, whether written or oral, happen only with His Grace. I am also really humbled on her insistence for me to write a foreword to this beautiful selfless service for which, I am sure, she is the chosen one. Guided by the Divine Will Anita has so honestly and vividly captured the essence of every person's experience in her own inimitable and impeccable style.

Though each story, on the surface, has some material and worldly connotations, in some form or the other, yet at a deeper level, it has some deep-rooted spiritual message both for the narrator as well as for the reader. Mostly in satsangs when one narrates his experience it is like sharing the story of how one benefitted with Guruji's grace in one of his life pursuits like recovering from an illness or experiencing some fulfillment of one of his worldly desires or getting rid of some problem or the other.

All the worldly problems one faces in life are the result of our own karmic destiny and, therefore, are our own making in some way or the other. Divine intervention in the form of Guru's grace is an exception and is not without any reason or message. Invariably it has a profound spiritual impact on the life of the disciple. It is said that the Guru arrives as soon as the disciple is ready. You may get connected to the Guru due to some worldly reason, yet in reality there is some larger spiritual reason for this. Guru's grace may take you out of a life-threatening situation, yet the life you may live thereafter would be qualitatively much better in a spiritual sense than before.

The real object of Guru's grace by interjecting in the otherwise strict principle of karmic cause and effect is only to help the souls in their spiritual journey by removing some material discomforts which might have created perhaps unbearable turbulences in the spiritual journey of the disciple and retarded his spiritual growth. It is, therefore, the pious duty of the disciple

to ensure while his karmic situations are taken care of, yet his focus on the spiritual pursuits must never dilute.

Each Satsang is the story of Guruji's Grace. The best thing about Guru's grace is his unconditional love for you and not to give up on you in spite of your innumerable failings and, slowly but surely, paving the way for your spiritual growth. I am sure every reader would be blessed to read these accounts and be prepared for his spiritual journey in a much better manner.

The Satsangs are not stories of miracle though a lot many things do happen not amenable to reason and logic. An ordinary mind driven by reason and logic, which is often controlled by perceptions of five senses, is an important faculty in the day to day life functions of a human being, yet is the biggest obstacle, sometimes to lesser evolved souls, in the spiritual journey as it can and does cause lots of doubts or "ifs and buts". The so-called miracles sometimes are created to quite the restless mind.

Spirituality is a comprehensive subject and needs a separate book to deal with many facets of it from the point of view of an inquisitive reader. The experiences contained in this book are just the tip of the vast ocean of spiritual experiences which a disciple is bound to go through once connected with Guruji. Please do not just take pride in narrating or hearing these experiences but try to fathom the real message and purpose behind it. It is meant to convey to you a spiritual message.

In any case there is no bigger miracle than the change in you as a person. All miracles are meant to change you in some form or the other. The real miracle happens when you decipher that hidden message and accomplish that change. Do not be just driven by the endless needs and wants as the sole focus of your spiritual pursuits, be it meditation, Satsang or prayers. The sole focus of the spiritual seeker must be to rise above all cosmic delusions of attachment and to finally merge with the Supreme.

It is fair to pray once in a while seeking divine intervention in karmic situations when the going becomes too tough and starts affecting the spiritual pursuits too yet cribbing and complaining about every life situation to the Guru or divinity is not a very good sign of spiritual evolvment. The life is short and everything connected with this life is transitory and

illusionary, the sooner one realizes, the better it is. The more strongly one holds on to the delusionary facets of the perishable worldly life caused by the illusions of maya, the more painful is going to be the journey without any end.

Guruji is here to cut the bondage of the souls to this endless suffering caused by relentless running after the delusionary maya life after life. It's a beautiful opportunity. Be aware, be available, just surrender.

Om Tat Sat.

R P Sharma

1

Lessons in Faith

Every experience is an education for the soul.

There are moments when I feel it was another lifetime ago; the pain, the then thunderous trials and my *trifle* triumphs. I stress on trifle because in the passage of time there has been a radical shift in my perspective on what is thunderous and what trifle is. My troublesome past has faded out and in the larger scheme of things, everything is microscopic in comparison to the love and the grace of our Guruji. Every juncture I went through was eventually to get me to where I am today and no experience that I have encountered can be diminished, as each combat with pain has made me who I am in the present. I am grateful for even the seemingly unjustifiable experiences, as my gains far supersede the losses and have taught me the most magnificent lesson of all; dwell on Him and not the problem.

Immediately following my first surgery for the removal of my tumor that sat as an unwanted guest in my left breast, I rested quietly at home in Panchsheel Park- New Delhi. I recall feeling a blend of triumph and gratitude to say the least; triumph as I had defeated a disease that had removed the presence of my father from my life and deeply grateful for it to be detected at the primary stage. I felt profoundly protected as I released a sigh of relief in the haven of my home where we regularly held Guruji's satsangs on Tuesday evenings comprising of 40 to 60 sangat and sometimes more.

I glared intently at Guruji's swaroop in my room as I mused on how blessed I was to be rid of the ghastly tumor. I thanked Him while sipping on tea sitting in bed and then gazing blankly out of my bedroom window at the prolific trees and bushes and the occasional pigeon sitting on my balcony railing where it defecated unapologetically.

My daughters, Anishka and Sonakshi promptly flew in from the U.S to be besides me during this entire episode and as they walked into my room to wrap me into their delicate arms, they rendered me confidence to move forward with a positive attitude. I looked at both my girls with utmost pride for having excelled remarkably with Guruji's grace. Studying in one of the best universities in the U.S, they labored hard and I was certain that Guruji would draw out a clear and meaningful vision for their future. He knew which direction to steer them in and I trusted His judgment more than I did mine.

'It is all behind you now mom.' Stated my elder one while my younger one nodded in assent. 'You are very strong and soon you will be back to living your life.' I believed them as I felt upbeat and raring to go. This was merely a hiccup and would soon subside.

In May 2012 was my surgery and a week later on returning to my surgeon for a clean bill of health he handed me a pathology report stating I had another tumor in the same breast that had to be removed with immediate effect.

Somewhat shaken I called my youngest brother Sanjeev and broke the alarming news to him. He rushed to Medanta hospital where I sat in a private room and He hugged me with a brave expression though his eyes revealed sadness and perhaps apprehension. I, in turn, reassured him that after this surgery I would be completely fine as Guruji was walking besides me through this entire ordeal. He nodded but could not brave it out as tears rolled down his cheeks. He induced mine as memories of losing our father after his prolonged suffering projected before us in a flash. I recall rushing to Guruji with Sanjeev on being informed of dad's cancer. He was in Manchester and we went to Guruji to seek His blessings. He asked us to carry a brass vessel the next time we came for His darshan. He blessed it and stated

in Punjabi, 'I give your father five years.' Therefore, it was! Dad lived precisely for five years after being diagnosed with cancer.

Now we gathered ourselves, entered the surgeon's room and secured the date for the impending surgery. My insides had rattled but I wore the veil of courage before my daughters on reaching home and breaking the unfortunate news to them. I sensed their hurt and as their mother, my prime instinct was to keep their faith upright and strong, so I lightened the moment as we all turned towards our pet dog Mojo who was and still is our greatest object of affection at home. Sonakshi petted him as she lifted him onto her lap, mollycoddling him as her baby. I silently observed my daughters' struggle to be brave but it also filled me with pride and wonder at how I had raised these strong girls who were someday going to be my most reliable friends and my pillar of strength. At that moment, I was the mother hence their protector and guardian, so I forced my tears back and proposed visiting bade mandir to seek Guruji's blessings. My elder daughter's pet name is Angel, Sonakshi's is cutie for life that she herself had carefully chosen for herself, and so they both are. My angel calmly and determinedly sat before Guruji's Gaddhi while cutie for life appeared a tad more vulnerable and somewhat baffled.

On visiting the temple, I resigned to my destiny giving minimal thought to what could and would transpire post surgery. I was not sure if this was going to be a long road that reached a dead end or it was merely another bump before I was back on track. Either ways I felt reasonably sturdy to make the uphill climb and that strength was drawn solely from my faith.

Precisely a week later I was wheeled into the theatre and in minimal time was under the surgeon's knife and kamal, the anaesthetian most compassionately stroked my forehead before injecting the sleep-inducing drug into my system.

On waking up Kamal called out to me, 'My fair lady you are an inspiration; I applaud you on your sprightly spirit post surgery and your most admirable attitude throughout.'

I was cheerful and I knew it was my indomitable faith that induced my heart to beam throughout the process, from the biopsy to the PET scan to the

surgery. I remember thinking, 'that if it wasn't for my Guruji I wouldn't have been smiling and here I was with my spirits soaring high particularly after my surgeon reassured me of the all clear since he had removed the tumor and cleared the margins of any suspicious cells.

On entering my hospital room the oncologist stated, 'although you underwent another surgery you were indeed very fortunate that the cancer hadn't spread to the lymph glands because if they had there was no escaping chemotherapy. At least you are blessed on that account.'

I contemplated on how Guruji had again minimized the affliction and maximized the right attitude in me. Be optimistic and the cloud hanging over us is bound to shift to reveal the sun. It's rays will permeate every fiber of our being to kindle the flame of love in our heart.

I was offered some words of wisdom that were, 'When you're sick you can't heal the disease with the same spirit as you had before the disorder was generated. The surgery is successful, the treatment of 32 radiation shots will be rendered alongside some years of tamoxifen pill but you need to do the healing. Medicines treat the symptoms but not the source of the sickness. Read 'You can heal your life' by Lousie Hay and, create a larger space of peace inside of you that will dissolve the bitter cells and generate the better cells.

Any disease particularly cancer is accumulated resentment so do your inner work, meditate or at least sit in silence with yourself to let your inner guide unerringly reveal what needs to be released. Each one of us is dragged down with our baggage of emotions and memories inspite of them being irrelevant to our present-day life. Wave them farewell and thank them for the experience. All experience is an education and a way of learning so embrace it but do not lock it into your system. Spring clean your mind of memories that evoke pain and your heart of emotions that deliver sadness to your cells. Create joyful cells by changing your self-talk; your internal dialogue and your autosuggestions that are your affirmations. Alongside your Guruji, you are the co creator of your story so make it an inspiring one. Remember God help those who help themselves.'

In England, they usually administered no more than 15 sessions but here in Delhi it was 32 shots of radiation. I was not aware of the heavy impact the

treatment would have on me as I took the initial sessions with a pinch of salt before they mounted to an unappetizing meal.

Each weekday I sat myself down in the radiology department, often for hours before my name was announced. I was reserved and careful not to make eye contact with any of the patients. I did not want to strike a conversation with anyone so I picked up the newspaper that lay crumpled on the empty seat beside me and began reading.

There was a particular woman whom I imagined beautiful at some time in her life, she was trying to spark a conversation with me, and so I gave in. 'It's hard isn't it? She enquired much to my reluctance so I responded curtly, 'yes I guess.'

'It's particularly difficult when your entire career depends on it. I was a model and a minor actor but now I have lost more than my beauty. In this cosmetic industry, there is no place for me anymore but I am determined to start afresh. I believe one door closes and God opens many others and most likely the right ones. It was shallow you know. I mean my career. It had no depth whatsoever.'

She drew my complete attention now as her courage kindled my own. I placed the newspaper down that I was not reading anyway and I spoke enthusiastically about Guruji. I shared my entire journey with her on how I met Him when I had hit rock bottom in my life to Him lifting me unimaginably to scale great heights. She listened judiciously while asking me questions about the sort of medicine He had administered on me to heal me!

I confirmed the curative powers that the shabd, langar and His aura had on each one of us that did the healing and it was at the end of the hour-long satsang that I shared with her that she requested for His swaroop. [His picture]

I learned that talking is essential at times even against our will and enthusiasm because that was Guruji's way of connecting people to Divinity. I did not meet her again, but I was sure Guruji would beckon her to bade mandir and that life would begin again for her. She had lost her hair and much of her looks but on meeting Guruji, she would gain significantly more

than she ever anticipated.

It was altogether an isolating and often grueling experience but it was a conscious choice to leave my daughters out of this episode. There were innumerable sangat who offered to accompany me to Max hospital but I declined because I believed Guruji walked beside me and it was my time to reflect, introspect and understand the deeper meaning behind my suffering. I sat in silence to internally recite the mantra jaap and as days turned into weeks I turned weary and then claustrophobic as I lay under the ominous contraption for 15 minutes each day. I began to dread my sessions and before each one, I experienced tautness in my gut and on returning home felt intensely nauseated. Despite all, I took it in my stride as He had blessed me with the strength of faith in this phase of darkness but not despair.

I formed unlikely friendships with patients in the same boat who waited for their treatment. I was advised to join a support group, and I smiled inwardly with utmost confidence that I was part of a universal support group that was governed by my Guruji.

What was incredible, besides my inner muscle, was the fact He distracted me from this experience by sending His sangat to entertain me. Vicrum Sharma, my Guru brother, arrived at my place practically every evening suggesting I get dressed for a fashion or an art show. I glared at him disgustedly and stated, 'don't you know I'm going through this very rough treatment that exhausts me. Please try and show some compassion Vicrum.'

'Yes yes' he responded with composure 'so wear something amazing and of course do not forget to wear your best accessory; your smile.'

I would be simmering with anger and irritation at his lack of empathy only to comprehend later that he meant well and it was indeed Guruji's way of distracting me and preventing me from sliding into a self-pitying mode.

He was one of the angels that Guruji sent during that phase besides the endearing support of my brother Sanjeev who was beside me in a heartbeat. We would regularly watch movies together while having our meals at the cinema itself. It was tough living with the knowledge that I had been a cancer victim and one of many in my family history from my paternal grand mom

to my father's sister to his nephew and then him. I was only 45 years old and in my opinion, I had just begun my life after concluding many chapters and launching new ones.

As I went through my journey, I drew strength from visiting Guruji at the mandir and absorbing His unmistakable supreme energy. I inhaled the salubrious air of His ashram, imbibed the mellifluous devotional songs that soothed my soul and ate the divine food that nourished and healed my ailing body. I sat in silence in chota mandir too every time an opportunity presented itself and at times I was fortunate enough to have the blessed food with others.

At each juncture, the combination of Shabad and langar in His satsang that exudes His grace has healed the fragmented pieces of my life. In addition, the entire energy of His temple has unfailingly uplifted me whilst emotionally charging me. It has filled me with renewed possibilities and positivity and a deep cohesion within myself. My mind, body and spirit have known to move into resonance with the higher frequencies of the temple. I breathe in hope and rejuvenation and yet I am deeply humbled as I look into the eyes of His devotees. Their struggles reveal themselves in their fatigued eyes whilst remaining firm in their faith. I believe, merely being in His fold is by far the greatest and the most phenomenal blessing that each one of us has and it is the beginning of a deeper quest within ourselves. Therefore, He always advocated the importance of remaining focused on Him because in doing so we focus on goodness so shortly when we stray we spring back to Him.

I was not sure where I was heading but I flexed my courage muscle knowing that Guruji was far greater than my fears and certainly mightier than my cancer.

By the end of August both my daughters left for their respective universities in the U.S; Anishka for USC and Sonakshi for NYU. I moved in with sangat, Astha Chopra and her parents. Goodness is easier to recognize than to define and despite my unfamiliarity with them, they took me under their wing and nursed my tired spirit. I was physically and mentally exhausted on my 32nd radiation and I remember thinking, 'I could do with a vacation.' Once my treatment was over, I felt free of its shackles and was itching to travel. The wheels under my heels did not permit me to stay in one given place more

than a couple of months so the impulse to fly prevailed.

A few days later, all four of us drove to Vrindhvan and on our return; the parents suggested that Astha accompany me back to Manchester. I was aghast, as they had never sent their daughter alone anywhere and yet they trusted me implicitly in spite of our brief acquaintance. I welcomed the idea as I shuddered at the thought of flying alone in my fatigued state.

They then suggested we both take a vacation anywhere in Europe if my body permitted it. I found the silver lining on the cloud looming over me, as that is precisely what I needed. My spirit felt free after feeling imprisoned in the routine of visiting Max hospital for my rounds of radiation.

I was terribly weak and weary but a vacation never killed anyone! Ask and He shall give.

2

Mother's Love is God's Love

Give He did.

Astha and I traveled to Manchester to return to my anxious mom who was not sure what to expect on seeing me after months of the treatment. She had flown back to her nest in England before my treatment had begun. She was afraid that I would have changed significantly. The harder the hammer, the deeper the nail and of course plenty had changed within me. Externally, my skin around my chest and my back had burnt making it murky and very sensitive. I scratched frequently because of the itchiness until it bled. The heat from the radiation caused hot sweats at the most unexpected times and the skin on my face was dehydrated and drab. Sleepless or disturbed nights were part of the process, so my days were interrupted with short but frequent naps.

Mom enveloped me in her embrace and I sensed the hurt she felt for me. Her eyes revealed sadness but I cheered her up by sharing my travel plans. Against all odds, I had it in me to spread open my wings and more importantly, I had it in me to play strong. I was, without a grain of doubt, exhausted as my treatment had taken a toll on my stamina and the overbearing heat that my body exuded as well as the burns from the radiation were altogether most discomforting but my faith kept me upright as I marched ahead and left for Amsterdam. I took a nap in the afternoons

ensuring it was a power nap and not one that lingered. I did not want to risk inviting the sleep-induced inertia that left me feeling languid.

It was here, while dragging my feet back to the hotel, Astha and I were both soaked in Gurujis fragrance that lingered. It was not just a whiff but a prolonged aroma that was unmistakably His presence to strengthen my then frail spirit and to expose her to a world unfamiliar to her own. It was reassuring to know that Guruji walked beside us and He gave me the sense to enjoy Amsterdam at my own relaxed pace instead of crowding the day to ensure ticking all the boxes. That is a lesson I have learnt in life too; to savor each moment and to be present rather than skimming through excess activities without feeling the joy of having done them. I was present as Guruji too was not absent from our trip. He was the wind beneath my wings that enabled me to fly without a speck of anxiety.

Before traveling anywhere, local or international, I appeal to Guruji to accompany me. I pray for Him to shield me from the potential harm and to make the experience the finest one possible for all involved.

It was my first time in Amsterdam; its name derived from the Amstel River and has more bridges than Venice. I was smitten by the vibe of the city known for its artistic heritage, intricate canal system, tapered homes and people cycling effortlessly around the city on bike paths making it a pretty postcard image. There were no queues for the Van Gogh museum so getting in was a breeze. To see the works of other noted Dutch artists like Rembrandt and Vermeer we took a stroll to the Rijksmuseum. The city fascinated Claude Monet and he painted the South church there on one of his many visits. After visiting Anne Frank's annexe and having the most delectable pancakes ever we sat in the red light area and drank a Heineken beer while staring into space! Not to mention my naivety in entering a coffee shop to drink a green juice just before our flight to Paris. I was laughing languidly without realizing what triggered the giggles and Astha wore this bewildered expression throughout the flight, as she did not know what had possessed me! It was in hindsight as I traced my thoughts to the coffee shop where the woman delivered my order of all green juice with a mischievous smile.

Paris the city of lights, romance and breathtaking monuments was next.

Though I had visited it at different junctures of my life I viewed it from a different perspective. I was filled with gratitude for being able to feast my eyes on the famous sites especially rich in its history, culture and aesthetic appeal. In addition, I found myself appreciating God's beauty in people and places I passed by. Everything was so animated and charming and I was overwhelmed for being able to touch it all with my senses. I realized my newfound ability to feel joy in the most elementary moments. I felt profound gratitude for surviving cancer and getting a second chance to relish God's creation.

Faith is a measure of switching the lights on, so even the darkness in me dispersed the moment I played His shabad or shared a satsang or two with Astha over tea taken with the spirit of consuming chai parsad. One bright day as the sun filtered through the windows in a local café near the Notre Dame Cathedral we shared our love for Guruji whilst observing the Parisians and tourists walking by. Later, we continued on the tour bus and stepped off at all the main attractions and in spite of having moments of self-doubt we covered every noted monument and had copious amounts of pictures taken there. I held myself together despite my drained appearance.

One of my favorite is the Louvre museum and I am enchanted by the enigmatic Mona Lisa whose short form in Italian is Madonna that means, 'my lady.' Besides having, no eyebrows there are many amazing mysterious facts about the painting by the renaissance artist, Leonardo Da Vinci. Presumably, that was the highlight of my trip; meeting Mona Lisa who never had to run to the parlor to shape her eyebrows!

On returning to Manchester, Astha continued to stay and on blending into the rhythm of the city, she commented on how smoothly she could adapt to its culture. Her voice was probably the voice of God as destiny had sent her there to test its waters before she settled there precisely two years later!

Guruji connects the dots and we are merely channels facilitating one another's journey. Six months before she visited Manchester, I was unacquainted with her. We met, I was taken under her shelter, and she flew with me and fell in love with England before giving her heart to the man she later married. It all seemed like a fairy tale with a successful conclusion and it had to be, as Guruji had written her story with His unerring precision.

I had visited her Delhi home twice to share my satsangs with sangat and I believed that was it. However, later she walked into my life to refurbish my home, restore my ailing spirit and render me her emotional support to travel with me, technically, a stranger!

Yesterday's stranger becomes today's family on connecting to Guruji because He has given us the shared bonding of love, compassion and support that sometimes our own family member is unable to give us hence from family turning into a stranger.

3

Faith is Born

I am no stranger to seemingly insurmountable mountains but with the command of faith, I am able to climb them. Faith does not move mountains and that I am convinced of but it has assumed me the strength to make that ascend.

Each hardship has befallen me to make my acquaintance with myself and to be the person that is worthy of Guruji's love. My own struggles have enabled me to empathize with others misery. To give others the gift of hope and the promise of a happier and fulfilling life has become my undertaking by sharing my own triumphs following the turmoil. It often takes a different perspective to change the way we perceive our issues that seem to be the absolute end and not just a bend on our road. Each of us encounter difficulties that strain us until we are reassured that no man is an island but a part of a larger continent standing on a common ground of struggle and strife.

Faith has its transformative prowess. It has changed my priorities, my perceptions and it has enabled me to step out of the room of cowardice and into the room of courage.

No matter what my inner climate, on attending satsangs, imbibing the shabads, consuming langar as medicine and sharing my satsangs, shifts me

back to a healthy disposition. My level of optimism is elevated which evidently exudes into the satsangs that I am asked to share, as the message of dispelling darkness by lighting the flame of faith becomes ever so lucid. The benefits of satsangs cannot be stressed enough but attending them with the right spirit equalizes and negates our karmas, purifies our soul and initiates us to our higher self. Guruji, like He said, descended the earth to uplift mankind and to make us cross the ocean of worldly existence and this He facilitates providing we open up to His Grace with the right intent and attitude.

I recollect how I had postponed my meeting with Guruji when Bamby Singh had first mentioned Him to me. Her family and mine were on a vacation together in Simla back then and she mentioned that her most revered Guru was coming to Delhi from Punjab and I overlooked it. She spoke about Him a few times but I simply turned a deaf ear until His calling came and all my reservations and resistances evaporated. A Newcastle, U.K Sangat, Devika Vij shares the following satsang. When I read it, I smiled to myself, because there are many people whose reservations very swiftly turn into reigning belief with His supreme Grace.

“I attended my very first satsang as an obligation to my mum and on leaving I vowed never to go again because a member of the sangat was sharing how she saw Guruji pull a laddoo out of thin air. My 21st century mind could not comprehend how everyone I knew to be so intelligent believed this. Ironically, I went only to be told that Guruji instructed His sangat to leave their shoes and logic at the door.

Weeks elapsed and I adhered to my word of not attending another satsang and then arrived one rainy day. Mum had a long day at work and longed to attend the satsang being held that evening. My day at work had been relatively easy and I was in good spirits so I offered to take her.

I had heard mum speaking of Guruji’s rose fragrance that always perplexed me. As I was sitting in the satsang, I smelled a strong floral aroma and I narrowed it down to either the lilly’s in the darbar, the air freshener plug-in around the house or possibly someone’s perfume. The satsang ended and my mum and I proceeded home. In the car, I looked over at mum and hesitantly

asked her if she smelled anything during the satsang.

Mum wore an expression of shock and that precise moment is ingrained in my memory. She confirmed inhaling a floral aroma too but we both agreed that it could have emanated from the flowers at the darbar. At that very instance, the entire car exuded that exact fragrance and it was impossible to overlook it. I couldn't believe this occurrence, I turned to mum with a questioning expression and whispered ever so quietly 'Mum can you smell that?' she smiled and replied in the affirmative and within seconds the fragrance was gone.

Guruji came and literally tossed my logic out of the window. We continued our journey home in complete silence, mesmerised by what had just occurred. This was the moment my journey with Guruji began and He never fails to validate His presence, from giving me Om signs when I have had a rough day to innumerable small but sure reminders of His existence in my life.

Guruji plays an integral part in my family's life and I can only look back and marvel at the experiences we have had and look forward to more. Guruji has imparted the wisdom to me that it is in believing that we are constantly receiving and what we receive in terms of our spiritual growth far exceeds and carries more substance than our material desires and achievements. Although I do believe that He is gracious enough to fulfil the desires in us that do no harm to others and is beneficial to us."

Below is Varsha Sehgal's satsang, a very dear friend who has been an inspiration to me on many levels. It is her resilient spirit with which she has dealt with many challenges in her life that illustrate that coming into Guruji's fold really doesn't translate into coming into a bed of roses. Whilst we all ride out our karmic journey, we not only draw strength from Guruji's love but also develop an attitude that enables us to cross every hurdle. In the end, we do not whine but win with a victorious attitude of gratitude. The first time she came over to my mom's place with my sister in law, kajal, she sat at mom's kitchen table and devoured the most delectable aloo parantas. Alongside, I shared my journey with Guruji with her and encouraged her to attend our forthcoming satsang. She was spiraling into self-doubt and low confidence but Guruji; our beloved father elevated her to a level where she

began walking tall once more.

It was less than a year later we were guided to hold satsangs in Newcastle that are now regular. With His unending grace, they happen regularly there with utmost discipline in the exact same manner as they happened during Guruji's physical presence; with simplicity and with the spirit of complete surrender void of flamboyance in its décor or our decorum. Versha is an epitome of strength and positivity and no matter how high the mountain she is one individual who is able to surmount it with an attitude of deep gratitude. Having said that she has literally climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and prior to that trained diligently that enabled her to make that ascend. This in itself illustrates her determination and will power to achieve the unachievable. She makes the impossible possible in every turn of her life and it is her faith that speaks volumes that creates chapters of inspiration for those who know her personally and for those who read her satsang.

My journey with Guruji began as a skeptic who attended her first satsang only to appease a dear friend but from that first touch with divinity to the years that have followed since, Guruji's presence in my life is as real as the blood that flows through my veins.

The year was 2013, my family and I had recently moved to Manchester, and like any new move it had its challenges and settling pains but mostly our life had been a happy one until then.

From the first satsang, I started having dreams of Guruji and some were more vivid than others were but there were a few that gave me the feeling that I had experienced a direct interaction with Guruji Himself. Through these dreams, He gave me instructions and advice for other people, which I passed onto them. Each time I felt very foolish, as so far I had prided myself in being a person of logic and reason and my behavior felt anything but rational to me. To add to that, was my fear that if what I was conveying did not come to pass, I would be laughed at and lose my credibility forever. Nevertheless, trusting my instinct I did as Guruji asked and each time the dreams unfolded to the letter for the people they were meant for. Inexplicably, none of the dreams I was having were answering any of my own questions but on a personal level, I was experiencing a huge spiritual shift. Every time I came to a satsang I was overwhelmed by emotion -

growing up I have found expressing my true feelings impossible to do and here I was crying like a baby publicly amongst strangers! At the time, I was not sure what was happening to me but deep within me, I knew something much greater than my understanding was at play.

As the months rolled on, my life started to come undone – it was as if a speeding train had derailed. I was bombarded by problems from all directions. My children had become innocent targets of severe rejection in their lives leaving them feeling extremely upset, unsettled and confused. My husband, who had so far only ever experienced an upward trajectory in his career, was losing millions in his business. In times like this one imagined one's family coming to their aid, instead we were faced with unimaginable resistance and exclusion. Within the community, the people we had imagined to be friends were suddenly avoiding eye contact lest they be drawn into the family drama. For the first time in my life, I felt truly powerless and so my life developed a pattern, which had more of the proverbial ups and downs than an ECG sheet. I loved my husband and children but keeping my family together was literally tearing me apart.

I began to wonder why this was happening to me now that I had come into Guruji's fold. Why my life had seemed better in the absence of the divine one but since turned on its head? I brought my concerns to my friend who told me that when Guruji was in His human form He used to say that the ones He loved the most He would squeeze them like a lemon until the very last drop. It was, perhaps, a test of their devotion to Him as well as Guruji's way of freeing the devotee of his/her karmic obligations of their present and past lives. Instead of going through life experiencing recurring major highs and lows, Guruji blesses His followers with a life where the biggest thorns are plucked out at the onset.

Hanging onto that hope, I made Guruji my anchor and with every new problem, I clung onto Him tighter and just when we seemed to be emerging the other side of our troubles, my mother was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. This was a blow too strong and I felt I had lost the ground beneath my feet. At the lowest point during this time my hands had begun to shake and I was becoming fearful of what followed next – what other test Guruji had in store for me and whether I would survive this never-ending onslaught of troubles.

My mum began her treatment and I found myself hopping between two continents on a monthly basis. I was trying to juggle supporting her and assisting my children settle into their new schools and lives as we had recently returned to Newcastle. This was a phase ridden with high emotion and constant guilt. If I were with my mum in India, I felt guilty for leaving my children who had only just pulled through a very awful time in their lives. If I were at home with my children, I felt guilty for leaving my mother who was gravely sick. I was also guilt-ridden for my absences at work and because I had minimal support from them, the surmounting pressure was becoming intolerable.

It was in those awful ten months that I finally saw Guruji's plan for me. Connecting the dots, I realized He had come into my life at just the precise moment when, unbeknownst to me, it was going to spiral completely out of control. Faith is not an easy thing and I have learned, definitely not for the faint-hearted but it was my faith in Guruji that finally saw me through everything without irrevocably breaking down.

Little by little, He built me; starting with problems, I could manage which escalated onto the ones I could not have dealt with single-handedly. Throughout my mother's illness there were several miracles that allowed me to care for her with love, patience and complete devotion – things I know for certain I would have regretted all my life if events hadn't unfolded as and when they did.

My mum died peacefully, pain-free and surrounded by everyone she loved. The doctors had assured me that she still had a few months to go but a week before my monthly trip I was feeling very unsettled and not being able to put a finger on the reason why, I preponed my trip. Nine days later, my mum was dead.

I relived a lifetime in those nine days. There was not a single word that was left unsaid, love restrained, or disappointment unexpressed between us. We showered each other with love, forgiveness and above all admiration for the life we had lived together. I had this sense of connection with my mum that I have never felt for another human being ever before or since – we were reaching out to each other not as the physical being but as two souls that had chosen to make this journey together. It was an unworldly and deeply

profound experience. People around us felt the energy too. In fact, they still talk about how unreal those last few moments were. It was as if our souls were coming to terms with the knowledge that our journey was ending and that any unfinished business between us must be addressed – not many get the opportunity or awareness to do that. In my rare moments of doubt, these memories serve to remind me of the most precious blessing Guruji has bestowed upon me. My relationship with my mother was one of pure love but with many complexities and He had given me the precious gift of tying loose ends, asking questions I had never dared to and above all show my mum that I loved her more than she had ever imagined possible. Hence, allowing us both to move on peacefully.”

It is literally up to us whether we step up to our challenges or step down from them. On stepping up and winning with a positive attitude we are then able to teach others to make that first step to a more joyful and positive living.

4

Immunity Build Up

The upward steps make us stronger and fitter for the following steps.

Between 2012 and 2013, my prime objective was to restore my immunity because life stopped in its tracks when I fell into a somewhat tiring and tiresome routine. I realized just how depleted I was on every level. My emotional texture was painting my external appearance with the same dreary look with dark circles and gray hair that I was medically advised not to color owing to its many chemicals. Being an inherent optimist, I had to alter my landscape but I needed professional assistance to guide me and lift me from the well of tears I shed beneath my blanket every night. My skin was still black and blue beneath my clothes and physical pain still prevailed. I did not appear as someone who had been struck with cancer but I had definitely earned the title of someone who was chronically fatigued. Life was wearing me out and the challenge to nurse mom and nursing myself were getting the better of me.

Around the spring of 2013, my friend Sangeeta Dutta found a nutritionist close to home and she was instrumental in lifting my self-confidence as she educated me on how to turn my body alkaline. Systematically she altered my diet; eliminating the high acidic foods and replacing them with alkaline ones and so new food types were added to my shopping list. From this, I recalled how Guruji stated people visit Him only when they want their shopping list

of desires to be fulfilled. They often fail to understand that by connecting to Him and loving Him He takes care of our every need and like a good gardener weeds out the wants that are not serving us in the larger scheme of things. There is a fine line between need and want and the latter is transient in nature, as yesterday's want fades into insignificance as our priorities shift. My internal garden that contained many undesirable weeds were being plucked away and each time that happened I felt the prick but I also understood that in the larger scheme of life it was for my benefit. Usually at the very time of weeding it is difficult to take a step back to draw wisdom from a cluttered garden but because Guruji awakens us to what is to be retained and what is to be discarded it becomes relatively easier.

"I've gained so much weight.' I shrieked with a heavy heart.

'Anita, believe that you have it in you to go beyond this. Keep moving in life and know that this too shall pass. Taking the weight off your mind is more vital than taking the weight off your body at this moment. Stress is proven to induce weight gain because the body releases the hormone cortisol that leads to blood sugar spikes, insulin resistance and weight gain. Positive, life-giving thoughts will keep you ahead of the game. Engage in activities that feel right for you; sit quietly with a mug of tea in a Zen zone and eat foods that have wholesome value to them. Eat little and not often but do eat as one of life's finest delights is food so why deprive yourself but never over eat. Do not bite more than you can chew Anita. One day at a time and do not worry, only contemplate.'

As she made her last statement, I recalled Guruji's words, 'chinta nahin chintan karo.' His voice echoed in different chambers of my life. Moreover, He had told me once, 'jiyada na kada kar.' Apna kayal rakh. Walk kita kar. Sylish rah kar.'(Do not overeat, take care of yourself, walk and stay stylish.)

Guruji was with me here in this situation too as I sat listless in Sonia's confined room packed with organic health supplements and a machine I was totally unfamiliar with that detected the deficiencies in my body.

I acted on her advice and got into the zone she strongly suggested; I regularly held Guruji's satsangs at my place and was pleased with its rising numbers. From five people as was the case when we initially started in Manchester I

observed over forty and because it was ever increasing I was encouraged to hold them every month on a Sunday. I drew a reservoir of energy from them and it totally engaged my mom too as she invited her friends with utmost energy and enthusiasm. For her at this point satsangs meant a gathering of her friends and though she respected the fact that Guruji was coming home she had not completely surrendered herself to the idea.

Mom could not grasp its meaning and stood with folded hands at a slight distance from His gaddhi before sitting down. Initially she did not completely absorb the shabads or imbibe the divine energy. She was, instead, concerned with the table lay out and if we had sufficient beverages to serve her guests with the food! Once the chai parsad was served she would, additionally, ask her dear friends if they preferred to have coke or pepsi instead!

I calmly explained, like a mother to her child, that Guruji gave us this platform of satsangs to connect with divinity and that too in complete silence. The significance of satsang was not to chat but to converse with only Guruji telepathically and to imbibe His energy that gradually purified our every thought, word and action to enhance our lives as we in turn influenced others in the most positive manner. After all, we can only give others what we have so it has to be positive.

The mellifluous shabads and their vibrations healed and elevated us and perhaps rendered us the answers to our endless enquiries.

The food that offered to Him to be blessed by Him is medicine for whatever ailment we are suffering from; be it emotional, physical or financial. Guruji used to state time and time, 'Nanak dukhiya sab sansar, so suhkiya Jin naam adhaar. Hence, ask to connect to His name. When He stated 'Mano mungo nahin He suggested mungo te asli cheej mungo. Do not ask just accept but if you are to solicit then seek the real deal that is His name, His love and His ever sustaining connection. We forget, at times, to recite His name but He remains ever true to us to love and guide us like a father figure who may be stern at times but forever has our best interest at heart.

My mom was not accustomed to this kind of scenario by way of connecting to God as after bathing she regularly read the Holy Gita and light a candle before her many deities. She wasn't into rituals and neither was she bound by any superstitions so on that front she was following Guruji's word that was 'Mein tumare vehem dhoor karnay aya hun' I've come to remove you

from your superstitions.

God manifests neither in superstitions nor via rituals. God is in the practical and once we become conscious of His presence in our lives we become mindful of our conduct. Our outlook, that He alters, determines our outcome on the choices we make. I witnessed Manchester sangat preferring to attend Guruji's satsang than engaging in any other regular Sunday activity so their priorities shifted, as did their bigger picture perspective.

After several months, I noticed mom finally taking a shine to it as she bowed to Guruji in every satsang with complete reverence before sitting quietly without feeling the urge to add coke or other beverage to our langar parsad table! She also resigned to the fact that chai parsad was medicine and even she began savoring it for her illness that was becoming visibly disturbing. She was finding it increasingly difficult to breathe and felt the need to rest more.

My immunity was getting stronger and my inclination to travel was getting stronger still. My fervor and fire for life revived.

Finding our blessings in pain alleviates it by affording us the realization that we do not own the suffering.

5

Mother's Teachings

Even if you fail to comprehend the deeper meaning behind suffering send it love, as it is love that will heal it.

It was the summer of 2013, when I flew to Ibiza with three of my friends and prior to that I attended a satsang and prayed to Guruji to accompany us on the trip and unmistakably He did while he took care of mom back home.

One evening while my friends and I walked in Old town towards the cathedral I asked Guruji if He was with us and in no time, we noticed a sadhu sitting on the pavement with several bead strings wrapped around his neck and on greeting him, he said 'Om Namah Shivaya.' He was not Indian but that did not matter because a sign from Guruji can come in any color, shape, form or place. Incidentally, I was with my childhood friends with whom I had grown up with in England and were now Guruji's devotees.

As we walked on, there was a flutter of white butterflies hovering around my friends and we broke into a girly giggle. We were wrapped in so much joy and love when suddenly there was the undeniable whiff that is associated with Guruji's presence.

As you can imagine, our entire stay in Ibiza was blessed and I was brimming with so much energy that my friends could not believe my stamina. After we

danced most fervently on the beach for hours we would return to our hotel where at the entrance sat most majestically Lord Ganeshji. In every nook and corner of Ibiza Guruji manifested His presence.

He turned the impossible possible by healing my burns in no time and rendering me the strength and the gusto to move into a healthier space. He reduced the mountain of a problem down to a molehill and I felt fit, fine and fabulous as I sprinted the sidewalks of Ibiza and soaked in the mesmerizing sunsets, the soft sand and the shimmering blue waters. I danced, unreservedly, whilst lifting my face to the placid clear blue skies that were dotted with fluffy clouds. It felt amazing to be cancer free and to have my skin free from burns, scars and unsightly rashes.

I continued gazing up at the skies whilst soaking my feet in the clear azure sea. I called out to Guruji to beseech Him to minimize my mom's suffering and to fill her heart with His love.

Guruji has taught me that everything that He has allowed to come my way was always with a purpose. The greatest pain or suffering has befallen me to mold me into the person He wants me to become. Difficult times came and in hindsight made me understand that they led to something greater and better once I was able to walk through them despite stumbling over and over again. I fell but He enabled me to rise and in despair came His light of hope. Gratitude is my deepest prayer as despite cancer invading me I was able to dance foot loose and fancy free in one of the worlds most stunning beaches.

I prayed that mom, too, was able to hold onto the power of faith and gratitude for the life she had led, from marrying my father to having us five siblings to having the privileges of an affluent lifestyle. The illness that she was encapsulated in came towards the end of her life and was again for a purpose only the higher power can make sense of. To me, my mother is the most sacred, purest form of expression and she has spent her entire living years in giving selflessly making the sacrifices only women of her generation could and would.

She is beautiful to look at and often I have envied her for her radiant skin and her magnanimous heart that never learnt to take as to give was her only mantra.

Her charity in life was to give relentlessly to those who worked for her and on visiting India, staying at my brother Ajay's house, she would regularly distribute samosas and Indian sweets like there was no tomorrow. The philosophy 'give more than you ever take' did not apply to her as she had her own, 'Just give.'

Her innocence and simplicity knew no bounds and her goodness radiated and attracted the entire Manchester community towards her. She used to say in Punjabi, 'Insaan de Gun honay chayed a ne aine ki rab vi khush ho jaya apne bande nuh dekhde.' [An individual's goodness should be so much that even God becomes pleased with His created individual]

'Sanjay mera Guru Nanak hai.' [My son Sanjay is Guruji Nanak] By that, she meant that he holds the right values and his heart is as pure and sacred as Guru Nanak is.

'Shukr kitha karo ki asey dain jugay ha.' [Be grateful that we are worthy of giving.]

I myself can vouch for that, as goodness prevails in him to the extent, he is a total giver too like my mom and does not know how to take.

Sanjeev, my other younger brother is another giver like my mom and mom's sister who is also a mother to me. Having said that, I am blessed to have all my four brothers as the most giving and loving men in my life.

As I stood before the Mediterranean Sea, I was oozing with gratitude to be born into such an amazingly simple yet sophisticated family. Subsequently, my gratitude extended to being blessed with two most loving, caring and compassionate daughters. Incidentally, I always prayed to God even as child that when I married I prefer daughters to sons as I had sufficient male energy in my family of four brothers and I being the only sister.

God listened and today I prayed hard that Guruji listens to my pledge for my ailing mom, my angel, mentor and my sincerest well-wisher.

From the following except there is a wealth of knowledge to internalize.

‘There was a bird who lived in a desert, very sick, no feathers, nothing to eat and drink no shelter to live in. One day a dove was passing by, so the sick unhappy bird stopped the dove and inquired, ‘Where are you going?’ it replied, ‘I’m going to heaven.’

So the sick bird said, ‘Please find out for me, when my suffering will come to an end?’ the dove said, ‘Sure I will.’ And bid a goodbye to the sick bird. The dove reached heaven and shared the message of the sick bird with the angel in charge at the entrance gate.

The angel said, ‘for the next seven years of its life the bird has to suffer like this, no happiness till then.’

The dove said, ‘When the sick bird hears this he will get so disheartened. Could you suggest a solution to this?’

The Angel replied, ‘Tell him to recite this verse, ‘THANK YOU GOD FOR EVERYTHING.’ The dove on meeting the sick bird again, delivered the message of the angel to it.

After seven days the dove was again passing by and saw that bird was very happy, feathers grew on his body, a small plant grew up in the desert area, a small pond of water was also there, the bird was singing and dancing most cheerfully. The dove was astonished. The angel had clearly stated there would be no happiness for the bird for the next seven years. With this question in mind, the dove went to visit the angel at heaven’s gate.

The dove put forth his query to the Angel. The Angel replied, ‘Yes it is true there was no happiness for the bird for the next seven years but because the bird was reciting the verse, ‘THANK YOU GOD FOR EVERYTHING’ in every situation. His life changed.

When the bird fell flat on the hot sand it said, ‘THANK YOU GOD FOR EVERYTHING.’

When it could not fly it said, ‘THANK YOU GOD FOR EVERYTHING.’

When it was thirsty and there was no water around, it said, 'THANK YOU GOD FOR EVERYTHING.

Whatever the situation the bird thanked, God and the seven years dissolved in seven days.

When I heard this story, it brought about a tremendous shift in my way of viewing and accepting situations. On adapting this verse, deeply internalizing it, and not just uttering it, it brought about a shift from what I have lost to what I have gained.

Every loss turns into gain and even if I have pain in my knees which I sometimes do, particularly on climbing steps I simply say, 'Thank you God for allowing the rest of my body to be fit and fine and soon the pain dissipates.

In the same vein applying this verse to every situation in life, from relationships, finances, and social life, to our aspirations brings a radical shift in our behavior and attitude in general. Feeling gratitude from our heart and saying it with conviction so the soul can hear has a deep impact on our lives.

There are situations in our lives that we do not have much command over but we can engage in the act of praying, as that is our free will.

6

Meditation

Free will is the choice to live free or enslaved, the choice to be in fear or to be happy.

I chose to be happy by adding value to my days. It was a win win, as every Tuesday back in Manchester, seven to ten friends of mine came to mom's apartment to practice the twin heart meditation followed by the recital of affirmations and mantra jaap.

It is difficult being still and silent in modern life and centering ourselves without the compulsive urge to check our phones. It is a challenge to stay mindful in contemporary living because most of us have social media addiction and we can spend hours, sometimes aimlessly, scrolling through every social site, from instagram to twitter to face book and snap chat. Suddenly that is an hour or more of our day gone by and everything else takes a back seat from breakfast to exercise to meditation. We are on overload when it comes to information and it can easily lead to obsessive-compulsive disorder that simply swallows up time. What we consider a boon is sometimes a curse particularly if we are completely dependant on it. Small steps that allow us to disconnect with technology and reconnecting to ourselves by going for a walk without our phone or engaging in a creative activity can make a huge impact on our lives. We learn that by taking a sabbatical from our phones also frees us from being slaves to it as technology is there to serve us and not

the other way around.

Two hours allotted to our meditation every Tuesday was getting my Manchester friends into the habit of switching their mobiles off and focusing only on their inner lives. We together prayed to Guruji as we recited our mantra jaap and lit our candles before His swaroop. They were already in His fold but were just not aware of it.

In fact, at this point, most of my friends had not made a deep connection with Guruji. They were attending because they felt a sense of tranquility and purpose for a few hours and the practice of remaining silent spilled over into satsangs later when they had built their relationship with Him.

One of my childhood friends, Suzie had recently separated from her husband and was undergoing a very difficult divorce with its many challenges. She began by coming for the weekly meditation sessions and almost immediately made a deep connect with Guruji. I witnessed her tears each time she came to the satsangs and found her life to be impossible.

Her faith was as pure as pure can be and her love for Guruji was just that; love. There was much to learn from her simple and straightforward way of believing in Him. She addressed Him as her mother and father to whom she had entrusted her life and her future, which was daunting to an outsider because at that point she was unanchored.

In time, her tears turned into radiant smiles, her hurt into happiness and her defeat into dare. She took bold steps towards rebuilding her life and each brick she laid attributed to Guruji's grace and the strength He rendered her. There was gratitude in her every stride and in her every word and breath. While I was in India, she broke the unbelievable news of having found love in her life again and that Guruji had made it possible for her to remarry and settle down.

My other childhood friend who regularly attended the meditation sessions and mantra jaap afternoons is a staunch Guruji devotee today. Guruji gave Sangeeta Dutta the job she sought and after her working hours, the seva of compiling CD's of shabds for every satsang and for distributing to the sangat. She is an incredibly pure soul who was my support when I was struck with cancer as she introduced me to Sonia, the nutritionist and to healthy eating.

She took me for walks and returning to mom's apartment, she would make chai parsad and serve to both mom and I. Good souls walked in and out of mom's apartment everyday.

In fact, the entire energy of mom's apartment exuded Guruji's love and it fuelled mom with zest and joy too in spite of her sickness. Playing His shabads in the background soothed the atmosphere at home and charged it with His love.

She also seemed to love people flowing into her apartment and that clearly reflected in her radiant smile. There was a deeper meaning for Guruji to send me back to Manchester at this junction of my life; it was to infuse mom's heart with so much love that she felt her remaining time on earth was worth her every breath in spite of her constrained breathing. Love is the most potent medicine and her spirit was being healed even though her body was dying.

The spiritual calling made me calmer and instead of falling apart my life was falling into place and it became apparent that I had a higher purpose of assembling people to fill them with renewed vitality and verve to seek a better life for themselves. Many sangat from across the globe came to lodge with us at different junctions and a few were students at the Manchester University who loved home comforts especially Indian home cooked food. We were happy to host them at weekends as this filled our space with cheer and gladness. It was usually on weekends that we held satsangs at our place so it was only after attending them I dropped them off to the local station for their return to the city. I felt honored that Guruji had given me the responsibility to make something valid with the time given to me and I considered each day as a possibility to generate something meaningful in my life via satsangs, nurturing mom and getting my health back on track. I aspired to be the woman my daughters respected and admired me for my ability to convert my trials into triumphs. They dropped in from their respective travels whenever they could and during their stay, we shopped, dined out, watched movies and attended a satsang. It gave me a deep sense of joy knowing they had their own connect with Guruji.

There was a phase when connecting others to Him dominated my attention, to the extent I failed to allocate time for myself to deepen my own connect.

In the comfort and convenience of mom's home, I found a spot where I sat in silence, uninterrupted by anyone.

Guruji listens to each of us. One day when a devotee asked Him how He would know what we, His devotees are going through, He responded by confirming that He is omnipresent and resides in each devotee's heart. Speak to Him telepathically and He responds effectively either through a shabad, satsang or a sangat. Making Him an indispensable part of our lives and loving Him as our holy father draws in more love. In families, too, fathers love their children unconditionally and when they receive love from their children they reciprocate by giving unquantifiable amounts of love and pampering. It is the same with Guruji. Simply love Him and feel that love overflow from the heart. Leave the mind out of the equation and see how our lives expand. Love has the most profound healing effect that there is.

There was plenty on my plate now and I was floating on a cloud of possibility as I continued visiting Sonia on a weekly basis to get a dose of positivity and wisdom.

7

Nutritionist's Wisdom

Wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.

An intelligent man thinks he knows everything whilst the wise one knows there is something to learn.

'We are a culmination of our successes, failures, hurts and triumphs. It is practically up to us Anita. Life is not a dress rehearsal and everything we do today has an impact on our tomorrow. Service, I believe, particularly when it is selfless, makes us better people. It is the only sustaining quality in all of us and is more consequential than anything else in our lives. It softens the heart when we engage in service for others with the right spirit and intent and fills us with love that is most enduring. Enjoy your own company too, as much as you possibly can, because that is where your true healing will occur, in the silence of your being. Draw out your social limits, define your boundaries, and do not be apologetic for saying no to others for the sake of saying yes to yourself. Never apologize for taking 'me' time. Go for walks in the fresh air. Declutter your mind and disconnect awhile from the world. It is a mental feng shui.

'Gupt seva karo.' Said Guruji. Do service without making a song and a dance about it! Do it most unpretentiously and by staying humble life will never allow you to stumble. Her last statement also struck a chord because saying

no to others to create space for oneself was a tall order for me until that point in my life. Going for walks was another thing Guruji advocated the importance of as it definitely improves the quality of our lives.

'By disallowing people in your space when it is not convenient to you is actually saying yes to your health, your soul and your being, so learn to be with yourself without feeling lonely or guilty of having turned others down. Being alone a few hours daily centers you without people dictating their demands on you. This time of healing from your cancer and its most depleting treatment is a steep learning curve but overall you have been given another chance to redefine certain priorities. Engage in recreations that bring joy to your heart and pace it without having to race it, which means do not clutter your day with too many activities and social engagements. Do not grab life by the throat. Life ought to be touched, not strangled' she slipped into silence and after moments reflection asked, 'I believe you're a writer. Is that right? And an artist?'

'So if words and images are your water, dear girl, then you must drink on.' She laughed 'And you do know that it is life itself that writes the best stories so let your experiences roll on. You are more capable than you realize so unleash your creativity. Artistic endeavors spur the release of immunity boosting compounds vital for fighting alien bodies in our systems. Dig your heels deep into your creative passions. There are only three things we own; our words, our actions and our conscience. If it is writing, then use your words as a service to others to inspire the reader to create its own motivating story. What's more, you must use your words responsibly as it will impact the reader.'

I took a moment to reflect on this and expressed my gratitude to Guruji in my heart because there was a phase in my life when I believed myself to be insufficient. I had nothing to report in terms of my achievements and over time Guruji blessed me to hone my inherent skills as a writer and an artist to apply these as seva. [Selfless seva] I also learned not to be in competition with anyone but myself. I never had the desire to be in a race with anyone, in any shape of form. My aim was to be better than I was before and to be free, it was important just to be me. I learnt that it is important to be myself because the world will and does adjust.

I have also learned what Guruji taught me many years back but I failed to apply it to my life out of sheer obligation to others and for the fear of displeasing them. 'Stay away from people who make you feel it's all wrong and stay close to the ones who make you feel, 'All is well.' People who are constantly in a state of ingratitude and a complain mode tend to drain us and if we spend too much time with them we are at the risk of absorbing their energy too and eventually become like them. Guruji showers His grace but it is vital to recognize it and be grateful. Blessings are His, attitude is ours hence that is what we need to work on. Intelligence is holding on but wisdom is letting go and I have learnt the latter with His guidance.

After a moment, she wrote something on a piece of paper, looked up and continued 'Get this. On creating an alkaline environment in your body, cancer just cannot sprout, as it needs an acidic atmosphere to breed. Equally important is to feed your mind with joy giving thoughts that also have an alkaline effect on our body. Forgive, forget and deal with unresolved feelings deep within you. Releasing resentment is vital for physical and emotional well being so roll up your sleeves and labor hard towards wiping out the negative images and feelings of the past and replace them with pleasant ones. It is an ongoing attempt until one by one, every image of wound and offence has made their exit from your system and you have filled yourself with brightly colored joyful images of somewhere you want to be or do in the future. This is your time to heal so single-mindedly do the inner engineering. In addition, do cleanse your gut and for this you can take probiotics.' Concluded Sonia.

I cheated once a week as I succumbed to this delectable almond cake in costa and she would instantly detect it in her machine to which she warned. 'Cancer loves sugar so make a firm fist at any sweet temptation and resolve that you will not yield to it. You are having stress related cravings and this usually happens in cancer patients but write it in your head in bold letters that 'sugar fuels tumor.' Counteract these cravings by finding a more virtuous alternative, as there is always one to everything in life. Nothing is indispensable you know and the last but not the least invest in massages.'

I recall Guruji advising me to indulge in massages on a regular basis. When the body is fit and agile then we are better able to carry out the work that we have been destined to do. Getting a regular health check is also important for

our peace of mind. Prevention is by far better than cure so staying vigilant to any unusual signs in the body may indicate a malfunction.

'You know massages are more than just a gentle rub on the body. It increases your blood circulation, drains your lymphatic system as it detoxifies, relaxes and rejuvenates the mind, body and spirit. Invest in yourself and you will feel a general sense of well-being and an increased self worth when you borrow time to pamper yourself. Integrate this into your life.

To sum it up, turn your body alkaline and feed your mind with healthy and creative ideas. Be with people who are positive towards you as their vibe will impact yours but most importantly be that person who others want to be around. Be bold, beautiful, brave and benevolent.'

I clenched my resistance muscle and I never ate that almond cake again! In fact I consumed primarily organic greens and England is a place where wholesome food is available at our fingertips and it's not ridiculously priced either. I also integrated the habit of walking in nature as the freshness of the air filled me with renewed energy and a chance to clear my cluttered head. I prepared my body to be fit to fly to California for Anishka's graduation ceremony. It was almost a year of emotional and physical restoration that involved losing my excess physical and mental weight.

I was uncomfortable leaving my ailing mom but at this point, she wasn't formidably sick though the frequency in which she took the oxygen from the cylinder had increased, as had her dose of medication. Her spirits were still admirably high and I had confidence in her ability to engage herself in my absence despite her increased dependency on me. At night I sat before Guruji's swaroop and prayed to Him to envelop her in His infinite love and protection. I gently closed my eyes in meditation; drawing deep breaths to let the initial wave of guilt roll over me before informing her of my departure. Her concern was my health and while I worried about hers, she never ceased to worry about mine.

I loved and nurtured my mom like a mother does her child. My mere presence in her home comforted and warmed her heart and I empathized with the emptiness she felt during my absence. In the same breath, on agreeing to let Anishka spread her wings to L.A to study in USC I felt adrift. I

was still hurting from my divorce when she embarked on her next chapter in California in 2009 and my deep insecurities had dominated my personality back then. On settling her into her new phase, I was a woman fighting many insurmountable battles. I was in a cocoon of deep sorrow and stress fuelled by the guilt of not being the ideal mother during that phase.

This was a fine chance to step back from my past and to walk tall for my angel. Though I had made mistakes in the past as far as my motherhood was concerned, this was our moment; Anishka and mine. No words can describe how I felt attending her ceremony as I bought a new dress, a clutch and matching shoes. I planned to put my best foot forward!

I stood before Guruji's swaroop and prayed for Him to make the experience one that certainly went down in my memory book. May its images always remain vivid.

8

California Satsang

I felt alive as I inhaled the crisp clean air of California and soaked in the luminous skies. From the time I had come to settle her down at her university in 2009 to her graduation in 2013 my self-esteem and self-reliance had fortified. Anishka, too, had blossomed and excelled remarkably as an individual who had undergone her own share of battles.

On arrival, the L.A sangat, Alka Gupta's husband fetched me from my hotel to drive me home to his family. Alka introduced me to her two sons who were impressively intelligent. We shared our life stories as we relished the home cooked Indian meal and good food shared in good company becomes blessed as the vibrations of the people around get infused in it. Moreover, the satsangs we shared infused the food with Guruji's blessings.

Later that day I attended a satsang in Orange County where the sangat was increasing, as it was world over. On sharing my satsang I witnessed the devotees' faces light up with wonder. Most of them had recently connected and there was always that awe felt towards sangat who had met and spent time with our loving Guruji. I, in turn, was in awe of the purity and the simplicity of their devotion. As Guruji had stated, 'Dekhi meri aan vali sangat mein nu rab man laygi aur tusi Guru guru karday raho gay.' [my coming sangat will immediately accept me as God whereas you all will consider me as your Guru.]

Sat-sangs are a platform that illuminate His Sovereignty as He permits us to reinforce our love for Him and He sprays His benevolence on each one of us by ensuring we draw answers to our everyday enquiries. His love for us is inexhaustible and it is the only kind that roots us and makes us blossom. For the ocean of love and grace that He bathes us in we need to reciprocate by working on our conduct, our karmas and our lives. Every drop makes the ocean so if each one of us led respectable lives then the collective energy of the earth is certainly bound to change for the better.

The responsibility of managing satsangs is not an easy task as it may instill the feeling of self-importance, bloating the ego. Alka Gupta is largely a humble devotee of Guruji who genuinely loves Him and has learned, through many trials, to surrender to His will. Her wisdom, that Satsangs are a means to the end is a very powerful message. She shares her satsang below.

“I bow to your lotus feet Guruji and seek your blessings to share my satsang though words cannot measure your enormity. Accept my humble attempt at articulating how you transformed my life and enabled me to transcend the trivial. May you bestow your anant kripa [boundless mercy] on those who seek your love and light.

Our Guruji is God who came in a human garb and He is infinite and can appear at any place, any time and in any form. Frequently, He has assumed His darshans in human form in California but my eyes did not recognize Him because the human mind needs convincing before it surrenders to divinity. We are driven by our egos and are practically blind to the higher perspective of human birth. The realization that we are spiritual beings having a human experience and that we are here ultimately to become one with Him takes time. This wisdom does not descend upon us overnight. We need to work towards detaching ourselves from people and objects that lead to woes. Strengthening our faith in Guruji is to our advantage as He then leads the way.

When I first saw Guruji’s swaroop, I was cynical and thought, ‘how can He be God?’ He does not resemble Mahashiv or any other God. Despite having had a religious mindset, growing up with conventional standards in India, I was unacquainted with the word Guru, shabad, kada prashad [Halva] seva,

simran and satsang.

I was handed a small swaroop of Guruji and was advised to recite His mantra jaap, which I started doing along with my regular prayer and Guruji's grace began to flow into my life. One day I smelt a sweet fragrance of roses and chandan in my back yard. The whiff came from nowhere and I had no clue that Guruji was showing me His presence.

I began noticing Om darshans on the tilak that we apply on Guruji's forehead. I was raised a Hindu and although I moved to the U.S over 21 years ago, I still performed all the pujas. Om would appear on pooja thalis and even on chappatis. The signs overwhelmed me, as I had never experienced them before.

In time, I realized that Guruji is beyond religion and rituals and that He is God incarnate and there is no power beyond Him. He wants us to become aware of our higher purpose, to connect with Him directly and not deviate from the true Path.

Living in the U.S, I had no way of connecting with anyone who could provide me with the answers to my questions until I discovered Guruji's website. I started doing bade mandir darshans on this website and listened to the satsangs many times in disbelief. They seemed too good to be true but through them, my faith strengthened and I began receiving my answers. Then I longed to visit Bade Mandir and so it was. Two years later in 2012, I was, unmistakably, more excited to visit Bade Mandir than visiting my family and on reaching there on a Thursday, the mantra jaap started playing. My sons, raised in the U.S, were apprehensive about four strangers eating langar prashad together in one plate. We were trying to make sure that all four of us stayed together so that we did not have to share with strangers.

Guruji always said 'mere kol aana hai te apna dimaag bahar juttiyaan de naal chhad ke aaya karo' [if you want to connect with me then leave your egos out where you leave your shoes.] Our first step of letting go of our egos began when my elder son had to share his langar with strangers and it hurt me to see him struggling. I looked at Guruji's swaroop in the langar hall and saw one of His eyes blink. It was His way of demonstrating that all happens as per His Divine will and we need to surrender to it. We visited bade mandir

many times during our stay in Delhi and each visit brought us closer to Him. Merely being in the sacred space of bade mandir, our mental, physical and spiritual cleansing transpired.

I had been suffering from chronic neck pain for many years that kept me awake at night and every treatment in the U.S had failed. On one of our visits to Bade Mandir, on rising after bowing down near the Kutiya, I stumbled and felt a jerk in my neck. Since then, the severity of the pain disappeared. Guruji's way of treatment is unparalleled and when all science, doctors and logic fail, His grace prevails.

He answered our prayers and upon our return from Delhi, some sangat contacted us and we had the first satsang in our home with Guruji's swaroop that we carried from Bade Mandir. There were seven of us and we witnessed a lit diya in His swaroop so He showed us His presence. We had no clue what kind of journey we were embarking on with Him. In fact, even now, a whiff of fragrance has come as I write this.

We decided to hold monthly satsangs in Los Angeles but not knowing how to go about it, He solved my problem by sending me to the Bay Area (from Los Angeles) in California to attend a satsang there. I met the aunty who was Guruji's instrument in organizing satsangs and she became my guide. Guruji connects all His devotees to ensure that we learn the necessary skills with the right sentiments when we are ready to embark on this journey with Him. Doubts crept in from time to time, 'Is Guruji really there?' However, He promptly cleared them by holding my hand and whenever I was about to fall, He supported and guided me and began to send sangat from different parts of the world to share their experiences.

I had first dream darshan before my gall bladder surgery, which was supposed to take two hours and was complete in only 18 minutes. During my recovery, I realized that there was no one with me in my hour of need except for Guruji. He worked through the surgeon's hands. His presence gave me a feeling of protection and calm and I felt positive.

The joy I experienced in His satsangs were unparalleled and all I wanted was to keep hearing the blessed shabads. They offered me peace even though I did not understand much Punjabi and I wanted to share my bliss with others

by talking about Him and listening to His kalyans [blessings]. However, a deep sadness emerged, wishing I had met Him when He was in His physical form. He understood my sense of deprivation and began to appear frequently in my dreams, which brought me solace. It was totally by His grace that I began to feel complete and not lonely anymore as a sense of peace and fulfillment engulfed me.

I hear Guruji's voice, within, which is the voice of divinity within each one of us that we hear in silence. It definitely guides us.

One time, whilst doing the dishes in my kitchen I was mentally talking to Guruji about my younger son. My inner voice told me, 'Mein uske dream wick aaya see kal. Ja ke puch lei.' [I appeared in his dream last night, go and ask him] I asked my son and he was shocked that I knew.

There are times when I have a thought in my mind and He responds in a written form either on billboards by the roadside, magazines or a shabad that I randomly play or in Bollywood songs as well as other myriad ways. He does answer directly and makes sure that I understand the deeper meaning that I internalize because I understand that having experiences is His way of validating His presence in our lives and it is for Him to carry us further on our spiritual journey.

Guruji has blessed my husband with a new life. One time his flight encountered a hurricane and Guruji brought him home safely. He saved the lives of all the passengers on the plane to save my husband who is also a humble devotee and a good person.

As Guruji used to state, 'Jidde undher daya aur namarta nahin hai oh rab to dhur oh janda hai.' [The individual who does not have compassion and humility in them becomes distant from God.] 'Nivya nu phal lagda.' [The humble are blessed.]

When we love Him unconditionally without presenting to Him our desires and demands, the whole world starts loving us. Feelings of anger and hatred are substituted with forgiveness and acceptance. Tasks that seemed enormous now are easily undertaken with His grace and benevolence. Keeping our Faith and love in our heart, we feel close to Him. He renders us the feeling that He is with and within us and we perpetually live with a sense

of protection around us.

Sometimes an excess of success fills us with ego and inadvertently we start looking for success and achievements even in the spiritual world. We aspire to procure more swaroops, cholas and other materialistic things related to Guruji but He is so kind that when we are about to fall into the pit of excess materialism He lifts us most mercifully bringing us back on the right trail.

During my visit to Delhi last year, my brother did not come home and we searched everywhere before we approached the highest authorities in the police force. No one was able to help us leaving us devastated. Guruji called us to bade mandir and we went literally like beggars.

En route, we stopped to take flowers for Him and saw this written, 'Feel the Force.' I embraced it as Guruji's sign. On offering flowers at the samhadi area, I saw a girl wearing a pink t-shirt that said, 'Heavenly Flowers.' We were in deep distress and broke down inconsolably but we trusted that Guruji would find our brother.

On reaching the line outside Bade Mandir hall, the shabad that was playing meant that we are 'nirgun' and our karmas are 'neech.' Only our Guruji can forgive us. There itself we asked for forgiveness from Guruji and I said to Him, 'ye hamare hee kuch karam hein jinka humme bhugtaan karna pad raha. Maaf karo humein.' [It is owing to our karmas that we are going through this. Please forgive us.]

On reaching Guruji's gaddhi inside the main hall we bowed down in a state of complete surrender, the shabad started playing 'Hoye Ekatra milo mere bhai duvidha door karo.' Guruji blessed us right there at that time. Subsequently, we reached Shivji's moorti outside, sat there and had chai prashad in my brother's name. At the same time, a strong fragrance engulfed us as we thanked Guruji while praying to Him.

The next shabad that played was 'dubdey patthar taarey.' We mentally prayed to Guruji again. Guruji - 'whoa dubh raha hei use sirf aap bacha saktey ho.' The next shabad was 'Satguru hoye dayal taa shradhha poori hei.' I understood that Guruji was showering us with His blessings. During langar Prasad on one of my chappatis, 13 (TE-rah) was written and I heard in Guruji's voice: 'Tera Bhai.' This time, my sister and I both received His

blessings in the form of fragrance.

Our cell phones were switched off, as we followed the guidelines of Bade Mandir. On exiting, we switched on our phones and my mom informed us that a stranger found my brother in a wounded state on a roadside and had called to inform us. Today, my brother is alive thanks to Guruji.

He never abandons His children and looks out for us, blesses us, and like a mother, He keeps us under His loving protective umbrella. At times, the lessons are hard hitting but He is just like a mother who is sometimes cruel to be kind to instill in us discipline and sound values.

He has made me realize that it is All Him. Like He used to say that 'pehle vi mein si, hoon vi mein te agay vi mein [I was before, now and forever] so completely trust and surrender to the truth that He is always with us and He is our conscience. The inner voice is He too and when we internalize this truth, then engaging in any wrongdoing becomes impossible. On understanding that our life is transient, He is permanent then we actually begin walking the path He has paved out for us. To see the change we must be the change. The challenges of modern life are many as our children and us are distracted, sometimes, for hours by social media but by regularly and consistently attending satsangs we begin to grasp the significance of switching off from the virtual world and coming home to the real world within.

I have also learned that as Guruji used to state, 'Sab ek level te nahin honday jo mere kol ande nay.' [Not everyone who comes into my fold is on the same level.] Hence I have learned not to judge, react, criticise or play the blame game. Instead, I keep my head down, shut my eyes and open up my inner world for Him to cleanse. As Kabir also stated that, we must look within and improve ourselves instead of trying in vain to improve others.

It is our heart to heart alliance with Guruji, Shiva, God and Divinity. He wants us to connect to Him through the shabads that are All His Vanni [His words, His voice of truth] Many of the shabds are life lessons and I do try internalizing them as much as I possibly can. Most importantly, my goal in life is to translate those shabs into my belief system so that I am literally breathing them.

We have no words to express our gratitude to our master, our God, Our Guruji. Sitting in His darbar, in His aura, when we are soaked in His love our conscience clears and we want our journey of self-realization to begin. We learn to accept our own shortcomings before Guruji and by surrendering to Him, He purifies us and we become better version of our own self. He makes us a 'banda' as He used to state. Thank you with every cell of my being."

Believe and your half way there and never underestimate His Greatness.

9

Anishka's Graduation

'Don't underestimate the greatness of the healing powers of Music, the ocean and satsangs.'

My friend Seema Jajodia and I shared a room at the J.W Marriot hotel and attended the graduation together along with our former spouses. It was such an emotional moment and when Anishka's name was announced, I broke down and so did she when her son Nikunj's was. We both cried tears of pride and gratitude as we had come a long way in life. I had personally felt real victory from the time I left my marital home to the struggles as a single parent to my children flying their nests to settle in their respective universities to moving back to the UK to nurse my ailing mom after losing my father to cancer, fighting my own battle with cancer to my angel's graduation. What a journey! Indeed, it was and none of which was possible without my Guruji's grace that enabled me to flex my courage muscle. He walked me through each phase lending me the confidence to do so.

We celebrated profusely day and night with fine dining; sight seeing, music and dance to the victories of our eldest children and the triumphs of our own personal lives. Anishka's time in California went by in a blink of an eye and I wondered in my heart what Guruji had planned for her next phase. She was stepping into the real world as an adult and she was already shining as children do when we allow them space to draw their own identities.

University life had done her wonders as she morphed into a refined young woman who shined with poise and certainty.

One evening under the clear Californian skies, I settled myself down to reinstate my life's affirmations with Seema. While some have manifested others are yet to.

We mused over life and its essence was, that by drawing on our inner resources and having inner resolve we can practically overcome any challenge.

We had learned, from experience, that the greater part of our happiness depended on our disposition hence the prime goal was to scrape clean internal stains and polish it with inner joy and infinite gratitude.

Most of us resign to our sadness because of our ignorance to the infinite power that essentially resides in each one of us. Guruji had always stated that He had come to awaken the Guru within us. One day on distributing His pocket sized swaroop He had excluded me and on crying out for one He stated, 'Kamiliye mein tere dil vich rena ha.' [Naïve girl I reside in your heart.]

We also mused on how futile it is to play the blame game and to work towards our own empowerment. We were determined to make our lives better and happier as we went along by adding real value to it. When our thoughts are filled with optimism then that is what we evidently attract. Conversely, if pessimism is what dominates our thoughts then that is what we draw into our lives. Thoughts, as it has been proven is pure energy and they generate a vibration hence to maneuver ourselves back to the positive mode even when negative chord strikes is imperative. To shift our energy when we are spiraling into a dark zone is vital before it is deep seated and absolute.

We sat until late hours with shimmering stars above and the swish waves of the Pacific Ocean before us with soft music playing in the background. The entire one-week trip was a healing process on many levels.

Once I returned to the hotel I pulled out my pen and writing pad and wrote my affirmations.

Affirmations can alter a belief system and they are a fine way to evaluate our spiritual journey. It helps us to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging negative thoughts. Affirmations have an impact on how we deal with the physical and emotional challenges in our lives and it enables us to observe our self-talk and to monitor how caring or callous we are to ourselves.

'My daughters and I are under Divine guidance.'

'We enjoy optimal health and our food heals us.'

'We attract the right people who enable us to evolve and bring out the best in us.'

'Happiness begins with me and I refuse to be a slave to desires, passion and people and instead emanate it from within.'

'I enjoy life as an incredible learning journey that unleashes my highest potential.'

'I enrich my personality through many diverse experiences including travel.'

'My inner voice speaks to me as the mental dialogue softens.'

'I love being with myself as I feel divine love and inspiration flow through me.'

'My Guruji is omnipresent so no matter where I am He is with and within me.'

'My strength, my Guruji, is greater than any struggle I encounter.'

'I thank Guruji for all that is and for that will be.'

In retrospect, affirmations had become an integral part of me along with satsangs where I internalize positive energy. I was not completely healed but I was sure that Guruji was guiding me on that front too. 'This is your time to heal so make it as much yours as you can. Follow your gut and keep it cleansed.' Advised Seema who is a total health enthusiast and the founder of 'Nourish Organics.' We have been there for each other throughout the time when life took an unexpected turn and we were compelled to make difficult life choices. Sonia had also suggested the same about gut cleansing and subsequently I did take it on board.

Immediately after the graduation, Anishka signed up for a programme in Kenya on a social entrepreneurship to help the underprivileged start their own business using the resources available to them. She stayed in their village for six weeks to serve and teach them to fend for themselves. My heart was in my mouth and despite my discouraging her she went ahead and

somewhere in the depths of my being, I knew this was her calling and Guruji was shielding her. When she was very young, probably six or seven He had stated 'Anishka is my old devotee and a very good soul.'

Anishka ploughed her own furrow very early in life and I learned to deeply admire and accept her journey in spite of my initial apprehensions. I had complete confidence that Guruji was walking beside her as her mentor and protector. She with her positive, go getting attitude has taught me that even the incredible is reachable when you have self-belief. On coming to Guruji and surrendering to Him, I have been a witness to the transformation of aspects of my life that were impossible.

I have witnessed the purity and simplicity with which my daughters' generation connect and love Guruji. They are practical in their belief, as Guruji wanted us to be; void of superstitions and self-serving notions about religion that actually remove us from God.

Their ego does not intervene as they follow only their heart and higher instincts to attain their goals. Because they are innately spiritual and not religious, they transcend the things that do not matter to reach their own truth. They seek God within themselves and not somewhere in the yonder. Rituals do not bind them and since religion feeds on fear, they avoid its shackles and instead feed on trust, faith and instinct. They do not dwell on thought but on their inner consciousness and inner self.

Today's youth is less interested in following the concepts of sacred books allotted to each religion and instead seek the sacred in every book. Open mindedness prevents divisions and is more likely to unite people.

Religion is likely to bind us with a set of dogmatic rules and spirituality invites us to reason about everything. Religion draws boundaries and there are endless different ones whereas Spirituality is one and teaches us acceptance. Religion also instills guilt for doing wrong whereas spirituality inculcates the importance of forgiveness and learning from our errors. Religion represses everything that is inconvenient whereas Spirituality transcends everything to bring us closer to God that is within us and not a figure promised only in the afterlife.

Paradise is in the here and now in our meditation, sound values and attaining

peace of mind.

Guruji was once introducing me to an eminent politician stating to her, 'enu mil eh bahut spiritual kuri hai. [Meet this person, she is very spiritual.] I was not sure if He meant this as a compliment to me or otherwise as I was never into rituals, customs or any kind of dogmas. Guruji taught me that there is no point in spending hours performing rituals if it has not changed our conduct making us better people.

My daughters' generation has much to learn but in the same vein has much to teach us.

Anishka's satsang

"We've been going to Guruji for most our lives, without knowing the gravity of His magnificence. We used to go, do our artwork, play games on the stairs, just sleep on our mum's lap, or stare at this being that our mum brought us to so frequently. We just went with the flow.

Looking back at my life, I now see this as a blessing. By simply sitting in silence from a young age, I learnt how to be content with myself. Sonakshi was five and I was six.

As I grew, I did not know whether I 'believed' in Guruji, as I never really gave it a thought. I witnessed many miracles happening with my mum and I realized that there is a magnificent force that guides our life- and that is Guruji. I never had to question my belief in Him. It is the same way you do not question whether your parents are your parents. Growing up with His and my parent's guidance, it instilled in me that whatever happens in life, happens for a good reason. Moreover, with having faith, you manage to have the courage and humour to go through situations savoury or otherwise.

With this infallible faith, I was able to volunteer and travel to places I never thought was possible because they were potentially 'dangerous' Even with family and friends insisting that it's not safe to volunteer in certain countries, I mustered the courage with Guruji's grace and guidance and loved every experience. It enriched me and broadened my perspective on life making me believe that nothing is unachievable when the hand of a higher one rests on

our head.

He is always with us even if we cannot see Him. We simply and completely have to trust that He is in every turn of our lives but more precisely, He resides within us. He gives us strength, wisdom and the insight to do what is right for us.

In my moments of feeling low and depleted, or when I just need a sign back from Him in good or bad times I chat with Him. Unfortunately, or fortunately I always ask Him for food and He delivers. Sometimes I wish I asked for other things because whatever you ask with faith He always gives!

One day I was at bade mandir on a langar only day (which means that no samosa or snack Prasad), and I was with friends who could not stay for langar but I really wanted to that day. Therefore, as I was meditating, I prayed, 'Guruji I can't stay for langar but I really wish that there was some samosa Prasad for me. I know there isn't any samosa today but it would be awesome if you give me some.' Anyway, we walked out of the mandir towards the shoe area without having any Prasad. After I wore my shoes and began walking towards my car, an uncle from the shoe area came running behind and called out to me. He then asked me to show my hands. I opened the palm of my hands and he placed a samosa Prasad in them and walked away without uttering a single word.

Guruji seems to listen to everything we say and think and as you start to have faith in Him, you start to believe in your own self. You learn to trust yourself and love yourself. Whenever you have doubts, you literally just internally talk to Guruji and ask Him for guidance, and you receive it in various forms. I sometimes get signs from Him in my food, or the clouds, or through His fragrance. It is just about whether you are willing to see it as a sign. Energy flows where attention goes."

10

My Daughter's Friend

My attention was on my home in Delhi and so I visited India soon after and on returning to my Panchsheel home I was in my room when a chirpy cheerful voice called out 'Jai Guruji.'

People have never stopped surprising me. The ones we least expect are connecting to Guruji and at great pace and profundity. It was Srishtey, Anishka's very close school friend.

Her vibrant, lighthearted nature is something I have always admired in her and she is so humorous that she makes my stomach hurt.

I was surprised firstly by how my daughter and her friends had, in the blink of an eye, turned into stunning young ladies and then into Guruji's true devotees. It all seemed 5 minutes ago when Anishka and Sonakshi's friends would flock into my home to get me busy in the kitchen. I simply loved nurturing and nourishing their friends as I had a soft corner for them.

On expressing my surprise she said, 'Oh but I've been an ardent fan of His for a while. He is simply awesome.' And the word 'Awesome' always rolled off her tongue with a tune to it and it was the first time I heard anyone say that they were a 'fan' of His. It made me smile and reassured that besides Ayesha Singh, Anishka had another Guru sister.

My immediate thought was that her generation was connecting to Guruji initially because they connected with the simplicity and the ease of it all. There was no complex belief system, doctrines or dogmas that were imposed. Anishka and her friends' value system comprised of being the best version of themselves. By employing their skills their objective was to reach out to others to bring about a collective change for the better. They, in their practical approach to life, were able to make a real difference. Srishtey may have used the word 'fan' to describe her connect as if she was a fan of some pop idol but her intent and deep devotion towards Guruji spoke volumes. Here she shares.

"I didn't know God was a chauvinist and why are you a man anyway? In the current age, wouldn't it be more effective to assume a woman's chola? Why are you Indian or is God only Indian? Isn't it more rational to be born in Africa and why on God's earth don't you solve global warming? If you are so smart and in control- why is the world in such disarray-, are you bad at your job?"

I had incalculable questions seated at His darbaar in bade mandir. My mind was swirling with provocative, insensitive and un-intelligent thoughts. Meanwhile, Guruji glanced at me. His glimpse pierced through my body into my soul. Although there were thousands of people there, the glance was the only thing I had ever been sure of in my entire life. It silenced my unwise teenage mind for the next two days. My enquiries stopped - I was touched. His eyes had warmed my soul but at that time, I thought maybe He found a way to access the subconscious mind that Confucius and Einstein spoke of. I dismissed these thoughts after two days of a peaceful mind and I returned to my usual high school drama. I turned oblivious to the magical experience that I had at His darbaar and completely forgotten about His photo given to me to reach out to Him in my hour of dejection.

Hum unke darbar par khatkhatate hai toh unka imtehaan lena, unka ghuroor, unki ghair mushroot muhabbat aur emaan lena jate hai. Seven years down the line, I was a 20-year-old lady- almost 'happily' agnostic. I was going about my absurdity and calling the club for the gym bag I left there the night before. Losing things for practically an ex-teenager who is out to prove the world wrong about her irresponsibility issues is a big deal. The club claimed there was no gym bag and there I was, desperate. My mum would definitely realise

that the sneakers she sent me had been lost and yet again call me the word that begins with an 'i' and ends with 'responsible'! In that moment, I gazed down at my purse and found the photo of Guruji given to me at Bada Mandir. Instead of wondering how this photo made it through 11 bags, 4 wallets, 7 seas, 7 years and 969 times that my bag had fallen on the floor; I just clenched it hard against my heart and asked Guruji for my bag. I called the club back four days later and, there it was, my gym bag with all its contents intact!

I was thrilled and I believe nothing is a coincidence and I shared my great achievement with Ayesha Singh, who has been one of my closest friends since school and a blessed sangat member. She was responsible for taking me to Guruji's darbar when He was in His chola and still enlightens me about life through Guruji's eyes. The gym bag story made her laugh loud; as she knew something, I did not. She insisted it was my calling but as far as I was concerned, Guruji and His devotees were emanating positive energy hence they were simply lucky. By this time, I had read innumerable books on the power of positive thinking and the secret of life. It is only logical to think that if there were a 50% split of chance between two people, the one with more positive vibes would win!

Despite my denial, I found myself outside the London Sangat's house on a Thursday night after the usual work drinks was 'coincidentally' cancelled. I felt a sense of love and peace and it was a homely feeling but did I have an instant awakening? Did I see a flash of light, a Morgan Freeman moment or become Bruce Almighty? No. Nevertheless, I embarked on the path of knowledge, which slowly changed me, rejuvenated my soul and re-birthed my spirit to evolve.

Par jab khuda mil jaye toh ghuroor, ghamand aur yaha tak ki chutney aur achar bhi pheeke pad jate hai!

In the London Sangat, I sat pondering how these people were able to love so purely, unconditionally and so wholly. People cried, people laughed and spoke about their experiences with life and death. That love, is what I began to think is Guruji. The pure unconditional love filled and fired up my soul.

Once I believed in true love with Guruji, it started raining satsangs! At first I

thought, no way would Guruji find time to return my gym bag instead of helping someone who truly believes and is actually suffering. Now I know He looks out for each one of us in the smallest to the most significant. I guess this recognition comes with verification too because He does this with everyone. Ask him for chai prashad with true love and it will be there. However, this can backfire, because every time I treat langar marginally as a mere meal and not blessed medicine – He teaches me a lesson by making me eat exactly what I considered to be ‘calorific’ or ‘unhealthy’ or ‘not tasty’! It is only now, I find myself so consumed by His love during Langar that my taste buds could be sensing anything and it would still taste all the same, blessed. Such is true love, even for a food lover!

Uski ek nazar, uski phoolo ki khusboo, uski gali, uske banaye log par hi fida ho jate hai. Jo side se jata hai usko lambi si smile de jaate hai. Sab itna sunder lagta hai ki har ek baat par dil bhar aata hai. Rondu ban jaate hai aur haste haste ro jaate hai.

Once I immersed myself in His divine love, there was no turning back. I kiss His ‘juttis’ and dream of pressing His legs. I realise that everything, everyone is His creation, and to love him or her is to love Him. He humbles and heals through His love. The stronger my love the more I heal. My guilt, countless questions and discomfort from living amidst inequalities and evils have slipped away, replaced with nothing but love. When every soul writes its own karma and Guruji controls the rest, we can only mentor each other. There is no blame to place and no revenge to pursue. Every soul evolves through the path he has chosen to walk on and in that choice, particularly if it is not good, He awakens us to what is.

Two plus two ab finally four ban jaate hai aur galat answers jaise kisi uncool gali mein jaakar chup jate hai. Suddenly, Meera ke krishn se pyar bhare geet pagalpan nahi- obvious ban jate hai. Punjabi gaane bada khilne lagte hai aur dil me woh nach jate hai.

He answers all my questions through shabds, sangat and sometimes His own voice in my head and He continues to reinforce them.

On Guruji’s birthday, I decided to celebrate with the London Sangat. After reaching home, I made a bouquet of the flowers I had received at the

celebration and broke the main rose with my nails. I felt bad and went to bed anyway and on waking up, I saw the broken rose standing higher than any other flower in the bouquet even though it was still broken. Guruji slowly nests in your heart, becoming a big part of everything small and a small part of everything big. God is God of big things and small.

Humaare andar aisa kya hai joh woh choo jaate hai, woh wahi bas jaate hai aur hume address bhi nahi batate hai! Guruji's experiences are tangible and practical and verified by His followers. As opposed to agnosticism and atheism that have no such verification. An atheist qhas not met a 'non-existent god' but we have met God in the human form and we are blessed beyond words. An agnostic will never know but we will. A small corner of darkness cannot darken a lit room, but a small corner of light can brighten the whole room.

However, this is not to say that agnostics and atheists are not blessed! For the first half of my life I was an atheist and then I moved onto agnosticism. Books, terrorism, logic and a lack of a personal connection lead me to believe in nothing. I was living differently, which does not mean that I meant any different to Guruji.

'There are two ways to live: you live as if nothing is a miracle or you live as if everything is a miracle.' Guruji spoke of 'surrender' and Einstein spoke of 'miracles'. Giving in to the love and power of God. Accepting not asking, living not speaking. Understanding that Guruji drives and knows our lives better than we do. I think I have surrendered to Him. In Einstein's words, I live miracles not mirages.

When I feel Guruji's presence, I feel deep emotion. It is as if I had always been waiting for this moment but locked in ignorance. I cry because my soul and Guruji did not tell my ephemeral body that they love each other and are in effect one; and laughing because I fulfilled my karma for the rendezvous. Hum tab bhi aapki chao mein jee rahe the hum aaj bhi aapki chao mein jee rahe hai, fark bas itna hai ki us waqt hum apne aap se hi chup rahe the aur aapko bhi chupa rahe the, dar mein jee rahe the aur dar mai hi mar rahe the.

It is possible that this is all a figment of my imagination, but I pen it down on paper because my Guru has given me the opportunity to share, so I do so

with my heart.

At 13, I transferred to the British School New Delhi, which has the most inspiring history teacher. She taught us German history and introduced us to the concept of Hitler and the Jews. At the age of seven, I lived a snippet of a dream that became longer with time. It was painful and it would come and go. I did not believe in the supernatural and assumed they were nightmares. Inexplicably, there were incidences and dates that matched my history textbook when I was 13, 14 and then 15. I asked Ayesha what to do as she and her mother Bamby aunty has been deeply devoted to Guruji. Ayesha would share 'irrational' things and I believed them but only in desperate times. I traded faith for self-gain and in hindsight, they were spiritual solutions that Guruji had given her for me. He healed me. Overnight, my subconscious thoughts, nightmares and pain dissolved. Guruji cared for me through my family and friends even when my love for Him was latent and then I went to Bada Mandir for the first time to thank Him for His blessings. My loving and beautiful Guruji drove me to my journey of the light of His divinity. I live my life with perspective and with His grace; I am determined never to let Him down by doing anything untoward. My objective is to live in line with His teachings that are for my highest good and for the good of humanity. In all of this, He is revealing my true nature and my real purpose
Aur phir jab hum uske darbar ki sochte hai toh uski chaukhat ke kabil hi nahi rehe jaate hai.

Par phir chalo lagta hai ki uske darbar ki seva hi kar aate hai, shayad us may leke saath hum bhi unhe muhabbat karne ke layak ban jate hai.”

There are volumes to learn from this generation and one invaluable lesson that I have inculcated in myself through them is that life isn't meant to be lived backwards. Look through the large windscreen of your car whilst driving forth instead of focussing constantly on the rear view mirror.

11

My Mother's Decline

'The mirror of our lives is polished more and more as we deepen our love for Him.'

My mother was not visibly unwell at this point though I observed her weight loss and felt her silent suffering. Her breathing was becoming increasingly difficult but she had an admirably strong spirit that prompted her to get ready for coffee every day around 3pm. We left home to sit at costa or her favourite local café Gourmand where we chatted. There were volumes to learn from her in terms of her positive attitude and her enthusiasm to go on with lightness and laughter and never complaints. She reminded me of our mortality but her focus in her current state was to live as well as life permitted her to. Life had a way of tangling us in sadness but it was always faith that untangled us in the end.

She shared her sentiments regarding our satsangs and expressed how much she valued them. Literally all her near dear friends that endured 50 years of comrade in Manchester, U.K had connected to Guruji and this gladdened her heart. Before each satsang, she pulled out her favorite suits from her closet and dressed it up with jewelry and accessories. She attended every satsang looking her best and that is precisely how Guruji wanted us to dress; to be 'stylish.'

In His lighter moments, Guruji stated that His sangat visited Him in ordinary clothes and yet when they pay social visits they dress to impress. Looking our best is our responsibility while doing His best for us is His grace. 'Mehnat meri Rehmat teri.'

This applies to all aspects of our lives from doing the best we can in our chosen field to being the best in our relationships personal, professional and social to thinking thoughts that radiate only good vibes. Hence, never accuse, blame or criticize. Never judge either, as we never have the complete picture of anyones life. We all grow and evolve through encouragement and Guruji was always most endearing and encouraging. Even His rebuke was mild mannered and empathetic. He taught us to come off our high horse to be humble and to be compassionate especially towards those who are less privileged and fortunate than ourselves. On bowing to Him He knew instantly with what intent we were visiting Him. One day I recollect a lady bowing to Him and He broke into a chortle as He gazed towards me and said, 'No point in bowing and showing humility to me for a few seconds when she has arrived from her home fighting with her husband and getting into a tussle with her maid.'

I recall the time He healed me of my asthma in October 1997 He stated afterwards, 'Anita for me to heal people of their illness is child's play but to cure them of their behavior is difficult. Watch yourselves for you are creating Karma all the time. Practice good karma. What you do always comes back to you hence sow good seeds and I will weed out the bad ones from your life's garden.'

As I see it, we are His seed and He waters us to grow and blossom into His well-tended flowers.

Taking responsibility for our every thought, word and action is imperative if we are to evolve spiritually. God help those who help themselves. To consider Guruji as a rectifier of all our mistakes and blunders is unfair and defies reasoning and good sense. We need to awaken to our shortcomings and then to surrender them to Guruji to give us courage and conviction to bring about change within ourselves.

Guruji always stated the importance of being in good company as our

thoughts and actions are influenced by the people we associate ourselves with on a regular basis. It is proven that sensitive, open people tend to absorb the habits and energies of the people they spend maximum time. Their practices are adopted and perhaps to some extent their demeanor and mindset. I have become particular about who I choose to spend time with and I have made myself my best company. It is better to be alone at times than to fall prey to wrong company that hampers our soul growth.

I commit to taking out time from my routine to sit quietly and to reflect and this may be sitting in a coffee shop with a hot drink clasped in both my hands. I feel profound peace within me in moments of solitude with meditative music in the background whilst sipping on a hot drink and talking to Guruji in my head.

Its reassuring that I am never alone as He resides in all my creative activities as well as in my thoughts and that is how sometimes the minutest of thought manifests almost immediately. I am much more aware of my self-talk too and when it turns self-critical and hard I switch to the self-compassion mode. Guruji has taught me to be in a state of self-awareness as much as possible so not to be in auto pilot mode.

Harsh judgments and criticisms of others also dampen the spirit so never apologize for distancing yourself from toxic people. We do not owe them an apology but we can offer them a silent prayer that good sense prevails. There was a phase when my family and friends were repellent to my coming to Guruji believing it to be naïve, immature and possibly misguided and weak but He gave me the courage to overlook unsavory remarks and opinions of others. Patience is by far the greatest quality we can hone as today the majority of my friends and family connect to Him and are on the path of self-improvement.

Sat- means truth and sang means company so regularly and consistently attending satsangs invite changes within us. I felt internal changes as from being a reactive person I entered a space of acceptance, calmness and responsiveness. There was a 360-degree turn in my personality and today I no longer relate to the woman of yesterday as I bid her a pleasurable farewell! We, each, are driven by the predominant traits of our personality and mine was fear, anxiety and lack of courage. I also had a tendency to feel

that success and happiness was for someone other than myself. To be concise I did not believe in my talents or their worth.

As my God, Guruji took residence in my heart I began recognizing and appreciating my innate abilities. I also acknowledged openly and honestly the weaknesses that lay within me; activities that I couldn't partake in. Guruji sharpened my focus to engage in my positives and not negatives. I feel a deep sense of gratitude for my inherent talents and put them to good use in the form of service. I used my calligraphy to make sketches of Him to distribute amongst sangat and my gift of words I employed for writing books with the intent that they inspired the reader for them to draw value into their lives.

During one particular phase, on praying to Him to resolve my personal situation, it appeared that Guruji was not paying heed to it. I shared my misery with Him on many occasions and pleaded with Him to appease it. I was downright despondent and continued praying for years and because there was no solution, I almost gave up; feeling angry, frustrated and betrayed by Guruji and I convinced myself that I was being punished for past-life karmas that had invited this particular situation into my life. I was muddled and miserable and, in my heart, I carried resentment and was not on speaking terms with Him for a while.

Today I realize that Guruji is not retributive. He is reformative so the bigger picture of giving us miraculous experiences is to illustrate to us that He is present in our lives and we need to switch from the material worldly engagements and aspirations to higher spiritual understandings of our existence. To change for the better despite all and not for the bitter is a victory in itself.

On understanding that Guruji is healing our lives and enabling us to reach our worldly goals we then need to progress to the higher goal of sharing our spiritual experiences and to inspire others to make their connect with divinity. This too is seva [self-less service]

What if you have not met Him in the physical form and what if He has not appeared in your dreams? There may be a feeling that life is not working out the way you wanted it to.

Trust me, it is not because Guruji does not care; He is working on your karmas and often silently. One day He will unfold His plans and until then continue doing and being good. Guruji unimpressed by pretense and He is not pleased by deceit or knivving behavior. He sees through it all. You can befool the world but not Him as nothing is concealed from Him. He resides in the hearts of clear-hearted soulful people. Be transparent and be true and the rest will follow on His timing so learn to trust.

On falling in love with Guruji and developing a sense of deep calm within that comes through constant surrendering I began to feel His presence every where I travelled too. I recall the time I was in Ibiza, walking barefoot on the sand during sunset I gazed admiringly at the sun. The shape of the celestial circle was exactly like Guruji's head that often compares to a shivling. I rejoiced in the moment and rose beyond myself into the broader perspective on things.

My realization was that He is beyond measure and His infinite power can burn our karmas in a split second. However, our greatest lessons emerge from the worst times and the worst mistakes of our lives. When we learn the life lesson, we must dissolve the negative emotions attached to our past in order to travel light.

12

Falling Apart

It was anything but light as it was the wretched British climate in October end when the clocks turn back and the leaves turn orange, yellow, brown and pink. Although it was a postcard sight, the dim skies were drawing every drop of joy from my soul.

My world was turning grey and I felt imprisoned in the confines of despair. 'How could this be happening to me?' I cried. Most people who knew me were well acquainted with my spiritedness and spontaneous knack of cracking a witty remark or two. I was usually described, as a happy, optimistic and vivacious individual except now I wasn't as I curled up in misery and sheer bleakness.

I passed my mother's bedroom to walk towards the living room balcony to heave a sigh of sadness. I gazed out at the trees and the rusty autumnal leaves as they fell to the ground and the ones that had not fallen had sadness clinging to their branch as they neither stirred nor fell. This sight was fully enchanting and magical as well as melancholic. Each one of us had to fall to the ground one day as everything and everyone had a season but there was beauty in that too as there was in life. The memory of that moment implanted in my mind and as I reflect on that poignant day, I realize how precious it was. It was painful but it was an essential part of me.

There was no beauty in sickness as I pondered over my mother's decaying state. This once strong, sturdy woman of 72 was visibly deteriorating. She was not so spirited anymore though wanted to go for coffee. She wrapped her oversized coat on her frail body and asked me to accompany her. I was constantly tired, as the 32 radiation shots had weakened my immunity so my energy flagged but I wore a valiant mask.

She broke down over coffee and the image of that frail woman whose once radiant smile lit up a room, I will never forget; she wept helplessly. Her vulnerability and her desperation for death to carry her home made me understand that our final exit too was not in our hands. She constantly cried out for death and there was nothing I could do to salvage her. I sat helplessly before her with a choking lump of deep sadness in my throat and held back my tears. My heart agonized over her pitiful state and my shoulders were saddled as was hers with the burden of sadness. We were two helpless women sat opposite each other with no one to turn to for relief, as there was none. God was not listening and Guruji was not intervening. She had to suffer the worst pain as I suffered in watching her. Her doctor was aghast at her life extension that was filled only with anguish. He empathized with her whenever she visited him but he too was helpless. No one was God and He Himself did not seem to be sympathizing.

I did brood over the injustice of it all. 'I am my choice.' Said the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. These words do not acquire a deeper meaning when your mother, who is the idol in your life, is falling apart. I chose to wear a strong and courageous facade for her but internally I was disintegrating. I choose my thoughts, feelings and a way of being but her pain and her constant suffering broke me from the inside tearing the very shreds of my being. My insides were so rattled that my thoughts overpowered with nothing but defeat.

The Sufi mystic Rumi once said. 'Anything you lose comes around in another form.' I lost my spiritedness that day but gained a depth of emotion on seeing my mother weep that evening in the coffee shop in our neighborhood. Her disease hit her most unexpectedly while she walked through life never marginalizing her blessings. She knew she had more than most and was grateful for every morsel of it. She shared, cared, and was a queen at heart who lived generously but now life restrained her. The unpredictability and

volatility in all things hit me like a stack of bricks.

Struggle is a great leveler as it compels us to stop and redefine everything. In the autumn of that year and in the winter of her life the rain fell and the entire universe was wet. After the earth was soaked everything turned heavier and burdensome including our suffering. We were drenched in a state of despair and though mom had learned to release her tears, mine were constantly wedged in my throat.

In December of that same year, my mother was bedridden.

My brother Sanjay organized a lavishly festive Christmas Lunch at mom's apartment. His wife Kajal and both his sons Someer and Rahin came to cheer her up whilst Sanjeev, from Delhi, flew in to celebrate what was evidently mom's last Christmas.

For me Christmas usually awakened my senses. There were memories of smelling the cold festive air outside and inhaling it exuberantly into system. I recall the aromas of the delicious Christmas delights leaving a lingering flavor long after it was gone. The festive German markets were always a thing to do with their scents and smells of nutmeg, cinnamon and pumpkin spice.

My most exciting moment was the feeling of unwrapping my gifts. Once during my teenage years my friend wrapped my gift in many layers all because she reveled in seeing the twinkle in my eye as I meticulously removed each layer of the exquisite and extravagant gift-wrap. Christmas was altogether about celebrating, being happy, and rekindling family ties, friendships and inner spirits.

The season of winter was usually my favorite in England when the Christmas lights twinkled in every street brightening my mood. I found these months conducive for inner contemplation as I wrapped myself in a cocoon of warmth while the earth slept peacefully. I reveled in the tranquil moments, as a child I completed an entire drawing book with sketches, and I continued in my teenage years coupled with composing proses. I expressed my emotions through my creativity and my sanctuary was my bedroom in our palatial home in the suburbs of Manchester. I had my own en suite and

bathed in the luxury of abundant 'my time.' Our gardens were also conducive to reflection where I cleared the cobwebs in my head making space to commune with myself. Being a spiritual seeker, I delved into books on Gautam Buddha and many others that taught me that the world was split into two types of people; good and bad. However, light and dark co-existed in each one of us and what mattered was the element we chose to act on. Whatever we nurtured expanded and that was precisely what defined us in the end. Certain books that I read, and there were many good ones, qualified me to understand life.

On December 25, 2013, I did not understand anything, as I was blinded not by the exhilarating Christmas lights but the darkness of my sorrow. Pain was tangible and the situation was a living hell; nothing like any Christmas, I have experienced in my life. It was sad, dismal and dreary. My mom's sight was even more draining to my soul. I felt so small like a comma after a long sentence. There was utter silence from her balcony where I stood for the quintessential crisp clean air.

She joined in at the dining table, which brimmed with Christmas delights, for several minutes before she retired back to bed, as she was far too listless to sit amidst her family. We were deeply saddened as the mere sight of her frailty tore the very fibers of our hearts. We knew she did not have much longer and my heart broke with the thought that she may not see the dawn of the New Year.

That night, long after we had attempted to cheer mom up with the Christmas festivities, I lay myself beside her. I closed my eyes and recited

Guruji's mantra jaap as He had stated that it has the power to reduce the impact of ones karmas. As the night closed to a day that may have never opened, again for mom I continuously recited the mantra in my heart with pain in my throat.

It was a long night. Sorrow permeated every part of my body and agitation infused my mind.

Still my mind,
Oh Divine

So Supremely kind
In the lap of your Grace
Keep me in your fold
And out of the cold

But my spirit rips
Your name on my lips
I hurt Oh Almighty

Give me a sign.
As I need assurance
That you are mine.

As you love me
With your maternal heart
And your paternal discipline
Extend it to my mother
Who is also my God
Like any other.

Even with the lights turned off there is never complete darkness. The light never forsakes us as the faint shimmering lights from the street filtered through my bedroom window and I turned to my side; shut my eyes knowing that mom and I were indeed blessed with the all-embracing light in spite of the harsh winter.

13

Another Tumor

'If there was no winter, would spring be so pleasant. If there was no adversity would pleasure be so welcomed.'

The festive lights were down from every nook and corner of the country and a cold frost dominated the month of January turning the skies bleak. I held a satsang at home in the early New Year for my mom. I prayed with all my might to Guruji not to prolong my mother's suffering. At this stage, her breath had turned shallower and her need for the oxygen from the cylinder had frequented. I was watching her around the clock and my chest tightened at the mere sight of her struggle. At this phase, I prodded along with heaviness in my heart that was evident to my closest friends and family members that tried to empathize with me. Kajal, Sangeeta Dutta, Mina, Sabina, Renu and Suzie were by my side to hold me up as the tides of defeat pulled me down. My brother Sanjay too carried this heaviness, as his eyes were sallow each time he visited mom at her apartment. He and I were the closest to her of all us siblings. In fact, he was the closest and he had indeed been a very caring, loving, patient and most understanding son to her. She was, undoubtedly, blessed to have him in her life. The bond between them was pious and pure. She often laughed with me that she did not grasp his British accent and often missed the point in the conversation. On leaving, she very innocently asked me, 'So what exactly did Sanjay say. He speaks so fast and then on top of that his British accent. His Punjabi also sounds British to

me!’

It was her heart that connected with him and the language of love between them was enough. God has given us eyes to see and feel the others love, that is often unmistakable.

It was and will always remain the language of love that bonds them as Sanjay even today, on awakening, prays to mom and dad’s picture every day without fail. Such is his purity. I must mention that at this stage of my writing, he has not connected to Guruji but he holds the qualities and goodness of a very good soul. His thought, word and action are full of love, compassion, humility and humanity hence a complete karma yogi.

As Guruji used to say, ‘Ma aur Baap di seva karo, izzat karo. Jo nahin karda oh rab kolo puri blessings nahin lenda.’[Serve and love your mom and dad. Those who do not fail to receive God’s full blessings.]

Parents, particularly a mother is equal to divinity as she raises us with her undying love and sacrifice and loving her means loving God. A child can never repay her for her sleepless nights and the time she dedicates in nurturing us. In the same way, we can never repay Guruji for His countless blessings except to live the way He wanted us to. One evening on returning from His walk He stated looking into my eyes. ‘Tu vi walk kitha kar. Ek ganta. [You too must walk daily for one hour.] [Weight katta, kat kada kar.] [Reduce your weight and eat less.] ‘Mein practical sab dika riya hu tuwanu.’ [I am demonstrating everything to you in a practical sense.]

Another practical way of meditating is to remember Him while we are going about our daily routine. Feel His love while allowing the heart to exude love for Him.

‘Lead a good life. If you cannot do good then most definitely do not bring harm to anyone and if you can’t say good then don’t speak ill.’ He said in Punjabi.

‘Ek chup sau sukh.’ [Silence leads to peace and harmony]

I have learned to seal my lips even if people around me are speaking negative

of another. As Guruji used to state, 'Apna nahin karab karo.' Do not ruin your deeds by talking down on and about others. Ninda nahin karo. [Do not gossip about another.]

My perspective, in my fifties is, with the time Guruji has granted me, I flex the right muscles to serve my daughters, society and myself. I aspire to be the woman my daughters can speak well of, learn from my mistakes and grow from my strengths. May the light I seek infuse them with love, mental and emotional well being. May the guiding light always protect them and pave the way for them. Guruji has flagged my voyage and I could not have asked for more. By sharing my life's experiences and His Meher [His grace] even if one soul is touched and healed then my life has not been in vain.

It was mid January and the skies were dimmer. I had my annual routine health check and kajal accompanied me to Wythenshaw hospital. We chatted endlessly in the waiting room as we giggled about this and that. She was truly a breath of fresh air in my life as her childlike energy ignited mine. She introduced me to her favorite friend; chocolate mint ice cream and this coupled with movies became our most companionable feast. I relished the combination so much that it became therapeutic. The coldness of the ice cream warmed up my heart on noticing her eyes lighting up like a child's on savoring every bite of it as if it was life's only real delight.

On undergoing my mammogram, the technician looked into the screen with a perturbed expression and I knew immediately. Her prolonged silence was too loud to be mistaken for anything but another fiasco. I was alone in the room as she left me shortly to consult a doctor. He came in to see the white patches on the screen.

'Please come into my room after you've dressed up.' suggested the oncologist.

I had pre-stage tumor in my right breast and left unattended it would develop into a malignant tumor, so it had to be removed surgically. Kajal and I could not believe our ears. 'Not again! She exclaimed. My heart sank, my skin turned pallid and my shoulders saddled with the burden of the news. My knees gave in too as we both trudged our feet to the car and while driving us back home she rang Sanjay to break the heart sinking news to him.

His British response came, 'flippin heck! Not again?' in the next breath came the question, 'Do you fancy doing dinner out tonight?'

Family is where life begins and love never ends and when you have a family with humor then there is a constant stream of laughter too. Guruji taught us to love, laugh and live no matter how ominous the days turn. With the power of faith, every hardship pales into a pinch as opposed to a punch.

Deepika Sakhuja is one of Guruji's devout followers and her love for Guruji knows no bounds. Her indomitable faith and her selfless service for her Guru illustrates that no matter how dark the cloud, faith is a light that radiates from our heart and into our action. Her satsang- her words.

"I can confidently state that Guruji has answered my most pointless prayers to my most profound ones. He has altered my entire outlook towards difficult situations that I have encountered in my life. I have accepted my challenges most gracefully, as it is through the storm that I have found my calm.

My affiliation with Him is like fish to water and now I cannot imagine my life without Him. On first arriving at His mandir Mr. Raghu Rai handed me his yellow sacred book on Guruji and asked me if I was Shiv bhakt and after confirming that I was, my love for Guruji deepened and I became regular at His temple.

On receiving a sticker of 'Jai Guruji', I stuck it on the rear window of my car but my son removed it and one day I was so upset that I cried and dozed off. Guruji appeared in my dream stating, 'Jab sab Gadi authe jahugi te appa sticker ki karna hai.' [When all the cars are going to come to me then what use is the sticker?] I made peace after that and now there are no stickers on any of my cars.

I love and trust Guruji implicitly. I have found my master and I am eternally grateful to the universe.

Once after our satsang at home my husband asked me what I was doing as all devotees had left. I told him I was playing candy crush and waiting for

Guruji. Immediately he was given darshan on the rim of the Jyot [the flame] and I felt immensely blessed.

On another occasion, a group of people went to Dugri mandir on a Sunday but I could not go. I was disappointed but at ten to six in the evening, an Om appeared on my finger. I excitedly shared this with everyone and completely forgot about carrying my visa copy and headed to Kuwait without it. At the airport I was advised to go to the immigration office to gain consent to fly but before I entered a man walked out and instructed me to go to counter number 10. On arriving there, the man behind the desk confirmed that the man I mentioned had not reported to the office at the stated time and that I was the first person to fly to Kuwait without the visa. I was convinced Guruji came out of the office to assist me as He can and does come in any form to protect and support us.

I write my 'gratitude list' every evening in a diary that has Guruji's swaroop on the cover. One evening I asked Him if He is aware of my writings to Him and on closing the diary, I saw amrit [nectar] on His swaroop. [photo]

There are innumerable incidences where He reveals His presence and I have documented them. Another satsang worth mentioning and can be relatable to many is about my driving home alone on leaving bade mandir. On route, someone bumped into my car but not realizing it, I did not stop and carried on home. On arriving, I was made to realize the damage but Guruji protected me and enabled me to safely reach home unscathed and without any confrontation.

Guruji is the one holding me up especially when I crumbled after my son passed away. Guruji has reassured me that my son of 26 years is with Him. He revealed to me my son Kartikay sitting on His lap every Monday. Guruji has rendered me strength to go on.

One night my CD player started on its own and what played was, 'Aaj tere ghar Guru Avnae.' The following morning I checked the entire pen drive and that shabad was not on it. He had paid me a visit that night as He does many times to shower His love on His devotees.

Once on preparing langar Prasad for the sewadars I heard a voice

commanding me to add 'loon' to it and I did not know then what that was! I sneaked out of the kitchen to call my mom to get the translation and on confirming that it was salt, I ran back in and added the needful to the langar Prasad.

He speaks to us telepathically but we need to have the ears to listen and a quiet mind to open up to His messages and a heart that is receptive to His love.

A month before my mom left for her heavenly abode Guruji revealed everything to me; from her illness to her being in a particular ICU and even the lights outside the door of it and saying to me 'Pakki hojja' [Be strong] I was travelling when I received the news of mom's illness and arriving at the ICU I unde I realized it was the same ICU and the lights at the door. It was déjà vu as I was reliving this and I knew He was preparing me for the worst. Mom was leaving and I had to become strong. Nimbu ki tara nichora hai mujhe. [He has squeezed me like a lemon] but my spirits are up and I feel loved and protected by Him at all times. It was, in fact, after preparing langar for a satsang I ran to the hospital where after 30 minutes or so Guruji took my son away.

Some incidences and tragedies we will never understand but when we are in His fold, time reveals the answers that we seek.

All He asks of us is simple living and high thinking. Simple does not translate into minimal as He always blesses us and raises our standards to enjoy the best life has to offer. The magic of His grace begins when we live our lives with the right intent wanting to do and be the best we can possibly be. When we become witness to His presence in our lives, we consciously begin to decontaminate our thoughts, words and actions. He then takes us on a spiritual journey that enables us to merge into His light one day to become one with Him.

Simply surrender to His will. Teri Raza mein Razi hum rahe. [May we be in acceptance of your will.] I consign myself to confirmed happiness the moment I allow Him to take over as He has the bigger picture in mind. He takes us under His wing and loves us like a parent loves its child. I smile because of Him, as He is the one who taught me to find the message in my

mess and to be content in all conditions. I am able to regulate my emotions better to lead a balanced and stable life. He has taught me to keep my calmness in a stressful situation that boosts my decision-making capacity. I have learned to give myself positive autosuggestions like, 'I can and I will never let my emotions take over my rationality.' My emotional equilibrium and resilience is all thanks to Him. I practice yoga regularly and my meditation is my seva in bade mandir, which I do regularly thanks to Him. I strongly believe the more we dedicate our lives to Guruji the more He banishes the negative energy from our lives. Thank You Guruji."

Deepika has taught through her relentless service [seva] and her invincible spirit that the divine force within each one of us is mightier than any mountain. She has brought meaning into her life that has tossed the emptiness out. She epitomizes the belief that no matter how high the tides, if we continue swimming with the current of faith we will never drown. Rest assured Guruji sails us back safely to the shore.

14

England's Winter

Faith knows the boat will sail and come safely back to shore.

My faith was not a constant stream of calm and consistency as the calm turned into storm every time my life's boat rocked. I never stopped loving Him and He is witness to it but my mind intervened to shake the sea of faith as I drowned in the ocean of challenges. Life was already rocky with mom's constant struggle for breath and now my own health and that too when my immunity had been compromised.

That evening, as it stretched into the night I sank into the shelter of my bed and dug my head in my pillow. My eyes were wet and my heart was literally bursting with a shriek, 'enough! I cannot take this anymore! Mom and I were dying a slow death; her literally in her physical deterioration and I, spiritually and emotionally and perhaps physically as I questioned my strength to tide over this tough phase. I was not so sure.

I was numb and I did not call out to Him and as I sank deeper into my pillow the rapid winds resounded in my ears and the splatter of rain knocked hard against my bedroom window that was synonymous with my condition. The lights were off and, in the darkness, there wasn't a flicker of light from the outside world. The streetlights had also dimmed.

I curled up holding my stomach, cried silently at first, and then brawled like a child. My pain pierced through me with such sharpness that it cut open my old wounds too; my father's death, my marriage, my divorce, my empty nest syndrome on my daughters leaving for the U.S. and my mother's insufferable state. I cried for all those moments and experiences too. I cried relentlessly until the tears drained my system and I finally descended into a deep slumber.

In the morning, I stood at the balcony as was customary to inhale the cool crisp air. I glanced in through the glass door and my mom after weeks of being in bed lugged her frail legs into the lounge. I wiped my tears, stood upright and went towards her to wrap her in my arms. I felt nothing but her bones as her flesh had shrank over her sickness period. She pulled back and looked into my eyes. 'Have you been crying Anita?' she enquired instinctively.

She sensed it even in her state where her morphine pills, her hydrocortisone as well as other medication had increased in dose. She was still reasonably present though she had moments when she was disorientated. She sensed it even the very first time in 2012 when I returned to my Panchsheel home after undergoing my tests. She sat on my bed, gazed into my eyes and asked, 'you do not have that same wretched disease that took your father away from me do you?'

I was stunned and somewhat shaken by her maternal instinct. On gathering myself, I asked her plainly, as I refused to play hide and seek with her. 'How on God's earth did you know mom?'

'It is in your eyes Anita and I know the disease well. It took your paternal grand mother, your bua, your dad and then your cousin who survived it and you too. You will be ok though won't you? It's not too serious is it?' she enquired as she heaved a heavy sigh turning her gaze downwards. 'God won't let me witness something so terrible, will He?' she enquired terrified.

'I know I'll be fine mom because I have my Guruji.' I responded firmly with infallible faith, as I did believe I would recover. 'It's just a hiccup and I know I'll be fine. This might be a long trek so I need you to return to Manchester to the comfort of your own home. I will be home immediately after it is over. I'll

be fine mom.' I repeated as I held her hand reassuringly.

This time as she gazed into my eyes, I was not sure what Guruji's plans were for me as this was the third tumor in two years so I assured her the best I could with evidently less conviction. I was stuck in my history.

She was weak and I sensed her pain that arose in her mind to her heart and trickled down to her legs that trembled with fear. The world turned black and bleak as it spun on the axis of injustice. She dragged her feet back to her bedroom, slipped into her bed and I followed her to lay beside her. She barely breathed but she wanted to off load her past to me; everything from her longing to study further as a single girl, to reluctantly getting married, to the issues with her mother-in law to many more distasteful themes common to a woman's life story. I lent her my ear whilst worrying about myself. I too was a woman who had encountered much pain and I recall at the age of forty when I stated in my head that 'life begins at forty' I believed it and that is what manifested; a beginning.

Here I was, standing before another hurdle that expectantly was not leading to a roadblock. Cancer is volatile having a mind of its own.

Having to confront my situation was beyond anything I had done in the past. It was indeed heart wrenching and I had experienced this kind of palpable pain only once before when I exited my marital home into the unsure world that imaginably didn't guarantee me a future. I found myself in an ambiguous situation where our future; mom's and mine was hazy. I wept overtly for both of us.

We were together embroiled in this deep karma; mother on her deathbed that was not coming to her easily and I with repeated bouts of breast cancer that seemed to be coming to me all too easily!

On having vented out her past, she shared her pearls of wisdom with me in her language and its very essence was this. 'Life isn't to be trifled with. It is precious and your presence makes a difference as you touch so many lives. It is a challenge like everything else but work towards the goal of being and bringing joy into your life and please do not postpone your appointment with happiness, as your daughters need you the most so be a good mother

to them. Your Guruji will guide you.’ My mother blessed me to be happy while she was on her deathbed. ‘In fact Anita.’ She continued ‘You are too blessed to ever feel like the victim. You had the courage to move the rubble that you were pushed under. You flexed your muscle and set yourself free from the entrapment and you particularly are not that person that gives up easily. You fought hard to hold onto a marriage whose very fibers were tearing at the seams until they unsurprisingly fell apart.

Giving up a marriage does not remotely resemble giving up an outfit that we have outgrown. It is more serious and its scars float to the surface. The charred bits of the past and the burning reminders will never completely reduce to ashes. So stay healthy and don’t worry.’

That is a typical trait of a mother; always expressing concern for her children no matter how old. I was 48 and diagnosed third time with a tumor in January 2014. I did not spell out cancer to her but her motherly instinct pronounced it for me. She was frail and bedridden and praying that her end mercifully came sooner than later. I returned to my room to the most divine swaroop of Guruji on my cabinet and I simply said, ‘Please keep mom and I in your fold, lock us both in your embrace and on the lap of your grace.’

I could not keep a cap on my emotions so I wailed before Him but knew in the depths of my soul that He may not intervene as He was purifying all her karmas but that was just my speculation. I was clueless about the script He had written for either of us and in my moments of deep frustration, I would ask Him. ‘Guruji what’s the plan?’

I prayed regularly for Him to dissolve her suffering, as it was the most painful sight I had witnessed in my life. She had a cylindrical tank besides her bed that delivered two liters of oxygen through a candela, a transparent tube that split just beneath the neck, wrapped behind her ears that reunited in her nostrils. The contraption took the edge off the critically constrained breathing. Her lung tissues were scarred and did not know how to perform their function anymore since a desperately deadly disease had taken residence there. Additionally, she took innumerable pills that comprised a meal. If only we had the power to change our loved ones torment.

On gathering the courage, I broke the news of my tumor to both my

daughters and Anishka flew to Manchester to be beside me. My elder brother Rajan, thoughtfully, treated us to a trip to Prague to clear my head and distract me from the impending surgery. I welcomed the treat and was determined not to let the gloom of my tumor doom our vacation together.

What I love most is packing and moving my feet from the known terrain into the unknown. What an adventure it is and the most beautiful thing in the world is the world itself and when we view it with our loved ones the joy multiplies as our sorrows are divided.

It is occasionally nice to get lost in the right direction.

15

Prague Bonding

What direction are we going in? I enquired.

'Mom let's make Charles bridge our first port of call. Suggested Anishka.

It was overcrowded even at this time of the year when the skies were drained of their color but we were together and my brother Rajan, generously booked us the most luxurious hotel there, 'The four seasons.'

We walked the cobbled streets, dined in local cafes and Anishka ordered a lobster then that she refuses to look at now having turned vegetarian and almost vegan! I did strongly feel the incompatibility between Anishka and the lobster back then as it seemed so out of place in her hands. She was so dainty and lady like and there she was trying hard to crack open its shell with an ominous looking contraption! It amused me and that image is still vivid in my mind.

It was a warm bonding with my angel and a fine break from the clamor of my life. Travelling and viewing the different sights of the world rendered me great happiness, as there was so much exquisiteness to internalize. It removed the feeling of being 'stuck' by lending me wings at a moments notice. It was incredibly vital to my healing too as by drinking in the enormity of the world I realized how minuscule my pain was.

The cancer was clearly not behind me as my girls had stated in 2012 on emerging from my surgery. I recall their words, 'Mom it's all behind you now.' I was so afraid in my aching heart, though I attempted masking my fears that it was not behind me but an essential part of me. To be brutally honest I was petrified but I had a brilliant knack of wearing the strong, I am fine kind of coat by buttoning it up with humor and a lighthearted anecdote. It kept me warm and allowed me to walk into rooms that required my persona to be stable and steady.

We feasted on the many sights of the capital of Czech Republic including its famous gothic style Church that is the largest in the world. What fascinated us the most was the astronomical clock which we probably walked by everyday. The graffiti wall devoted to John Lennon with the Beatles lyrics written all across it was appealing and we took many pictures as we rested against its wall. The colorful baroque buildings were a post card sight.

It reminded me of the very first vacation my girls and I took post my separation. It was a big deal of booking the flights and hotel room in Istanbul on my own, as I had once been perfectly dependent on my near and dear ones. That chapter left me hollow and I did not trust at that point that there was a life after, until life opened up its unimaginable doors and proved me wrong.

Anishka, Sonakshi and I had the most elating experience as we visited each prominent site there from the blue mosque, Sophia museum, Topkapi, spice market to the partying by the Bosphorous Bridge and world-renowned Reina club where we had the most delicious Chinese meal under the open skies. Our enthusiasm spilled over to the extent that on arrival we checked in at the hotel in Old town Istanbul and immediately stepped out to venture into the calm yet cheerful emotion of the people and places. The east and west blend and the fibers that were tight with tradition and modernity were vibrant and most importantly compatible. Its textures, tastes, color and spirit was sensational.

The blend proved that co existing as humanity being the only religion is possible. Humanity is synonymous with spirituality that equals our value system. Simple living and high thinking is not at all complicated where all

that needs to be revered is and we learn to give more than we take to balance the scales. Nature eventually does tilt the scales if man does not adhere to her laws. Guruji has taught each one of us to give selflessly in the form of seva and when done regularly washes away the dirt from our physical garb.

I giggled inside at the profuse attention my daughters were drawing from the local handsome men attempting to make their acquaintance with them. 'Five minutes ago it was I who drew the attention!' I thought to myself. It was clearly their time to make heads turn and though I walked with them, no heads turned for me!

After Istanbul, we flew to London and watched the musical 'Oliver' in west end theatre. Musicals are one of the joys my girls and I share so be it London's West end or New York's Broadway it is a pleasure catching up on them.

It was altogether an inspiring experience as it was my stepping-stone to more vacations with my girls. I did not imagine the scale of travel I would do with my girls in the future but Guruji made it possible and with what measure I cannot express. The more I travelled with them the lighter I became and the process of letting go happened with great swiftness. Nonetheless, Istanbul was the turning point in my journey of rebuilding and recreating myself and I will never forget its spirit. The palatability of it has left its lingering flavor.

Anishka and I loved Prague with its many pleasing sights and amidst the uncertainties; it was the first sign of life, love and beauty after a long cold winter. As a mother, no amount of time spent with your children is ample and the joy of watching them blossom is another kind of joyfulness altogether.

Anishka's inner flowering was evident as she nurtured me with her love, wearing the face of courage as her mother battled with what was hopefully the last scrap of cancer from her life. For me, these moments were priceless and rendered me the realization that in spite of my circumstances I still had a huge appetite for life.

There was much sharing with Anishka and seeing her handle my situation

with such maturity filled me with pride. She gave me confidence while Sonakshi, who insisted on being beside me was constantly on the phone. She was hurting because it was her final year and she failed to be by my side. I reassured her that I was soon going to be back on track and that she needed to stay focused.

Love is and will remain the most potent emotion that the human species is blessed with. It is love and youth that fascinates the human heart and for me I found abundant love in my daughters and I felt deeply blessed and youthful on engaging in activities with them.

My ordeal with cancer was nothing but a curve that would finally turn my life straight.

16

My Surgery

'Life kept throwing me all these curve balls. Then God handed me a bat and taught me how to swing.'

Straightaway on returning to Manchester, I was wheeled into the theatre except this time with the heaviness of many things. Firstly, mom was seriously sick so I had not confirmed the news of my tumor or my surgery. The fact that I was going in for the third time scared the living daylights out of me; also because it reminded me so brutally of my dad's pattern and I feared following the same. The last but not the least I went into the theatre with this fear that once they start my chemo it will compromise my immunity further. Already, my immunity, my spirits, my life's beat was low and with all my creativity could not imagine how to draw a brighter picture or write a happier story.

It was as grim as grim could get and though I loved Guruji with every fibre of my being, I failed to understand His plan. I tried convincing myself that Guruji is far greater than my problems and that trusting Him meant trusting His plan and His timing. In my mind, I tried to reiterate everything I learned on my journey with Guruji but all His teachings particularly that of surrender just could not be applied. When the heart is in fragments and when fear of the unknown seizes the soul, a cloud of doubt is bound to descend the mind.

I was tangibly hurting and that hurt was painted with all its grimness over my face. Even though the doctor in India was convinced I had inherited the cancer gene, I had invented lies for myself for my peace of mind. I had convinced myself that I would not be struck with cancer again. I was not going down my dad's route. I was going to be completely clear of cancer but then man proposes and God disposes. There is never an exception to this rule.

I broke out in a cold sweat worrying endlessly and needlessly about the impending chemo. My anxiety had escalated to disproportionate heights and immediately after my surgery I held another satsang. One fine day mom in her weak state commented in Punjabi 'Tu mere kar nu Gurudwara bana deta. [you have converted my home into a Gurudwara.]' She was visibly pleased and perhaps proud of me for choosing this path of peace after having gone through years of turmoil. I must not fail to state here that God has given us free will and I could have chosen another path on becoming single again. Worldly temptations glare at us but because I chose Guruji and His path He shielded me from the illusory, transient pleasures that we often indulge in.

Entwined in the tight threads of ache that had multiplied, I was hurting for my mother in her degenerating state and for myself for my dejected state. It was the worst nightmare of my life and it intensified.

Mom screamed out for me every morning from her bed accusing me of not loving her enough as not to be administering the injection in her. I was aghast because euthanasia was clearly not an option but her lack of oxygen had shrunk her body and she was evidently frailer. She called out to death but it was evading her.

Was she not letting go or was Guruji not taking her? Was her suffering, karmic or was it circumstantial. We were confined in one home of despair with no windows open to possibility.

Meanwhile, regular satsangs kept me afloat. It eased my load and gave me the strength to deal with my reality. I went in for my check up with tears choking my throat from the fear of impending chemo. As I sat, I was given the good news that I did not need chemo but most certainly needed the tablet tamoxafin for years to come. I exhaled a sigh of intense relief.

Mom's situation was despicable as even her G.P frequenting home visits was baffled as to why she remained in this terrible state. 'It's God's will.' He once said dejectedly. 'It's unfair and never have I seen a worse case of pulmonary fibrosis. It's insufferable to say the least.'

Renu Mehta, my childhood friend held a satsang at her place that was literally next door. I walked over, attended the latter half of it and carried the blessed langar back for mom.

On settling mom along with her housekeeper, Monica, I returned to Renu's place. Her sisters Rakhi and Ramona were visiting from London and on the sangat leaving we sat till 1.am sharing about Guruji and much to my delight all three sisters were now connected to Guruji as one of them asked the other, 'Do you believe in Him?' 'What is there not to believe' she responded promptly. 'He is God!'

I was amazed at how effortlessly and exponentially His following was growing and that too without ever meeting Him in the flesh. This is testimony of the fact that divinity need not be visible; He is to be felt with the heart. There is a divine purpose behind everything- and therefore a divine presence in everything. Although I understood this theoretically, I had to internalize this in the context to mom's illness.

My affiliation with Rakhi, Ramona and Renu has strengthened over time, as they are now an integral part of the Guru family. On visiting India their topmost priority is going to Guruji's ashram.

Rakhi Gupta's satsang

"I was introduced to Guruji through my sister Renu in Manchester, UK. Whenever I called to speak to her, she was either meditating or attending a satsang. The belief in God was inculcated in us since we were children and we regularly visited mandir and Gurdwara with our parents, but we were no more spiritual than that. I found it strange that so much of her time was being dedicated to this without realizing that Guruji was going to take me into His fold soon after!

The following year many occurrences unfolded in our lives for which we are eternally grateful and it was then that parents decided to hold their first satsang. The whole experience felt magical – peaceful and divine. Anita, Renu's and my common friend shared her satsangs and we spent the entire evening listening to the amazingly blessed miracles and about her time spent with Guruji.

A couple of months later my father-in-law was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis, a terminal illness. This was a very difficult time for us and I got caught up with the family. I attended satsangs whenever I could to draw solace and to pray to Guruji to look after everyone, especially my father-in-law.

Seven months elapsed and then unexpectedly I experienced something incredible – I was driving on the North Circular in London and then it happened. People say, 'the heavens opened' but that does not come close to what I witnessed. I was looking ahead at the road and asking God for a sign and it was then that the entire sky turned into a huge "Om". I was amazed at what I witnessed and although I was driving in the fast lane, I captured the image on my mobile.

I believe that was my first real experience with The Divine. The lucid message I received was that 'I am always with you.' Guruji revealed to me His presence and He heard my prayers. I began attending satsangs regularly in London with my sister Ramona. I had to attend – it was like a magnetic pull that drew me there every week. I did not want to be anywhere else – but with Guruji.

A couple of months later I again felt His grace.

My daughter was studying French and Spanish at UCL, and she was on her year abroad- in Valencia, Spain. One day she rang me to say she was feeling unwell – we worry about our children, particularly if they are at university abroad.

My sister-in-law and brother-in-law were visiting Valencia a day later so I knew my daughter would be fine. I asked if I should go to her but she insisted that she would be fine. However, eventually she owned up to the fact she was

not well enough to leave her apartment or manage day-to-day tasks and she wanted to return to London. Her friends took her to the airport and she flew home.

Once in London, my daughter visited the doctor and he prescribed her antibiotics and rest. That evening, a Thursday, I prayed to Guruji to protect my daughter, as she had to return to Valencia for her university course. I was worried and was tempted to ask her to stay.

The next morning at 6am, my sister who also lives in London, called me and told me that some uncle had posted something on the London Guruji whatsapp group. I tried to find out who but was not able to and the message read, 'With Guruji's Grace, the very first satsang is taking place in Valencia, Spain.'

I couldn't believe what I was reading; firstly, this message had been posted on the London whatsapp group and we never receive notifications of any satsangs taking place other than in London; and secondly, Valencia, where my daughter was? It sent shivers down my spine as Guruji had listened to my prayer. He had someone in Valencia who could look after my daughter if she ever needed.

Once we embark on our journey with Guruji, He reveals His presence by taking care of our everyday life to build up our faith – we must surrender to Him and love Him unconditionally.

During this phase, my innermost desire was to visit Bade Mandir and I knew this would happen if and when The Divine Lord Guruji Maharaj called me. I was very fortunate and blessed to visit it and many times since then. However, the time that really comes to mind was on Purn masi, February 2016.

I was visiting India with my sister Renu, and the entire trip was a spiritual journey. We attended many satsangs including the Presidents' Satsang at Rashtrapati Bhavan and one at Taj Mansingh hotel. Before returning to London, we wanted to visit Bade Mandir again. There were riots in Haryana and my family discouraged us from stepping out as it could prove risky but we were determined and went.

We arrived in half an hour from Greater Kailash and had divine darshan. Just before leaving, whilst waiting for our driver, I clicked photos of the outside of the Mandir, of the Shivling and the entrance. On returning to GK as I showed my cousin the pictures I had taken, I noticed a figure in the background and so I zoomed into the image to get a sharper view. There, as clear as daylight, I saw Guruji standing before the entrance of the Mandir. I was stunned and could not contain myself. I was emotional, as Guruji had given me Darshan on Purn mashi at Bade Mandir. Thousands of people have seen this photo of Guruji as it went viral. Several people commented on how it must be photo shopped, but I know the truth.

The last satsang that I will share took place in April 2018.

My Thayaji, who was more like a grandfather to us, became critically ill in Manchester, and was in hospital. We had returned from a holiday in March 2018, and Uncle had just returned from Penang, Malaysia, where he had spent two months. That was something he had done for the last twenty years. On holiday he was fit and healthy, walking, eating well, chatting and even swimming daily.

However, after a few days on arriving back, Uncle was hospitalized. It was very serious for the first 24 hours, and with Guruji's grace, pulled through. As my Thayaji was 93, he had some slight health issues, but everything had been under control. Whilst in hospital, Uncle developed pneumonia three times, could not swallow well and had lost his appetite.

My Uncle was a very saintly man and his whole life he would simply say 'Thank God for everything.' My Dadi was Sikh, so my Uncle and Father grew up going to the Gurdwara, and they both went every Sunday without fail. Uncle had heard about Guruji through us and had attended a couple of satsangs at home in Manchester. He also kept a Swaroop of Guruji with him always and kept on saying 'Jai Guruji' and 'Satnaam Shri Wahe Guru.' The same Swaroop was with Uncle whilst he was in hospital.

He was in hospital for approximately seven weeks and two weeks before he was discharged, I experienced something profound. We were trying to make Uncle as comfortable as possible, and he loved listening to classical music. One night before leaving the hospital, I asked Uncle if I should make the

music quieter; so not to disturb the other patients in their rooms. Uncle replied that they were playing the music so loudly in the room next door that it would not matter; to which I asked Uncle what they were playing. Uncle replied, 'they were repeatedly playing, Rakkhi Charna de Kol.'

There was no music in the room next door. Nothing. Yet that is all Uncle could hear. Then suddenly, Uncle looked straight ahead at the hospital wall and very sternly in a strong voice said,

'Jai Guruji, Jai Guruji, Jai Guruji. Satnaam Shri Wahe Guru.' Uncle turned to me and said, 'You know Rakhi, this is all Guruji's Gift.'

Uncle meant, 'Guruji's Gift is the Gift of Life.'

My parents, my sister Renu and I were all feeling uneasy and prayed that Uncle would be fine especially as we had to leave for the night. We left the hospital ward and made our way to the exit. My sister went to bring the car and as soon as I walked out, the most intense rose fragrance I have ever smelt, gushed past me, as if Guruji had just brushed past us. My parents did not get any rose fragrance but I did, and at that moment, I knew Guruji was with Uncle, keeping him safe with Him. Uncle was with us for another ten days and I know that he is in a better place now, with Guruji, in His Charan.

We experience a satsang every day when we are in Guruji's fold. Our entire life becomes a satsang. I feel I have surrendered to Our Guruji and love Him with all my heart. I see Guruji in everything and cannot imagine my life without Him. We go through our karmas but I have given the reins of my life to Him."

Om Namah Shivay, Shivji Sada Sahay, Om Namah Shivay, Guruji Sada Sahay. Jai Jai Guruij, Shukrana Guruji Maharaj.

I must not fail to add my own piece here that Rakhi now coordinates the satsangs in London. When she speaks about Him her face lights up and you can feel her joy of being in His fold. She is indeed a pure soul as are her other sisters. It was later that the fourth sister Rohaila also connected. I guess that was meant to be.

17

A Light Bulb Moment

What must be must be.

Came April and my brother Sanjay and his wife kajal could evidently see I was embroiled in dejection that had no relief. They took me to Amsterdam for a few days and though I hesitatingly left mom I knew it was for my well-being. I felt somewhat lighter as they are gifted with humor and a sense of adventure. We enjoyed the chocolate brownie to another level of laughter and light heartedness at a coffee shop. Guruji has a way of appeasing us and lightening our load even in our difficult hour.

The boutique hotel, 'Andaz' had a library in which my evening tea and a cookie became a daily treat and it is where I sat and reflected on my journey with Guruji and mom's anguish. It was agonizing thinking about the pain of her not being able to breath. Why did something as natural as breathing have to be so hard? Where was Guruji at this very difficult juncture of our lives; particularly hers? I had heard that God never gives you more suffering than you can endure but in mom's case, this belief was a question mark. I was practically numb with heartache. She was a pure soul who had her share of tribulations and yet she suffered beyond the measure I deemed fair. I know He knew best but why was He so relaxed?

A light from the shadows shall spring

Love is the melody He will sing.
In His embrace we will rest our head
And utter the words not yet said.
The truth of our being He will reveal
Moreover, our broken spirit He will heal.

I was determined, for my self-preservation, not to delve deep in the philosophy of man and his suffering. The truth is that all of us belong to the present and the experience as a human on earth is brief. What was in front of me was real and, as heartbreaking as it is to be mortal, I needed to be totally in the experience of being human and to enjoy it. I did not want to lose the moment with Sanjay and Kajal, to whom I am very close. We were attempting to distract ourselves from mom's ill health and the evident mortality. She needed to hear my voice so twice daily I called to check on her. She was insistent that I did not leave her for long since her end was around the corner. I assured it that it was merely for three nights and that I would be back before she knew it. She was calling out to me as a child would call out to her mother.

These three nights was about walking and soaking in the Dutch vibe. I love Amsterdam and can return at a moments notice. It has a very creative and artistic vibe that resonates my own.

At the end of April mom was admitted into the hospice where she was about to breath her last. I looked over at my mother who was evidently sick and dying but yet held on. 'I can't seem to leave you all alone.' She commented. 'But Anita I must go now as the suffering is beyond my capacity to endure. I am very tired now. Please pray to Guruji to take me.'

Each time I visited her I dreaded it being the last and then two days before she left us she fell into a state of unconsciousness. I desperately wanted to say, 'stay back mom' but instead I whispered to her higher consciousness 'let go mom, it is ok for you to go now.'

A miracle occurred on the same afternoon that I felt was her last day on earth. It was a Sunday and most of us siblings were surrounding her bed. At that instance she struggled to open her eyelids from her slumber, raised her hands from a body that was limp with morphine, and placed them directly

on my head. She even attempted to smile as I saw her lips stretch. She blessed me without the words but with undying emotion. Immediately after, she limped back sinking into the bed and closing her eyes. We all cried at this most poignant phenomenon. My mother had blessed me with the very fibers of her being. Her blessings were akin to God's blessings and I had felt the profundity of them on that particlaur day.

We returned home and Monday there was no sign of life in her though she was still breathing and then Monday night, Tuesday morning we received the dreaded call. Sanjeev, Amit and I drove quietly to the hospice where my other siblings, their wives, my chacha and chachi encompassed her bed. My elder brother Rajan gave way for me to sit beside her and to entwine my hand into hers. She was still breathing at this point although it was slowing down. She was waiting for me and of that I am certain. I whispered in her ear Guruji's mantra and I reassured her that it was ok for her to let go and that I will be fine.

A light bulb above her head suddenly flashed and within minutes, she was gone. It was 6th May 2014 when my angelic mother passed on. That image, of her death, will never fade from my memory. It is still as clear as day today. There will always be reflection on this matter and a deeper enquiry into the reason she had to suffer so greatly. Some inquests do not reach their conclusion; not every question has an answer.

When she left we returned home to her empty home; Monica her housekeeper awaited the news though she already knew. Once before when dad passed on Monica was there in our old home and now history repeated itself and I had lost both my parents. I suddenly felt orphaned and vulnerable. I could not believe that I had no parental umberella to shield me from the rain; no one to tell me when I was wrong or to pat my back on being right.

Despite her being visibly consumed by PF from when it was first diagnosed in 2010 to May 6th, 2014 it was the hardest loss I was forced to bear. She left this world on the same date as she came into it. The world without her did not appear particularly desirable at this point. The loss ached hard; I cried for myself and I cried for her, as I was not sure where either of us were heading from here. My heart was desperate to believe she went to Guruji and

I was desperate to believe that Guruji would hold my hand from here onwards. I had died many deaths and now I had to be reborn and on doing so my Guruji; my father and mother all rolled into one had to teach me to walk again before I could run on this earth's plane.

It was hard setting the wheels of my life back in motion but almost after her passing I got my physical self together though my emotional fibers were torn.

On the day my brothers were in India at Haridwar, I remained in Manchester where kajal, Rittu, Rajan's wife and I held a satsang for mom at her apartment. I could not comprehend the transient nature of a human's life. I imagined mom walking into the satang in her physical garb as she used to and now she was no more. Where did she go? This simple soul had spent her entire life pleasing those around her placing their needs before her own, doing her best to draw a smile to their face whilst concealing her pain of loneliness. Battling one time with clinical depression and after losing her husband to whom she had dedicated her life and then she was struck with a fatal lung disease. She was suffocated with so many burdens in her life and eventually her lungs shut out the oxygen. Despite her physical and emotional challenges, I had witnessed mom's strength in dealing with life and no matter what she faced, she always taught us to do what was right. She believed in the theory of karma and instilled in us that no matter what life threw at us we were to do our best, be our best and to never under any circumstance hurt or deceive another. Our karmas ought to be so good that they are an inspiration to others hence exemplify goodness. Walk away from all types of negativity, complain less, pray more and spend time alone to know who you are. Be in a space of gratitude and appreciate the fact that God is all the time filling your cup until it runs over.

Her submission to the divine her entire life was all about what God wanted for her and not what she wanted for herself from Him. She was a giver in every sense.

One of Mom's outstanding qualities and attributes I learned whilst living with her in her latter years was her ability to laugh at the smallest of things and since she had no ego she possessed this quality to laugh at herself. She enjoyed her human experience despite some of her struggles and found her

joy whilst delving into the deeper meaning of life and love. I am sure without a grain of uncertainty that my mom loved me and it is this love of hers that I always carry in my heart as I walk through life doing and being the person she would've been proud of.

Reflecting on her mortal life, her physical garb was fraught with a deteriorating disease and eventually shed. What does life even mean? Everything from her body to her children to her wealth, her comfort she left behind. In the end she advised when, bed ridden, 'don't be attached to this pain that I've suffered and you've had to witness and suffer too. Remember me for the good times and not my sickness-ridden body that is actually not mine. Everything, I leave behind for you is for you to enjoy while you are here on this earth plain. Maximize all God's gifts by appreciating them and giving some away. Do not get attached as it's *all* borrowed.

18

Seven Deadly Sins

What I borrowed from reading and drawing knowledge from other faiths is that they teach, in fact, the very same values but man's interpretation has distorted the doctrines of truth.

The seven deadly sins that are also known as the cardinal sins and are very much relevant to modern living as they were when they were first documented. I will simplify them in the context of today's tech ridden life. Today's life that Guruji described as 'complex and all consuming' in His words still characterizes it with our conduct, our beliefs and the thought and feelings we entertain for the majority of our time. What we entertain for too long we become and the negative traits seep into our system without making that conscious choice.

Pride, Envy, Gluttony, Sloth, Lust, Avarice [Greed], Wrath [Anger] The mnemonic I use to recall this is 'PEG'S LAW'.

Pride- translated as arrogance. This behavior may lead to a clouded judgment that may further lead to self-destruction. All decisions that are determined by the ego result in unhealthy unsatisfactory life.

Guruji said, 'Mein twade vehm aur ahem dono dhur karan aya hu. [I have come to release you of your superstitions and arrogance.]

Envy- is characterized by an insatiable desire that generates sadness at another's good fortune. In today's tech world, face book is proven to generate resentment and envy towards other's life style choices and this often leads to depression or low self-esteem from feeling that what we have is not enough and other's lives viewed on social media have bigger and better lives when in fact that can be far from the truth. Hence comparisons are odious and teach us that we are our only competition and the aim is to be the highest truest expression of ourselves. The sad or resentful covetousness towards the traits, status, possessions, abilities or lifestyle of others is futile and the cause of deep misery.

Guruji said, 'Paat karo, mantra jaap karo, Chunge karam karo. Rab kolo rab mang lo baki sab kuch ethe re jana hai.' [Pray, do mantra jaap, do good deeds. Ask God for God as everything else will remain here.]

Gluttony- an over-consumption and over-indulgence of anything to the point of waste. The deep unreasonable desire to attain something immediately. For example, the irrational behavior to attain the newest I phone by dropping all rational thought and to wait outside an I phone store to attain the latest version. Gluttony can be interpreted as selfishness; essentially placing concern with one's own impulses and interests above the well-being or interest of others to the point of destroying others peace of mind and happiness that eventually destroys theirs.

Guruji has taught us the balancing act. He advised us to enjoy all worldly pleasures and to dress up smart but not to crave for anything material to the point of losing our peace of mind.

Sloth- can have a broader meaning- it can be to evade one's responsibilities towards others and self, a mindset giving rise to apathy, and a passive inert or sluggish mentation. By this definition 'evil' exists when good people fail to act in their state of apathy and inertia. This includes ceasing to utilize the gifts of grace such as wisdom, understanding, piety, fortitude, compassion, gratitude and all things good. Such disregard may lead to the slowing of one's spiritual journey and to the neglect of duties such as charity to others and to animosity towards those who are on the good path. Unlike committing acts of immorality, sloth is actually a sin of omitting responsibilities through

sheer laziness.

Guruji has made us proactive in as much as taking care of our families, engaging in seva at home and at satangs. Our mindest has changed and each of us is busy in one seva or another. According to our innate talents and abilities each one of us has been allotted a certain task.

Lust- unbridled and intense sexual desire that may lead to adultery, rape or fornication. In another context it can be excessive desire to attain power or wealthy lifestyle by immoral means. This can be the instigator of envy and lead to feeling lack while developing an uncontrollable impulse to engage in immoral acts to attain whatever one desires. For this, the individual may lie, cheat, deceive and betray loves ones and eventually destroy a potentially healthy relationship with them and with oneself. Self-destruction is the outcome.

Once Guruji said, Guru sab maaf karda hai lekhin character maaf nahin hai kyo ki uhu apne haath vich hai.' [A Guru forgives His sangats transgressions but character is in your hands hence it is not easily forgiven.

Avarice[Greed]- excessive focus on earthly gains- theoretically and practically it can be translated in modern times as running a business; manufacturing and selling a product that is deadly or harmful to the consumer but you continue to keep your profit machine rolling at the expense of others' lives. In the bargain to keep yourself registered as a good company you may even line the pockets of the decision makers. It is a rapacious desire to attain material possessions and often to boast their gain to others more than to satisfy their own appetite. This endangers one to be consumed by materialism that may lead the individual to become frustrated if for any reason they are unable to attain it the next time around. It is the attachment and the dependency that leads to misery. One tends to forsake the bigger meaning to life and condemns all things divine in exchange of temporal things. Greed is what may also lead to robbery and theft by violence and force.

In the words of Henry Edward, avarice plunges a man deep into the mire of this world, so that he makes it to be his God.

Guruji once said, 'Log samaj de ne ki paisa rab hai. [People consider money to be God]

Wrath- this is uncontrolled feeling of anger and hatred. Wrath reveals itself in the desire to cause injury to another and can manifest in different ways including impatience, revenge and self-destructive behaviour such as excess consumption to substance abuse that can lead to depression or suicide.

When extreme anger reaches a point of wounding another, or even desiring that the other person suffer misfortune, is considered a sin.

Henry Edward said, 'Angry people are slaves to themselves.

Guruji taught us to let go of anger to remain calm and contemplative. He also said no ABC- accuse, blame and criticize.

Our modern world is in trouble with many issues that are only escalating, from the individual having cancer or depression to more global issues such as global warming and tsunamis. Whether the storm is internal or external what keeps people from believing is ignorance. The lack or no faith is what eventually leads to a deep settling of the impulses mentioned in the seven deadly sins above and when deeply entrenched in these vices people are unhappy, unhealthy and dissatisfied.

We may fall prey to one or more of these traits at some time in our lives but it is my firm belief that on connecting to Guruji and deepening our connect for the sake of drawing love into our lives in lieu of more material, the negative in us drops as the positive rises. Our social behavior, driven by our insecurities and fears, abates when Guruji awakens us to our divine nature changing us from the bitter to the better. He enables us to overcome our many vices bringing us to a place of peace and contentment.

Sit still, praise Him, feel His love pass through and be forever content.

19

What is Faith?

Contentment is a rare gem in people's lives today.

Most people trapped by fears and worries lack faith.

What is faith?

Is it positive thinking, confidence or is it simply feeling and doing the right thing?

While these are important traits to uphold, is faith the belief that God is with and within us to enable us to overcome our wrongdoings and to diminish our inherent darkness. Will He untangle our karmic knots and straighten out the tense aspect of our lives.

Genuine faith is a rare asset today and people are unaware that it is the greatest currency of our times that will never depreciate.

There are several common ideas about faith. I know many people who believe that faith is an intangible 'feeling' that cannot be defined. It is often thought to be personal, mysterious and unique to each person. This feeling usually has no definition, structure, or clear purpose and, inevitably, is whatever people want or need it to be. In other words, for almost every

person, there is a different description and definition of faith. Others believe that faith is simply, 'positive thinking.' As long as people take an optimistic view and remain upbeat about events and circumstances, they are demonstrating faith. Faith may go deeper than that although these are certainly good qualities of the mind. Optimism does enable us to endure severe trials.

'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' Take note of 'evidence' of things 'not seen' The meaning of 'substance' here is 'assurance.' Faith involves an assurance 'of things hoped for.' However, if something is hoped for, that something has not yet been received. Therefore, where faith is involved, there is assurance that it will be received. Nevertheless, how can evidence relate to something that is not seen when we think of evidence as involving things that are seen. In a courtroom, evidence is what can be proven. It involves facts visible to a jury. In other words, evidence only involves things that can be seen or demonstrated. How then can faith involve evidence that is invisible, not seen?

Faith involves evidence in the following way. Real faith, in any promise made by God, is actually THE evidence. It is the belief that is the evidence. If God promises to do something, He will and much beyond our imagination and of that our lives are evidence. Your evidence is everyday miracles and the unfolding of events that we have asked for in our minds; perhaps imagined them and seen unfolding that He had made possible. It is the very unwavering faith that you hold. If you have true faith, you do not need to search for the evidence—you already possess it!

Faith is exercised toward Him, but it is He who makes this possible. You should never be concerned with the opinions of people. Make your own connect and live by His order that in effect simplifies our day-to-day living. Guruji said, '1:1 connection banao.' With a million different mindsets in the world it is hardly possible to have a common connect. The focus is Him that is common to every sangat but the connect is individual. It simply has to be. Therefore, one sangat's message to another to believe or behave in a certain manner and to follow the vision they had for us is unverifiable and therefore does not in all probability apply to us.

Noone knows us better than Guruji. He knows what spiritual and material needs we have. Each journey is different and has to be respected. Like He said, 'Tussi alag alag class vich ho aur oho mein nu patha hai sirf kaun kis class vich hai.'

The teachings therefore are individual and so there can be no mediators on this journey where we are doing our own learning while He unfolds the lessons. In time we see our life course changing for the better while we uphold the faith that He will and does grant us only what is best for us and our families.

Rising above superstitions and fears is the prerequisite to an advancing spiritual journey as both hamper its growth.

Almost everyone believes that faith involves feelings. Physical feelings merely come from the human senses and have nothing whatsoever to do with faith. Human beings accept knowledge that they have received through the five senses—seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. These senses all involve physical information and knowledge. The mind receives and processes this information in order to draw conclusions about circumstances, things and events taking place around it. Faith is spiritual, not physical. It is a confident assurance, which comes from the Spirit of God in the mind of a believer. So many today lack the strength to believe that God will perform the promises contained in His Word. He seems far away, vague and ethereal to billions of human beings caught up in a materialistic world. The vast majority does not have time for God. There seems to be no room for prayer and meditation. All these things draw us closer to God. Most give up trying to do them, and then wonder why they have no faith! This leaves them forced to rely solely on their five senses for guidance. Most people feel that anything derived from a source other than these is not to be trusted.

Coming back to the senses before proceeding; in today's stressful world where people consider every minute event or activity stressful i.e. 'I'm stressed about my weight.' 'I'm stressed about what to wear, what to eat, how to live.' 'I'm stressed about how to get that next bag, dress or whatever.' In the age of social media that causes utmost resentment and envy towards others' lives, the quickest and easiest remedy is to pop a pill. It may be a tranquilizer in any form be it drugs that create momentary bliss to numb

some kind of sad feeling within us or to create a transient feeling of ecstasy. All pills are chemicals that our lives have become so dependant on. Botox, hair colors; food, water, air and every element around us are all chemicals and that is what has entered our blood stream. Nothing about humankind remains natural so coming to Guruji with utmost faith detoxifies the mind and body and brings us back to nature and a more natural way of being.

Consider the following verse: 'For we walk by faith not by sight' Practicing true faith means learning to disregard what you see. Literally, sight does not count in relation to God. This reveals that believers do not walk by what they see. Just as you would never consider driving a car without sight, a true believer does not walk through life by sight. This principle cannot be learned overnight. The very concept of this kind of spiritual understanding is completely alien to human thinking. Unlearning the wrong idea of faith requires a lifetime of practice. Prayer, study, fasting and meditation are spiritual activities. God is Spirit. Many wonder why they are not healed or their prayers not answered They lack faith, which comes from the Spirit of God. If they had faith, they would have evidence, assurance and confidence that they will be healed, blessed and receive answers to their prayers! They would know that these things were coming, in advance of their arrival.

Faith is, I believe, the most reliable exchange there is today and the returns are always beneficial. Personally, it has enabled me to lean into life and to be brave and often bold. It lends me the realization that I can switch my fears into action through faith and my lack of confidence into courage. It gives me the strength and the wisdom to know that I am bigger than my weaknesses hence I can switch into whatever mode I need to.

Very recently, I had very severe pain in my shoulder owing to regular writing and sketching. The pain was constant and I went to a physiotherapist who asked me to visit him for a few months on a regular basis and to pop a painkiller every day. With my frequent travels it was not possible to be regular and I refused to be a pill popper so I turned to my faith; my Guruji. My orthodox belief based on my knowledge and my conditioning was that only a doctor can cure me but my faith has taught me otherwise. I sat before His Divine swaroop, prepared chai and served Him for Him to bless it as my medicine. Believe you me after some days of doing this and remembering Him daily with deep love, doing the mantra jaap, listening to His shabad and

focusing on my healing throughout, the pain dissipated. I did not take a single pill. My faith is larger and more magnanimous than any pill but then my faith stood tall stubbornly, infallibly, unwavering, immovably and most firmly. It was not a case of, 'let's see if this works' but totally a case of, 'I know this will work.'

However, this is not to say that when an illness strikes that we discard the doctor's advice particularly if it is something grave and each situation is different. Medicine taken be it orthodox or alternative is far more effective and successful when taken with His blessings and we hold onto the faith that the best *will* come out of it.

When struck with cancer, I did go through the entire gamut of surgery, radiation and post recovery care. The entire chapter had faith as the main protagonist. He ensures that He sends the best doctors and surgeons our way who render us the treatment with minimal side effects as it was in my case.

Our fear cannot be bigger than our faith because if it is then that is where trouble begins.

20

Love has no Religion

I belong to no religion.
My religion is love.
Every heart is my temple.

The trouble is people believe faith means that Guruji will wave a magic wand to resolve their worst problems in a heartbeat.

Faith is the window behind which we stand, unaffected by the scorching heat and torrential rain conversely. Faith is nothing but an absolute expression of profound love for our Guruji. It is the abiding adoration that becomes an essential part of who we are and in that sense, faith is us. Faith is the master artist of our inner canvas that adds colors of positivity and various hues of happiness and the kind of joy that we had never experienced when we had not yet met Guruji.

Strength of spirit and character both deepen the very ocean of faith. No matter how troubled the waters we rise to the top with His grace.

Faith has many interpretations but my recent one is this;

It is an ever-illuminating lamp shedding its light on my soul.
Awakens me to the eternal truth and makes me whole

It reveals the dust that is settled in the corners of my heart,
And transforms my character from arrogance to humility.
On surrendering, redrafts my life's script and destiny.
Faith steers me from the world to my soul's need
Once connected Faith forbids Divinity and I to part.
Loving Our Guruji is nothing but true love indeed.

Faith comes and takes permanent residence in our heart once we welcome it with love, compassion and humility. Moreover, as we witness the flower of our existence bloom like never before we tend to the roots of faith with ever more love and nurturing.

I had read somewhere that 'for faith to be crowned it has to be tested by the fires of patience. On arriving at Guruji's darbar and on being let in or at gaining 'admission' as He stated, the test of faith begins its journey. This journey may have hailstorms threatening the soul to turn cold except it warms up quickly with a single glance from Guruji. He keeps both our heart and soul warm whilst holding our hand throughout its trials. Death ruthlessly took away my dad in 2009 from terrible cancer and then my mom in 2014 from PF. It is not like faith wasn't hurt; it was injured for sure leaving me unanchored awhile but then its resilience got me back on track and I rose above the injury and entered the space of acceptance.

A cloud will descend to eclipse our happiness but faith is what sustains us and keeps us afloat.

For the ocean of blessings Guruji showers on us there is nothing we can give Him in return but a life well lived, in His name by His grace and by His word. This is the only humble and sweet offering we can make. When we share our satsangs, do seva and simran then collectively, the 'I' gives birth to the celestial 'Us.' Guruji has clearly shifted our focus from 'me' to 'we.'

Faith is many things as we have learnt and it goes beyond the boundaries of religion and doctrines. Faith has no color, caste or creed. In fact, God has created our skin tones with beautiful variety but our souls are the same color.

Below an Iranian girl shares a phenomenally powerful satsang that

illustrates just that

“Om Namah Shivaya Shivji Sada Sahaya. Om Namah Shivaya Guruji Sada Sahaya”

There are no words to describe the many wonders you have blessed Guruji, yet the many satsangs granted by you need days and nights of sharing. I love you Babaji. You are everything. Thank you for everything.

I was born in Tehran, Iran into a non-religious open-minded family. We believed in God, though as a child I did not believe in anything I had not witnessed or experienced for myself. I always felt I was separated from a higher source and often gazed up into the sky. The empty feeling expanded over time. I experienced many mystical events whilst growing up which deepened my inquiry into the power that created existence and I.

I was not a planned child and being one year, one month and one day younger to my sister my young mother could not take care of both my sister and me. Therefore, I spent most of my time with my Grandmother who assumed the role of a mother and this created a special bond between us. I always observed her being in a state of Shukrana. No matter what life threw at her, she never uttered anything but Shukr. Never gossiped or judged and neither was she driven by ego. I felt a light energy radiating from her, which had many people longing to be in her presence. In my 34 years, I today realize the tremendous blessing of our God upon me from the day I was born. My parents planned to leave Iran for Canada in 1998 and leaving my Grandma was extremely tough. While settled in Canada, in July of 2003, I found an excuse to return to Iran for a visit but my mother would not agree letting me travel by myself. The calling was intense. During one of my many pleas suddenly a voice loud and clear said, ‘tell her if Grandma Passes away and I don’t see her...I will never forgive you’. My mother surprisingly agreed. During one particular night while I slept over at my Grandmother’s home, I woke up early morning. As I sat up on the floor I saw a figure I initially thought was a male ghost with a baldhead and all human features except one big vertical eye. I was so frightened that I immediately laid back and covered myself with my blanket praying to God for Him to protect me. The moment my Grandmother woke up hours later, I frantically ran to her and told her what I had seen. She said while calming me that He comes to her often and

that everything is okay. I was relieved to hear as I thought it to be a ghost.

I left Iran end of July that year to head back home to Canada. In October of 2003, my Grandmother left her physical body and joined God. My mother was stunned as to how those words months prior had exited my mouth about my demand for visiting Iran for the sake of seeing Grandma. Today I realize Guruji has been guiding me way before He gave His permission to be aware of Him. We think we are the doers until He blesses us with the wisdom that He is, He was, and He always will be.

From the year, 2012 certain ailments manifested lasting up to six years until the Divine day, July 7th, 2018. I suffered from blood platelets disorder, severe acute depression, marijuana abuse, severe insomnia, critical anxiety and stress, body inflammation, tremors, constipation, hair loss, and harsh migraines lasting 24/7. My life was going nowhere since I was bedridden and suicidal with each attempt resulting in failure. I visited every hospital in Toronto for tests every day only to return home drained. I felt alone and shattered in critical pain that had no cure. My head burned so much that I often banged my head on the wall continuously. The expression 'tears being dried' applied to me as in the last episode of my ailment in 2018 my tears had dried. I was numb and emotionless...dead really.

In 2016 after begging God for help while bedridden, in the early morning hours I saw a white bubble of light from the sky entering my room while getting smaller as it drew closer to enter my stomach. Due to severe stress my monthly menstrual had stopped for eleven months and suddenly when the Light entered my body, I recovered from this one ailment the next day. The ailment commenced yet again on Dec 25, 2017. This time I had my mind set on exiting life for good and it was the third occurrence that forced me to be bedridden yet again.

Life runs according to God's plans and not ours. It was in June 2018 when I was begging God yet again for help when a vivid vision of the figure I had called 'ghost' appeared. I heard a deep voice again asking me to pray to Him. My life was a miracle from that day on. Every time I stepped outside, I saw butterflies around me. I felt a new energy compelling me out of bed and taking me for walks. Streets that were routinely busy in Downtown Toronto were suddenly closed off without a trace of one human.

On July 1st, I stepped out when suddenly I heard God's voice telling me to go to a church called C3. A friend of mine recommended a month prior but I had forgotten about it until that moment. I learned that it was within an hours walk from my house. I reached the address mentioned on the search engine but it was an old church that was closed. I was frustrated, fragile and felt beaten up. Surprisingly my tears started rolling and I asked God to carry me to wherever He wanted me to go. Light energy wrapped itself around me and my feet started walking towards a direction. I started running and the moment I reached the church the person singing worship songs stopped the band and said; 'God just put it in my mind that someone on the way to church was running and crying...God wants you to know this suffering is ending and the land of grace is near.' My soul knew that message was for me. After leaving the church, I begged God to bless me with the energy I felt inside the church to be mine eternally. On the way home, my feet suddenly locked right in front of a bookstore and again I could hear a voice telling me to go inside and ask for spirituality section. Suddenly after 45 minutes of browsing my eyes locked in on a book called, 'The Divine Light' by Anita Kumar. The voice again said, 'remember the white light you saw two years ago...pick up this book...it's connected'. The book came home with me but I had lost so much trust in everything that a book was the last resort of hope for me. I did not bother opening the book and just left it in my room. On July 5th, 2018, I had a dream that I was in a beautiful room full of flowers and a fine-looking chair right in front of me. I saw disciples standing up out of respect for someone who was entering the room. I then saw a colourless ball of energy this time enter my stomach. Suddenly I felt nauseous and fell. While still asleep, I saw myself sitting up on a bed where a baldheaded man wearing a long chocolate brown dress sat beside me. I woke up from my dream and felt an energy I could not describe. It was blissful and I opened my notebook to write what I had vividly experienced in that realm. Two days later the voice insisted I pick up the book and read. The minute I did open it out in the patio an invisible hand came up from the book and grabbed 90% of my migraines. Butterflies came and went while reading about someone calling Guruji 'Lord Shiva.' After searching who Lord Shiva was, I noticed the vertical eye. The voice then insisted I look carefully at the cover of the book and I realized, unbelievably so, that it was He who had manifested Himself before me 15 years earlier. I asked Him to confirm this to me and the next paragraph I read was about Guruji's birthday being on July 7th. Then He said, 'look at your calendar...it

is a special day today and I have come to you. My light has entered you’.

I questioned if I would ever smile again. With Guruji’s grace, I now laugh with every cell of my body. With Him besides me, I am living in this beautiful realm and every day is a satsang. Guruji blessed me with a dream darshan of being in Bade Mandir standing beside His swaroop. Then His indications came months after for me to visit India. When Guruji’s Hukum, He does everything. He blessed me with Seva in the Mandir, which was a divine experience. Guruji blesses all His children. He has blessed me with the wisdom of going to Him for everything and anything and He does respond. This is Guruji’s time, Raghubeer uncle said during my travel to India. I am no special or different from anybody else. It is Guruji’s grace and His doing to show us that He is not limited to any one religion. He said people all around the world would connect to Him. All we have to do is ask for the real deal. See the image of God in everyone and everything. Keep your vessels pure and positive so Guruji can fill them with His eternal grace.

Guruji Baba... Thank you for calling me home. Thank you for closing all the doors so I could see yours open. I love you for all eternity.

Jai Jai Guruji Shukrana Guruji’

Have faith and go with the flow. Spread happiness and positivity wherever you go. A true follower is the one who sails through the storms and still smiles and says, ‘Meher Hai Guruji ki. Tera saath hai to mujhe kya kami hai. Har andere mein tu hi humari roshni hai.’ [Guruji’s grace is always with us. When He walks beside us then we lack nothing. In darkness, He is our light.]

21

Light & Dark Coexist

Light and dark coexist in each one of us but what prevails is what we focus on.

Below is an excerpt by a devotee of Guruji, Major General S.P.S Narang [Retired] that illustrates His courage to overcome the societal and religious norms and beliefs to attain the higher goal that is Oneness in all living beings. His compassion and humility is his one true faith.

‘Stop looking for the light and decide to become it instead.’

“Last November, I was driving from Dehradun to Chandigarh. It was a fascinating four-hour journey with the added attraction of visiting Paonta Sahib Gurudwara. I had to break on the way to give my car and I some rest and what better way than entering the abode of Guru. Besides the soothing Kirtan, it is the langar that one savours, seated on the floor among a multitude of people from different walks of life. Some partake of all meals, as they have no means to satiate their hunger.

Breaking bread with them gives an indescribable spiritual high, and to experience this, one does not need to belong to any one religion. I, too, enjoyed the langar and made my exit to continue with my journey. I stopped to buy knick-knacks from a kiosk outside the gurdwara. Just then, I spotted

a family of Gujjars [Muslim nomads who rear cattle in mountains and sell milk for their livelihoods] in an intent discussion in front of a tea vendor. The family comprised an elderly couple, two middle aged couples and four children. Three women were partially veiled. They seemed poor as the eldest man [probably the father] counted coins and some crumpled notes.

Undoubtedly, the issue was how much they could afford to buy. They asked for three cups of tea and four samosas [popular Indian snack]

Gathering courage, I asked him, 'Kya aap sab khana khayenge? [Would you all like to have food?] They looked at one another with a mix of surprise, apprehension and a hurt self-respect.

There was silence and sometimes silence can be very loud. The innocent eyes of the children filled with hope. 'Hum kha ke aye hain.' [We have eaten] he responded. There was an instant retort, 'kahan khaaya hai subeh se kuch bhi,

Abba?' [We have not eaten anything since morning papa.]

Hearing that, a dull ache in my chest caught me by surprise. The stern look in the eyes of the three men and the pleading moist eyes of the women said it all. I insisted that they come with me. They agreed, reluctantly. We entered the Gurdwara [Sikh temple of God]

A good feeling descended over me as I deposited their shoes at the joran ghar [shoe deposit room found in all Gurdwaras]

The elders were awed by the architectural marvel. However, there was fear in their eyes, which was understandable. They were entering a non- Islamic place of worship for the first time. Nevertheless, the children could not care less, their innocent faces single mindedly focussed on food. Some onlookers flashed strange looks from the corner of their eyes but I followed the children, adapting their easy attitude as they excitedly chose head wraps of different colors as everyone is supposed to cover their heads inside the Gurdwara.

Except for the eldest member, all accompanied me inside and emulating me, bowed their heads and touched their forehead to the floor. Many others must

have noticed, as I did, that these children went through this ritual with utmost reverence. They took parsad [offering] from the bhaji [priest] who asked them if they needed more. The children gladly nodded. We then entered the langar hall [blessed food hall] and I took the children along to collect thaalis [plates]

They did it with utmost joy, as only children would. Seated opposite us was a newly married couple. The bride, with red bangles accentuating her charm asked the children to sit beside her, and two of them sat between them. The way she was looking after them, I could tell she would make a loving mother. Langar was served and though I had already eaten, I ate a little to make my guests comfortable. One had to see to believe how they relished it. The initial wave of apprehension had vanished and they ate to their fill. I have no words to describe the joy I experienced.

We had nearly finished when an elderly Sikh and a youth with flowing beard [perhaps the head Granthi and sewadar-helper] sought me out. I was overcome with fear and more than me, my guests were scared. I walked up to them with folded hands. He enquired, 'Inhaan nu tusi le ke aye ho? [Have you brought them in?]' The next question baffled me. 'Tusi har din path karde ho? [Do you say prayers everyday?]' I almost blurted 'yes' but it would have been a lie. So with utmost humility I said, 'no'

Expecting an admonishment, he surprised me. 'Tuhaanu tha koi lorh hi nahin. Aj tuhaanu sab kuch mil gaya ahi ji. [You do not need to. Today you have everything.] I was flabbergasted. Was it advice or sarcasm? He added, 'Inha nu Babbe de ghar lya ke te langar shaka ke tusi sab kuch paa laya. Tuhadda dhanwad. Assi dhan hog aye [By bringing them to the Guru's abode for langar, you have everything from God. Thank you. We are blessed.]

Then, with folded hands, he walked up to the elderly and requested them, 'Aap jab bhi idhar aao to langar kha ke jaaiye. Yeh to uparwale ka diya hai ji [Whenever you happen to pass through here. Please come and have food. It is God's gift.]

I escorted my guests out of the langar hall. Just as we were about to pick our footwear, one of the children said, 'Humme aur halwa do naa.' [Get us some more sweet offering] We five went in to get more parsad.]

Finally, as we were about to depart, the elderly woman whispered to her husband. I enquired, 'koi baat, miyaji?' Almost pleadingly, he said, 'yeh keh rahin ki, kya aap ke sar par haath rakh sakti hai? [She is saying, can she keep her hand on your head.] I bowed as she blessed me with tears in her eyes. A wave of emotion swept over me.

Is it my imagination or for real, that I have to feel the beautiful hand of a Muslim woman, wrapped in purity and love, on my head? This is the reason we are secular and this is what Guruji taught us about all religions being one as God is One."

In the consciousness of the one who immerses in the divine love of God, there is no narrowness of caste creed or religion and absolutely no disparity between one soul and another. Loving humankind equally and beholding one race to love all as our brothers and sisters is the highest prayer and service to God.

When we fall in love with Guruji, we are at home with Him and His children wherever we may be, travelling, working, His ashram or Gurdwara. Most importantly, I feel when we awaken to the belief that Guruji actually resides in our hearts then our senses sharpen and we awaken to our every thought, word and action and consciously eradicate all that does not serve us. In the same vein, we consciously reach out and help another just like Major General Narang did on seeing the Muslims struggle with buying tea. Guruji gives us the courage to do the right thing and to be the right person.

Our aim should be to return to Him in a better condition than when He sent us down into the world.

22

Satsang at my Mother's Place

My world felt hollow and I decided to hold a satsang that evening at mom's apartment. It was truly serene with her close family and friends present. I was numb with sadness and though I broke down periodically, I had not completely registered her absence from my life. During the satsang, I repeatedly went into her room to see if I could feel her presence and if Guruji would give me some sort of a sign.

Grieving is such an isolating experience and its recovery time varies from person to person. In a sense, sadness is a great leveler as it compels us to pause and redefine which I have had to do at many junctures of my life. In retrospect, I see this as a sort of adventure and not an adversity. The many bumps on my road have actually taught me to live passionately as opposed to passively. However, it takes time and during my grieving period the days were lingering and my nights even more drawn-out but in these dark moments I never failed to seek His light.

Amit, my brother Sanjeev's dear friend stayed and supported us throughout the last leg of mom's life. He has taught me that purity is of essence. He being pure in faith and in his way of being clearly illustrates the grace that comes to Him so naturally and effortlessly. There is no resistance in Him as far as Guruji is concerned. There is absolute acceptance in him and in fact, he lives by the truth that the lamp and its light are one and so our soul and Guruji are

one. Ego is the greatest deterrent in our spiritual growth and distances us from Him. Visiting Guruji's ashram comes as naturally to him as breathing and having langar with purity of mind has purified and elevated his entire existence.

During our family vacation together, he shared the importance of feeding our higher self and not our lower self. In doing so negative people who sap us of our energy naturally distance themselves from us. It is vital for us to constantly nurture the positive in us and feel good about ourselves. Vitally important is to thank God for everything indefinitely; from the body to the mind to our relationships and to our daily bread.

Since I have battled all my life with atopic eczema from birth to the present day, he taught me to thank God for my skin and believe you me my skin rashes have abated and most people I meet comment on how much they envy my glow!

Age and wisdom do not necessarily walk hand in hand. Wisdom is a gift from Guruji at any age and in any space. Buddha also came to the realization that life is but an illusion at a very young age and he shared his truth with the world.

Amit also taught me the transient nature of all things except matters of the soul. He sets aside time for himself instead of being in company that engages only in gossip or small talk. When alone, he introspects and hears two voices within him; one that berates him and the other that shows him his own magnificence. He has learnt to turn up the volume of the voice that lifts him and so the other voice fades into insignificance. He is very compassionate towards others and rarely judges another's journey because he believes that what we send out returns to us manifold. Therefore, never curse or send out negative vibes to anyone. For those who have wronged us we must not seek revenge but send out positive vibes to them and leave the rest to Guruji. Injustice will never befall us when Guruji is by our side as no one is bigger or greater than Guruji. Today Amit, with Guruji's unending grace is one of the leading cosmetologists in Delhi city.

Amit resonates Guruji's voice in that He used to constantly advocate the significance of being positive as 'what we think we become.'

His satsang

“I was introduced to Guruji almost 12 years ago. I entered Empire estate or chota mandir, as we know it, clueless as to where Sanjeev and Anita didi were taking me as I sat amidst other devotees.

I was indeed very restless and did not know what to do as I sat and stared at Guruji thinking, ‘it’s just a man sitting and making a fool of people. Anita didi insisted that He is Shiva incarnate but at that instance, I begged to differ. I continued to stare at Him and in my head I said, ‘Yeh sab nahin hota.’ [this is not possible]

At that very moment Guruji’s glance turned towards us and He called out to all of us; Sanjeev, Anita didi and I.

As we bowed, He gave us His blessings and I again said in my head, ‘Yeh sab nahin hota.’ I was mimicking others only out of respect but no belief. Then he turned to me and said, ‘Sab kuch hota hai!’

Completely startled I stared back at Him with goose bumps all over my body. He went on to further state, ‘You are pure and changa [good] and I will always be with you.’ I did not understand what He meant and after some time He gave us permission to leave, as He knew I was restless and did not want to stay for langar parsad.

I pondered over it but convinced myself that His response to the dialogue in my head was nothing but a coincidence and I brushed it aside.

Time passed by; days, months and years and Guruji’s chapter was behind me. Then one night I had a dream where Guruji clearly stated that He is with me. Guruji had left His physical body by this time. I woke up startled, as the dream was clear and His voice very audible.

Sumi kumar held a satsang and my sister Aarti and I decided to go awhile to pay our respects. While driving we found ourselves in an area void of network so our cell phones lost all connectivity. Our car stalled where there were no streetlights and I was clueless about how to fix it.

I panicked as my sister was with me and I was getting the worst thoughts possible. Four boys completely drunk shouted obscenities at us from their car as they passed by and this in turn increased my nervousness and I almost broke down, as I did not know what to do despite my repeated attempts at making calls from my mobile.

I instructed my sister, Aarti to hide herself in the back seat as we were clearly in a danger zone. While sitting in the driver's seat I closed my eyes and saw Guruji stating, 'I am always with you.'

On opening my eyes I noticed a car in front of ours appear from nowhere and one bald man got out and offered to fix our car. As I was skeptical, I stayed in my car, locked it but opened the bonnet for him. After a few minutes, he came to my window and asked me to start the car and it did! I offered him money but he only smiled and left. I asked Aarti to come in front and she suggested we follow him and thank him properly and we drove at almost 100 to 120 km and yet no one was in sight.

After a point, I considered it a coincidence. Being a medical student, logic and sound reasoning had was my mental makeup.

I returned home, on sleeping I had a dream about the incident, and that bald person was wearing Guruji's chola. It was a few seconds dream and when I told Anita didi, she told me that Guruji had given me darshan and showed me that He is always with me to protect my family and me.

Little did I know that my journey with Guruji had started much before and today I walk the path paved out for me by Him.

I came from Kanpur to settle down in Delhi with my sister Aarti to establish my career from scratch with no home. I left behind a running clinic in Kanpur hence my family thought I had lost the plot. Against all odds, I moved to Delhi and my massi, who is like a mother to us, and lives between Delhi and Kuwait took my sister and I under her most nurturing wing. One evening when I was completely alone I got scared and Guruji came in my dream later and again repeated, 'Mein humesha tere nal ha.' [I am always with you.]

After that night, my life changed and I began taking Him seriously realizing that there are no coincidences. Everything was happening by His choice and I felt protected.

One morning I was praying while gazing into Lord Shiva's photo and wondering if Guruji is God then I must have His swaroop in my mandir. After three weeks, a friend of mine Kanika Saluja had a dream to make a portrait of Guruji and to present it to me, which she did. I felt weird keeping a picture, as my faith was still not absolute so I asked Him to make me feel His presence.

I fell asleep and at the break of dawn when I went into my mandir I could not see Guruji in the swaroop as it was covered in bhabooti and my home exuded His rose fragrance. Subsequently my head stopped making silly enquiries and my faith strengthened.

Every question of mine is answered pertaining to day-to-day living in either a satsang or a shabd. On one occasion, I was to leave for Paris but owing to some unavoidable circumstance, it was cancelled and I was terribly upset. I met a sangat in Guruji's ashram who was sharing her satsang and stated, 'Mano mango nahi.' [Accept and do not ask.]

I was still very disturbed and asked Guruji to turn things around so that I could go to Paris but lo and behold that night the terror attack that took place was sprawled all over the news. We were to stay in that very same vicinity but Guruji protected us by cancelling our trip.

From this, I learnt my most invaluable life lesson- to be in a state of constant gratitude and acceptance and not to complain when things are not happening according to my wishes. Leave it all to Him and He will never leave you and from this I learned the bigger word, 'Surrender.'

As Guruji stated that when one individual connects then one's family and staff are also blessed. My driver Ganesh has been working for us from the past 40 years, much before I was born. He was diagnosed with terminal carcinoma of the kidney and was given a month to live. I called him to Delhi and took him to bade mandir where he took chai parsad. He went for surgery in Delhi under Dr. Jain heading the nephrology center and today my driver

is cured of cancer. It is a miracle and miracles happen everyday with Guruji. Not to say that on coming to Guruji our problems will dissolve and we will have millions in the bank. According to our karmic journey, we will undergo the debts we need to clear but what happens is that Guruji protects us and minimizes the blow and we are able to breeze through the challenges. While breezing through I have observed and experienced the amount He pampers us. The human journey is not easy as two days are never the same; one day we may be ecstatically happy and the next as low as the ground we walk on. Conversely, He lifts us each time and fills our hearts with so much love that we are inspired to make something of our lives. In time, He reveals the purpose each one of us has on this earth plane and we are able to fulfill it most effectively and efficiently. Our lives are then never mundane or mediocre.

There is so much beauty and joy in being in His benevolent fold. He keeps us from harms way and even if there is someone trying to harm us, He alerts us about that individual's intentions. Therefore, as Guruji used to state, it is so important for our soul growth to keep our intentions pure in whatever work we engage in and not cheat anyone as our bad karma will rear its ugly head in one form or another. Most of my friends believe and worship Guruji and I consciously stay in a positive space. If there is any negative vibe, I move away as Guruji always guided us to stay positive, which is only possible if remove ourselves from negativity and eradicate it within us. However, He enables us to be better human beings only if we want to. In my view, there is no point in coming to Guruji if we are not to work towards becoming better people. I always pray to Him to enable me to serve others through my work and to treat all people fairly.

So sum it up; Guruji never encouraged us to leave our work or neglect our families and sit in a satsang. He wanted us to fulfill our worldly duties and responsibilities and then come to Him regularly and that might even mean on a weekly basis. As long as we remember Him at home, our work or wherever that is most important. To change our negative into positive is our true dharma. By changing the inner atmosphere the outer will always be conducive to our happiness no matter where we are. Inner cleansing is a vital that means to rid ourselves of all vices such as anger, bitterness, criticism, insecurities, jealousy and being judgmental towards others that then Guruji erases with time. I have personally learned to be and do the best I can so that

Guruji can be proud of me. I have awakened to my own weakness and always aspire to focus on my strengths. As a doctor, I have seen many instances where medicine takes a back seat and meditation changes the entire chemistry of an individual's body. Davayi [medicine] works better when we have His duaye[Grace]"

'We are made wise not by the recollection of our past but by the responsibility of our future.'

23

Sonakshi's Graduation

'Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.'

It was third week of May and I flew to New York to attend my younger daughter Sonakshi's graduation ceremony. I stayed with her at her apartment and I recall every morning, before the actual ceremony, I sat at her balcony that overlooked the stunning sight of the harbor with a mug of tea whilst listening to Guruji's shabads. The sight and sound of water has always had a healing effect on me and though I did break down everyday without exception I held onto the very fiber of faith that someday the pain of loss would evaporate. The scenes of my mom walking in her apartment, making tea, watching her favorite wretched serial on colors in the kitchen on full blast and then getting bedridden and never rising again all played before my eyes in NYC. My love for her and the sadness of her loss was overwhelming.

Amidst the sorrow, however, these moments with Sonakshi was the first sign of life, love and beauty after an endlessly long winter of mom's sickness and death. Sonakshi's lighthearted nature coupled with her wit and humor never fails to lift my spirits. Moreover, she has been exceptionally sensitive to my feelings and reads me like a book. The confidence she has drawn from her education has enabled her to venture into many diverse experiences and

over the years, she has initiated many trips abroad with me. By enlarging my canvas through travel, she has imparted new vigor and vitality to my spirit.

Currently, despite my hurt of losing my mom, as a mother and a friend to my daughter, I wasn't going to allow my gloom spill over onto one of her life's most important day; her graduation.

This was also His grace as many years ago when they were still children of perhaps six and five, Guruji had stated that He would be sending my girls abroad to study. It was inconceivable to my mind as my life was ruffled back then.

I was overjoyed at the accomplishments of my daughters; Anishka, my pride who graduated the year before and Sonakshi, my joy. They had accomplished much more than I had imagined. I prayed to Guruji that they both excel in their chosen career path. The cloud of uncertainty was bound to descend upon them on stepping out into the real world but they had a strong support structure emotionally and financially. Above and beyond they had Guruji's grace.

I stayed long after the ceremony was over; I probably needed the change of canvas. My sadness was everywhere like shattered glass but in my silent suffering it was faith that kept me stitched together.

I visited and stayed with Taj aunty in New Jersey and the day I arrived, she held Guruji's satsang. I had stayed earlier too and it was always very calming to be with her. The swing in her garden is where I parked myself every morning to have my morning tea and subsequently I settled on my laptop to write. In doing so, I stretched my vision to her well-manicured garden of many flowers in admiration and in the same vein, the apprehension that the thorns of my past may never stop pricking me. The chirping of the birds that flew from one tree to another reminded me of my own ability to fly from one place to another but I did not believe it then as my heart was griefstricken. I had no compass but one direction was certain and that was to be in the here and now and to recognize that the seed of thoughts I was sowing in Taj aunty's garden would blossom into tomorrow's reality.

My objective was to set myself new goals and though I was without a

direction, on seeing the leaves fall and grow, I knew nature was reassuring me of re growth and re invention. I do believe that wherever we are planted is where we grow so trusting Guruji as our divine gardener is imperative. He knows what to weed out and what seeds to sow for us. He unearths the deep-rooted faulty thinking that is responsible for the way we perceive the world and opens us up to fresh, renewed perspectives. Even those who wanted to bury our confidence and self worth were not aware then that we are Guruji's seed and were bound to grow and flower into the most beautiful God's creation.

I surged forward to attend a soulful satsang in New Jersey temple where I carried my hurt and enquiries about my mom's departure and how she was doing on the other side. The questions were in my head when a gentleman readily from the sangat stood up to share his satsang about losing his beloved mother the previous year and on grieving relentlessly Guruji gave this gentleman a vision of his mom. She appeared very happy and told her son to stop grieving, as she was in the best place possible with her Guruji! All this while that he narrated his satsang he was staring at me and sharing as if Guruji had prompted him to do so for my benefit. I was stunned at how prompt Guruji responds to our enquiries through satsangs.

With a broken spirit, I shared mine but I was brief compared to usual. I heard others to draw strength and was in awe of sangat's courage to disclose openly and honestly. Their resilience was inspiring to me. What has always astounded me is the elasticity of the human spirit. No matter how deep the waters Guruji teaches us to swim and to come afloat. Battles are not only fought on battlefields but also in the soul.

And as He said, 'Nanak dukhiya sab sansar.' People everywhere of different caste creed or faiths carry their burdens. As it is said, wedding albums may appear perfect but the actual marriages are far from. Family pictures too are a joy to view but the story behind them is sometimes sad and damaged. Behind the radiant smiles, the eyes often reveal a different tale. Therefore, compassion towards people is essential and then to guide them towards the light is the greatest service any of us can ever do. Guruji is for everyone so to share and care enough about people means introducing them to Him and not denying Him. I observed a few sangat who would state, 'Oh but we don't tell anyone about Guruji. It's our space!'

We are not aware of the burdens people carry, the best way to help others is by introducing them to Guruji, and then His grace takes over. Wounds heal, anger abates, and one's reactive nature lessens as we awaken to our flaws and without a single dialogue, our relationships improve. This and more; some tangible and other intangible blessings are gained as He irons out the crinkles of our karmic garb.

Taj aunty in New Jersey had a natural instinct to wrap me in the warmth of her affection. Her entire life was an inspiration to me. I was in awe of the fact that she headed a bank there, supported both her sons whilst having raised them single handedly with a joie de vivre that can only be ours when Guruji emits the rays of His love onto our lives.

She has connected many people to Guruji and by sharing her experiences; she lends hope to others and often the answers they seek. So do share and do care, as your goodness will multiply. The third law of motion is also active in our lives. As Newton said 'For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Martin Luther king said, 'Not everyone can be famous but everyone can be great because greatness is determined by the service that you do.' So aim to do service through whatever gift God has given you to serve the world and that equals success. Change your paradigm to service with whatever gift you have; Mark Zuckerberg and all the great people have given to the world in the form of service through their word. By doing the right thing, the right things will come into your life and the significance you bring through that service is ever lasting.

We are all similar struggling with similar issues be they financial, emotional or physical. We are all part of a collective destiny and shared humanity.

We are connected to the source of all that is and all that is possible and all that is possible is possible for us.

We are spiritual beings having a human experience and on coming to Guruji and being blessed endlessly by Him we aspire to fulfill the highest, truest and excellent expression of ourselves as human beings.

He gives us a vision even if He does not share His plan or His timing. He steers us and though He is in the driver's seat, He gives us a chance to claim our power as a passenger. Choose to do the right thing and to be the right person even against the odds because eventually it will pay its dividends. I return to the statement made earlier; assist others and introduce them to Guruji as by doing so Guruji takes over, particularly, if their time to connect is right. That only He knows.

Ram Dass once said. 'We are all just walking each other home.'

24

Guruji Launches my Book

Home is where the heart is.

Now that Anishka and Sonakshi had graduated, I was not sure of my place of domicile. The most obvious move was to return to Delhi, as both my daughters were more likely to gravitate towards the city than Manchester. They were born in England, raised in Delhi and educated at the British school from the primary level.

Anishka, immediately, after graduation signed up for programs that were to benefit the underprivileged in different parts of the globe, from Kenya to Cambodia to Peru so she was on her most commendable path. My prayers to Guruji were to keep her under His protective umbrella while she fulfilled her purpose.

Sonakshi, on the other hand, stayed in New York and got a job in merchandising at Macy's, the world-renowned department store. Both were making their mark in their respective fields and I still had time to return to Delhi to start over in a sense as it was after five years.

As Sonakshi's graduation gift, we went to Miami for a few days. Sonakshi and I went parasailing and that was my first ever. Anishka and her father stayed on the ground as they had both experienced it earlier. I prayed to Guruji to

enable me to brave it out as I have always had the fear of heights but once I was high up Sonakshi and I chatted in the air!

My filmmaker friend, Deepa Mehta connected with me one fine afternoon in Miami. What she said to me was strange, inexplicable and yet made perfect sense.

'Anita, I've never met your mom but she came in my dream that was crystal clear. She told me to tell you to take care of her shawls. She wants you to wear them and enjoy them. Does she have a lot of shawls?'

'Yes she does!' I responded startled and baffled by this.

'Well there you go and I know it sounds strange but I've been trying to call you to tell you this and also that she loves you very much.'

A sizeable chunk of emotion stuck in my throat by her last statement and I fell silent. Guruji knew I needed constant reassurance.

'Anyway my dear!' she continued 'When are you coming over to stay with me in Toronto?'

'I'm going to plan soon. Perhaps next year with Guruji's grace.'

Before she hung up, she commented casually, 'By the way, I simply love your latest book! When are you planning to release it?'

'Not sure! I'm looking for someone to release it.' I said

'I'll do it! It is a hilariously accurate story about Delhi High society and I simply love the title. I love everything about it! Let's release it in September. I'm in Delhi around then.' Concluded Deepa.

She lightened my heaviness in more ways than one; firstly conveying a message from mom and then willing to, most graciously, release my debut fiction, 'Delhi Anything goes.' This was my third book, after 'Turning the Page' and 'Divine light.'

I went ahead and wrapped myself in mom's shawls on returning to U.K that felt like I was wrapping her love around me. They kept me warm with her

blessings.

I cleared some of her clothes and donated them to a local charity. Thereafter I held a satsang at her place and I noticed the sangat had grown in numbers. Guruji was touching many lives and I was pleased to witness it not only in my hometown but also across England. A friend of Rakhi Gupta, Alka, shifted from London to Leicester where she initiated the satsangs there. There were others in Birmingham, Liverpool, and Newcastle and of course London. Guruji enabled people to branch out by reinstating their jobs, transferring them to cities and towns where He felt needed satsangs. Many people were chosen by Him to do the needful and consequently their lives had taken on a new meaning.

I made a brief visit to Delhi to release my debut fiction, 'Delhi Anything Goes.' I stayed with Sanjeev and my badi mom [my massi] who had enveloped me in their love. Whenever people shower me with their love I feel it is Guruji loving me through them, be it family, friends or sangat in general. The respect we draw into our lives is His grace and when People adulate us on our achievements it is Guruji's meher [Grace] that they are praising. He is the one who has groomed us and given us the life that is most fulfilling and admirable. The more we immerse ourselves in His Grace by living by His teachings the more gratifying life becomes and we become a beacon of light for others. On seeking His light, we become a speck of His light. We can only give what is within us but if we lack energy, good health and spirit then we do not have much in terms of contributing to the world. Guruji once said to me, 'Vajan lose kar, Kat ka, walk kita kar aur apni sehat da dyan rak.' [Lose weight, eat less, walk regularly and take care of your health.]

When we are healthy and happy within ourselves that is precisely what we exude, hence it begins with us, our self image and self worth and subsequently travels out. He taught us without doubt to be pure at heart and strong in spirit and that is precisely what I was aspiring to.

'Ahem or vehem mein twade dhoor karn aya ha!' Superstitions and Arrogance [or ego is what I have come to dispel in you.]

When we truly place our ego aside knowing that, it is 'All Him' then 'He fills our cup until it spills over.'

The book launch was blessed as innumerable sangat, family and friends came to bless and congratulate me. Anishka shared a moving speech and after which Deepa Mehta shared her sentiments. My brothers Sanjeev, Ajay and his wife Selena all supported and encouraged me. Above all, I thanked Guruji, my mom and dad for their blessings.

Whilst the media clicked pictures, someone nudged me on my shoulder and lo and behold, it was the handsome masterchef, Vikas Khanna who popped in to surprise me. I met and befriended him a few years ago and how he connected to Guruji is another story.

I was truly overwhelmed by the response the book had received and it was an occasion never to be forgotten. Anishka and I glowed with adulation and an achievement that was beyond our expectation.

Tu Rab ka ho ja wo sub ko tera kar dega. [You become God's; He will make everyone yours.]

My mother's presence was very evident in the launch, as the perfection in which it was managed had to be the blessing of my parents and the larger hand of Guruji.

Each one of us is layered by multiple beliefs instilled in us as children and the conditioning usually hampers our progress but tonight the self-doubting ones I shed. I felt more confident within myself and was ready to set new standards and beliefs that were not influenced by others opinions. I was open to trusting my instincts and creating new thoughts that are actually our most valuable emotional currency. This directly affects our life so building a healthy emotional empire is possible when we make the right choices that make us feel more fulfilled and content. The swirling thoughts and beliefs within us belong to us and once we take responsibility for them we change them with Guruji's guidance and grace. All of this serves our goals and dreams.

Love is this fluid and free energy requiring an environment in which it can expand, contract and flow. It is born from an unfiltered unconditional essence that is accepting, compassionate, passionate and kind. To

experience this love within the world we must embody this quality of thoughts and beliefs that then manifest into our world. We need to fall back in love with the essence of love within ourselves and then we have healthy loving relationships with each other.

Soon after the glorious evening, I headed to bade mandir where Anishka accompanied me. We sat, meditated and consumed the blessed langar. The simplicity of the dishes never taste so good at home and yet here it was simply delicious as it was divine.

It was my time to return to England and to take a call on my future and the future of mom's apartment. I asked Guruji to lend me clarity.

Courage is the ingredient I needed to add to my plate of change. Faith was not the problem as I had ample of that and as the belief goes; we are twice armed when armed with faith.

Anishka and I bowed before Guruji before we embarked on our respective journey ahead. I noticed a glow of certainty on her face as I embraced her and wished her well. Guruji had clearly transformed all her fears into faith and seeing her, I was inspired to achieve what she had.

We may not have it all together but together we have it all.

25

Lost and Alone

All I knew is that I need not be afraid of the unknown since wherever I went Guruji was going with me.

Unforgettable was the evening as the winds were exceptionally callous as they tapped hard on mom's apartment windows and the skies turned from light grey to dark charcoal around 4pm. It was typically winter except gloomier as it was the first one after mom left. The apartment had so many questions in its emptiness and I was still trying to sort out all her belongings that she had needed while on the earth plane. Now she did not need any of it and some of it she wanted me to enjoy and I decided I would. Her exquisite shawls and saris were timeless and could be worn by my daughters and I. We are all custodians of possessions for the next generation and safe guard things that our loved ones left behind for us. To value is imperative but to be attached is not.

It was cold and drab and I wrote a note to mom. 'Mom, where and how are you? My heart is heavy with wanting to see you even if it is just once to know that you are fine now that the garb of sickness is dropped. I try but I cannot convince myself that I am over your suffering. I am still living it. Please give me a sign; anything that will make me go on.

In this phase of profound grief, I must not fail to appreciate and express my

gratitude to the incredible support of our Guru family. Guruji has ensured a caring sangat family by our side during the thick and thin of our lives. Sangeeta Dutta, my childhood friend with whom I learnt many activities including badminton and judo rang my doorbell and asked 'Do you want to do something?' I asked her if that something could be going for a walk and talk. She readily agreed as we both ventured down Dunham Park, an English heritage site with deers and a quaint café that offers the most delectable home cooked broth.

As we sat, I spoke about mom profusely and then toward the end partially about Guruji and Faith. I could barely drink the soup that I would have otherwise relished. Everything seemed to have lost its flavor. I had taken her death very badly as the grief tore at the very fibers of my heart and the memory of yesteryears was as fresh as five minutes ago.

I still wear my good memories of her like a favorite piece of jewelry. I remember her with the deepest kind of understanding, wisdom and respect for an extraordinary woman. Morning would break eventually when there was no pain but only the pleasure of her memory. I guess dawn breaks when you least expect it to.

Meanwhile my childhood friends in Manchester resisted me loosening my grip on England for good whilst tightening my knots back with India. I reassured them that I would go with the flow and see where Guruji took me. I needed to trust the future. There was nothing else to turn to!

I left for Delhi that month, November and my first port of call was Guruji's ashram. On bowing to Him, I rested my tired head before His gaddhi and immediately felt at home. I knew I did not need to ponder where home was anymore, this was it; I wanted to live here and release my final breath exactly here too, at His lotus feet. The British fresh air has been my favorite ever since but this superseded every place I had ever experienced. Unique in structure and serenity this is the ultimate solace for anyone who enters here. After imbibing the shabads, eating the langar with all its curative powers I was filled with the most pleasing feeling of love and security. I was enclosed in His fold of love and on making my exit, I felt light in mind, body and spirit. I was elevated with the life force that I was sure would make me shine again. Guruji had enveloped me in His warm blanket of love and caring. On walking

out, I met Abhishek Banerjee who often does the joru ki seva. [service for taking shoes.] He spoke about losing his mom to cancer and Guruji reducing the intensity and duration of her suffering. He had been given her a chance to shower every morsel of love and affection on her. Listening to him, I realized that Guruji had given me a second chance to reacquaint with my mom and to shower my love on her too.

Abhishek's satsang in his words

'Your Guru chooses you and never the other way around.'

The circumstances and the incident, which made me meet my Sadguru, has proved this age old saying to be very true.

It was the first week of March 2009 when my mother, who in her late 60's was taken ill. We took her to the hospital where she was diagnosed with advanced bronchial pneumonia and her immunity was compromised. Later a biopsy confirmed stage 4 Lymphoma, cancer that attacks the lymph nodes of our body. She looked frail and we were terribly worried. My entire world came crushing down in a single instance. I was at my wits end and I silently cried before the photo of Lord Shiva in my house as I worshipped him from childhood (thinking back now all the dots connected).

Coincidentally, there was another patient in the same ICU whose family were connected to Guruji for years. Though we never spoke, we acknowledged each other on meeting in the corridor outside the ICU. There was yet another family there, whose mother was in the ICU on the ventilator for over a month and the doctors doubted her recovery. Her daughter Mona had just started going to bade mandir a week back through another sangat.

Another week elapsed and the progress of my mother was very slow. On one particular day, I was feeling very depressed and standing alone at the corridor outside the ICU; Mona Aunty offered to take me to a place where she was positive my mother would get better. It was Guruji's Mandir but being a cynic, I declined by stating that I just did not believe in Gurus owing to their reputation. She insisted that this was different and unlike any ashram or mandir that she had been to.

Somehow, I changed my mind and I now know it was Guruji's will and I agreed to go with her family. By this time, the sangat's family [who had taken Mona and her family initially to the mandir] had taken their father home from the hospital. It was like Guruji had directed our destinies in such a manner that our paths crossed for just that one week for us to meet and go to Bade Mandir to receive His blessings and love.

Rajeev Narula uncle (sangat) took me to the mandir from the hospital. As I got down from my car in the parking lot, I smelled a strong fragrance from nowhere. Even Rajeev uncle smelled it and asked me if I could smell something. I told him in my blissful ignorance that it seemed as if he had poured the entire perfume bottle on himself that evening. Rajeev uncle smiled and told me that it was not his perfume but Guruji who was blessing us with His fragrance. I in my lack of wisdom took it in jest. I was not aware of Guruji's omnipresence in our lives!

On entering Bade Mandir, peace permeated me and then I saw Guruji's swaroop for the very first time. I could not control my emotions and wept silently before Him as I sat in the hall. After having langar, I returned to the hospital and around midnight as I stretched my legs outside the ICU where my mother was, I smelled the same fragrance, stronger than before and this time there was not a single soul around. I desperately wanted to understand where the fragrance was coming from but there was no rational explanation and I finally realised that Guruji with His infinite kindness was blessing me.

My mother was discharged from the hospital the following day making a rapid recovery from her infection. Coincidentally and equally miraculously, Mona Aunty's mother began recovering and after an incredible 45 days, she was taken off the ventilator and discharged. This was again Gurujis grace as the doctor had given up hope.

My mother's fight with cancer persisted for another four years as this cancer compromises a person's immunity making them prone to infections. In those four years, Guruji gave my mother and my family the strength to fight and be positive. Guruji exuded His fragrance whenever my mom had to be hospitalised, which was generally once a year. From 2009, Guruji has been my biggest support.

Unfortunately, my mother passed away in 2012 and I was disillusioned as I was hoping for a full miracle and recovery for her. I was angry with my Guru and used to question why he took my mother when he knew she was the reason I started going to Him, for her wellbeing. I told Him that until he called me I would not go to Bade Mandir.

Guruji had His ways of getting me back on track and being the All merciful Supreme power that He is He spoke through His sangat. I was asked to attend a satsang that I did. Over there a sangat spoke about Guruji taking Samadhi and the events of that time. Slowly, realisation dawned on me that Guruji was telling me that death is inevitable but Guruji makes the timing and the circumstance better. As Guruji would say that when you are in Bade Mandir, 'Aapkey karm kat jaatey hai jab aap Guruji ke sharan mein aatey ho aur aapko moksh milta hai' so that in the next birth you are unburdened by the baggage of your past lives. I realised that Guruji had taken my mother to give her a better afterlife and this was the message He conveyed through various people.

He has bestowed many blessings on us and in every step of our lives now, we feel His subtle but sure presence.

Guruji, I bow my head before you and pray to keep us all at your lotus feet. Your love is constant and your kindness is limitless while your blessings are infinite! The limitation lies not in you but in our thinking, as our faith tends to waver from time to time because of our karma. Please bestow your blessings on your foolish children who would be lost without you. So hold our hand till forever!"

26

Blessed Wedding

Doubts are, forever, obstacles that inhibit our entry into the kingdom of belief.

It was first week of December and Astha Chopra [Now Astha Passi] was getting married in Delhi and Guruji literally took me under His wing as I had the blessing of staying with our dear Sudha aunty who played mother to me when I ached for mine. I had recently given my Panchsheel home for rent and on doing so felt lost. More than being lost, I needed emotional healing hence Sudha aunty held the very fibers of my being together until I could walk again.

An old sangat, Anita Sud's son, Anmol and his wife took my home on rent and they were gracious enough to revamp the deteriorated state of my home that was in direct reflection of my heart. They cleaned it up and made it a livable space.

I had never met them and I still had not after they began living there until later. They came through another Sangat brother and angel of mine; Anish Channa and without a hiccup of hesitation I asked him to just go ahead and do the needful. Who can fulfill all your lease formalities, clean up your home and in parts even renovate the place unless it is Guruji's meher.

Astha's wedding was a box office hit. Before the pomp and show, there was the most soulful satsang in Guruji's darbar. Her wedding was all His meher [Grace]

My younger brothers, Sanjay, kajal and their children, Sanjeev and I planned to celebrate Christmas and New Year in Hong Kong. Amit also joined in whilst my girls had taken off with their father.

Sanjay was extremely close to our mom and I could sense his pain but we were both made of very strong and resilient fibers and had decided to let our hair down for Christmas and New Year.

No vacation is ever complete without Guruji's satsang so Sanjeev, Amit and I over lunch, one day, shared our experiences. We drew the conclusion that our inner and outer landscapes had undergone a huge transformation thanks to His infinite grace. Each one of us encounters inner turmoil at some point in our lives but Guruji has made us aware of it so that we can heal it. Sometimes people ignite the fire of resentment by bringing out the worst in us. Either people get you or they simply prefer to forget you. I, for one, have ceased to prove myself to anyone by simply being less reactive and more proactive towards my own direction that makes a positive impact on people.

I was so different earlier with longing love and approval in my life and not accepting myself because of the rejection of near and dear ones. Life was a series of disappointments particularly felt in relationships where compatibility is taken for granted because of the very nature of it.

I have learned, though it has taken me decades to arrive at this place, that you need to set your own standards, be true to yourself and work on being the best glorious version of self. Light attracts light. Your vibe attracts your tribe. Guruji brings you to the realization that change your inner life and your outer will take care of itself hence my aspiration is be aligned to Guruji's values and the rest just follows.

Overall, it is imperative to send love and light to those who do not understand you particularly if they are related to you since resentment will only turn denser and you will attract them in your next life if you have not let go. More importantly, resentment in the body turns toxic causing

illnesses. Resolve all your issues by cutting the cord and sending them healing love and light. Aim to detach so that you are able to travel light.

Send light, travel light, be the light.

The word happiness is redefined after coming into Guruji's fold. It is no longer about just doing, getting, seeking and achieving and then allowing that fleeting and elusive emotion to cause joy and then disappointment.

Happiness is no longer a mere mood or feeling but an optimal state of being and a way of interpreting the world. While we cannot change the world, we can change the way we look at it and make small but significant differences by contributing to its peace and harmony. Each of us who are in Guruji's fold have learned to do service with whatever resources we have and that collectively shifts the consciousness of the universe leading to a higher vibration.

I sat at the balcony of my hotel room, closed my eyes to bring awareness to my breathing and imagined Guruji sitting in the midst of my heart. I felt a calm sensation wave through my body as I taught myself the art of mindfulness.

I also became mindful of the toxic emotions of resentment and remorse that was eroding my sense of well-being over the years. I with Guruji's grace let them go and after mastering the art of forgiveness, I was able to find room for happiness that was no longer fleeting. I found a reservoir of joy within me that Guruji uncovered and today I tap into it whenever I invite it. He ensures that happiness never eludes my grasp and that my positive attitude enables me to weather challenges that used to be overwhelming. There are sometimes circumstances we cannot control but we can control their effects on our well-being. Much of our happiness quotient attributes to genetic endowments and a small amount to circumstances. However, 40% of it is in our hands. Hence, Guruji used to say, 'khush raya karo.' Even small efforts to enhance mood can have cascading effects. Positive thoughts keep you in harmony with the laws of attraction and abundance and we can only give out what we have inside.

When we respond to hatred with love, we diffuse the former and generate peace. Happiness is a matter of choice like most things in our lives. It is a way

of being, almost a skill that is cultivated and enables us to tap into our higher levels of consciousness to find insight, peace and inspiration. In a world where our worth is measured by our material gains Guruji had taught me that just by doing more I was becoming more and it certainly didn't mean I was getting a lot more done. It was all about quality over quantity and movement was not to be confused with progress.

Seek and Guruji will find ways for you to be who you aspire to be but ensure you seek to be someone Divinity feels proud to call you His own.

27

Miracles Galore

Things happen to all of us but the only things that matter are the ones that happen in us.

I was in Delhi until end of May and my intent of staying under Guruji's sharan via Sudha aunty was to heal my soul. There was plenty of 'me time with Guruji' that rendered me reflections into my inner life and the more I introspected the more awareness surfaced. The more awareness, the more realization of the amount of work I still needed to do inwardly.

Honesty is certainly the best policy particularly when it comes to our own character and we all have flaws. I was overly sensitive at this point and I absorbed the energies around me too easily hence it was important to center my core, build my confidence and courage quotient and to oversee who and what did not serve my own progress.

In time, with the right intent things started leaning in my favor when I dedicatedly and determinedly began working towards them. Guruji had allotted me the role of sharing satsangs so I got exposed to many different energies around the world. Ordinarily, I was uplifted on sharing but on rare occasions, I felt drained without an obvious reason.

It is important to understand that those who have met Him and share their

satsangs are no better or superior than those who have not met Him or who do not share satsangs. Everyone is allotted a role according to his or her innate ability and talent. Guruji was well aware that I was incapable of standing in the kitchen slicing vegetables to contribute to the divine langar hence He said, 'tu satsang kita kar. Loka nu das ki rab ki honda hai.' [You share your experiences and tell people about divinity.]

The point is each of us has a talent and mine has always been the word and since I was a child I wrote poetry, taught myself the various fonts and bought my first calligraphy set at the age of 11. I began teaching calligraphy from the age of 22 and trained my students to become teachers too. Later I went on to write books. With the highest blessings of Guruji, my mom and dad have enabled me to reach great heights with the innate talent of a 'word.'

Each one of us is endowed with an aptitude and Guruji enables us to hone it and to serve the world through it. It is important to take complete responsibility towards its excellence. It is our purpose as well as our duty and it is that which comes most natural to us will give us the deepest sense of fulfillment.

We each have a mission and it is through our work that we are able to inspire others to do the same. Hope breeds hope.

Satsangs, therefore, are a culmination of many hearts and hands coming together and each one plays a significant role. We are each a piece of the same puzzle and on coming together, we make the whole. Some are visible and others are behind the scenes. Some stand at the gate and others in parking lots. Each individual makes the picture complete.

Sevadar satsang- Pooja Prashar Aunty

'Agam Agochra tera Ant na paaya'

'We often hear about miracles but perhaps all of us have actually experienced them but have not acknowledged them to ourselves. We often pass the experiences we have as a coincidence but nothing is. Guruji soaks us in His love and grace and what was otherwise not meant to be happen. That is what a miracle is so having Guruji in our lives is the greatest miracle.

I am so fortunate to have experienced many miracles. My husband and I are from a middle class family and our dreams and aspirations have been modest. I was married in my late 20's and our first priority was to plan a baby immediately but who knew what was in our destiny. In the second year of my married life, I began consulting doctors and found there were some complications. In the 4th year, I conceived but had a miscarriage. My husband and I were both devotees of Lord Krishna and Sai baba and we visited Shirdi every year.

After struggling for 7 years, we decided to go for an IVF treatment, which placed a heavy demand on our finances and caused much anxiety. As we have to endure our karmas, my IVF treatment failed and my husband lost hope of becoming a father. In addition, we faced a financial crisis. It was the most testing time of my life and I was spiralling down into depression.

One day, I received a call from an old friend to visit bade mandir to which I replied, 'I am tired of visiting Mandirs, Gurudwaras, Masjids and Doctors and I've lost the hope of becoming a mother' and I hung up the call. Later, I met her and she shared her experiences with me and asked me again to visit the Bada Mandir.

On 21st September 2011 (Thursday), I went to Bade Mandir for the very first time and on entering it, I drew immense peace sitting in the main hall. We had chai prashad and then I heard the sound of a newborn baby crying. I looked everywhere but could not see any newborn baby but I heard the voice again. I did not understand His message or His indication. After consuming langar, we returned home. I went back to Bade Mandir and it was a Monday so Guruji made me listen to few satsangs of the sangat present there through which, I learnt two prime lessons, 'Surrender' and 'Maango nahi Maano' [don't ask only accept]

After six months, when I understood the meaning of Surrender, I prayed to Guruji "Please Baksho merko and mujhe maaf karo aur hum dono ko sharan mei lo"[Please have mercy on me, forgive me and take us both in your fold.] I frequently visited bade mandir and took langar prashad as I felt it was healing my problems.

Within a year, I conceived again and was overjoyed believing it was my Guruji's blessings and I would be able to sustain this pregnancy. Nonetheless, on visiting the doctor, I discovered that the pregnancy was again on the weaker side and there was only 30-40% chances for it to sustain. After hearing this, I was shocked and lost my faith except my husband advised me to continue visiting Bade Mandir and to have langar prashad because eventually there will be light at the end of the long and dark tunnel.

One day, I was having langar prashad and suddenly I shrank in excruciating pain. I went to the washroom and had a miscarriage again. After having my DNC I went to Bade Mandir to complain to Guruji about my miscarriage. I only asked Him one question, 'After this darr, which darr (place) should we both visit?'

In the year 2012, Guruji blessed me with His sewa at Jhulla on Saturdays. Rajeev Uncle was the coordinator and was not aware of my reason for visiting the Bada Mandir. He gave me the sewa to guide the sangat. I was quite happy to do the sewa and had unexpected experiences during that time; His darshan, His fragrance and His presence. It was a beautiful feeling. Thank you Guruji.

One day, I thought, 'Bohot hogyi sewa, let me sit and meditate' and Rajeev uncle consented to it. It was 8th March, Women's Day (Saturday) and I was running late and en route I wondered who would be that blessed individual who will offer bhog prashad to Guruji. On sitting in the meditation hall, I was not at peace so I went and sat in the corner of the Rangoli. Suddenly, Rajeev Uncle called out to me and I thought he was calling me for sewa. I rose with a sad expression thinking, 'Kya Guruji aapke paas baithne ko hi nahi milta.' However, Rajeev uncle took me towards the kitchen and handed me Guruji's bhog prashad. I was in tears and while shivering went towards Guruji. As I entered and sat down with folded hands I heard a voice, 'Jholi aage kar,' I could not understand the voice and again I heard 'Jholi aage kar' and He said again, 'Ja tera Kalyan kita, aj toh count kar – exact 9 months baad teri jholi bharr jayegi.'

On 16th November 2014, God blessed us with a baby girl.

One day, I was sitting with my 18-month-old daughter and was listening to

Shabads and doing Sewa and suddenly I heard, 'Tu bhool gayi.' I asked Guruji 'kya.' He said 'Tu bhool gayi.'

"8th March se 16th November 2015, count kar" and yes it was exactly after 9 months. He also told one of the sangats that the miscarriage that happened earlier after eating langar prashad happened because it was not a normal child. It was an abnormal baby because of its karmas. Now I will give them "inni mithi cheez ki duniya dekhegi."

No doubt, Guruji blessed us with his meetha prashad whose nickname is Mithi and she is known as Mandir+ Guruji ki beti. I now live in a state of immense gratitude and grace and I do not take anything for granted. This has also taught me that God in the form of Guruji is very much present in our lives who instils in me the desire to be a better person by being more patient, tolerant and compassionate. It is important to understand that whatever happens is for a bigger and better reason so be grateful for that experience too.

Shukraana to Guruji for His immense blessings and to Rajeev Uncle for guiding us throughout.

Gratitude is the most powerful prayer.

28

Prayer is the Key

Prayer is the key to opening up new worlds.

I attended Guruji's satsangs regularly with the intent to heal my soul and to surrender all my fears and uncertainties. One day on arriving at bade mandir and bowing to Guruji I stated, 'Guruji, I remember you telling me not to fear but I've never been able to manage it so here, I surrender my fear to you.' On more occasion than once He commanded, 'tu dariya nah kar.'

Guruji's sangat was growing exponentially world over and bade mandir had turned into a sea of new and unfamiliar faces. Each face either was exuding His grace or was fraught with worry. Some arrive at His darbar in a state of ill health or are susceptible to a continuous stream of diseases and infections. I walked around Shiva's fountain and on looking up at the clear sky; I envied the birds that flew freely without the need for chemicals and medications. They were free of anything artificial or synthetic whereas our lives were anything but natural. In today's world, particularly we heat up our brains with the radiation from mobile phones, undergo botox, replace our rotten teeth with implants, toxify our bodies with the polluted air, and consume chemical ridden food and much more that removes us from nature. Guruji had stated, 'Sab cheez vich milavat hai.' [There is adulteration in everything today.]

For a few tranquil hours I felt detoxed here as I did not stare into my mobile, had access to clean air, pure water, organic food and healthy vibrations void of any negative feeling. I could regulate and moderate my emotions here and feel completely and utterly protected and secure without any eyes forming judgments. All were on their journey with Guruji where He protected, corrected and directed our lives.

On meeting a familiar face in Guruji's ashram we feel overjoyed. As I walked around Shiva's fountain, I met Akshaye Pahuja whose satsang in his words is as follows.

"I came under Guruji's Divine wing in 2010. Since moving to Delhi, I was getting indications from various friends and relatives to visit Guruji's Bade Mandir but my analytical mind prevented me from doing so. I am very spiritual and since childhood was a staunch believer of Lord Ganesha and nothing on earth could make me believe that a human being could be God (unless I experienced His divinity)

My journey goes back to a Monday morning in 2010. I had a meeting scheduled in Vasant kunj and while driving saw a car with Guruji's sticker, which back then was a rare sight. On seeing that car, the last three calls from Guruji instantly filled my mind. The first was through my wife's friend who spoke about His grace and asked me to visit His Mandir to experience His surreal divinity. The next came through a friend who was blessed by Guruji and the third and the last one was through a business associate where at his office I saw Guruji's swaroop for the first time. Something stirred in me and though it left me mesmerized and I knew there was something extraordinary I did not quite grasp what. That person shared the the timings and directions of bade mandir and I knew that was the day I was to visit Him and I did so without Google Maps and only verbal directions. As I entered, my logical mind was instantly silenced and immediately I saw Ganesh ji and my joy knew no bounds. I entered the darbar hall, with heavenly bliss that soaked my soul. The peace and serenity I experienced is beyond words. That day, I knew this was my ultimate destination and there was nothing beyond this.

My spiritual journey with Guruji continues under His divine shield and supervision and now my life is completely dedicated to our Mahashiv, our Guruji as I have handed the reins of my life to Him. Whatever I experience;

the good and not so good, I consider it as His prashad.

I never ask Him for anything because I have the confidence that whatever I need He gives me. His decision is always beneficial and I have learnt to walk with Him and trust that wherever He takes me is for my own advancement. I am learning to surrender and have absolute faith in Him. I feel He has always kept me on a bed of flowers in spite of my worldly problems.

Once we are in His sharan we need not harbour any fear as He Himself chaperons us through and beyond life. If we wish for His grace then we must learn to be worthy of it by being a good human being. We must watch our thoughts and deeds and be mindful of our actions. Knowing that Guruji lives in our hearts, we must always aspire for the best for others and ourselves. Guruji's words are the ultimate truth and whatever He indicates is bound to transpire. His blessings cannot be measured. There may be impending difficulties in our lives but He evades them and we remain oblivious to them. We are blessed as he has handpicked us. It is owing to our good fortune and good karma of previous birth that we are under His divine umbrella. I love my Guruji and know that He is always with me as He is the almighty. May everyone who reads this be blessed. Jai Guruji"

Akshaye has been able to align himself to the all knowing, all-powerful and all loving source of the universe. He rests in the feeling that the Supreme energy purifies and brings out the best in him making him humane, compassionate and a kind individual. From the depths of his heart, he has surrendered his needs, wants, fears and anxieties to the infinite power. He also rests in the feeling that he need not do anything alone as Guruji guides and guards Him all along. This renders him peace and keeps him in a state of acceptance, as he understands that delays are not denials. In time, he also witnesses his every painful story turning into an envious glory. In this space, he does not need Guruji to perform miracles as the greatest miracle is being in His divine fold. He knows that he is turning into the best version of himself and is living the best life made possible by our Guruji. This confirms the notion that we are coming to Guruji, to His ashram and regularly attending satsangs out of love and not the curiosity to witness some sort of a magic performance.

On returning to Manchester in May 2015, I parked myself in mom's

apartment.

My dear friend Mina Vadhera suggested we visit Mykonos, Greece for a few days to unwind and so it was. The Island that is known as, 'the island of the winds' with its sparkling deep blue Aegean seas is stunning and serene. Mina and I danced on the beach with people whilst sipping champagne and cocktails to music resonating across the seas and the shores of Mykonos. Afterwards we walked the cobbled streets through white washed alleyways to find the restaurant of our choice. Amidst these beautiful days, there were still questions on my future home.

'Where do I live now that mom is no more and what do I do with her apartment?' I asked.

'Your home is where your heart is and right now I believe its Delhi and only because of your daughters. Having said that, plan on returning to England as that is where you will blossom and people also miss your presence.' Replied Mina. 'And one thing you know....' She began 'Your true friends who you've known your entire life live here in England and you're so close to your brother Sanjay and your sister in law, kajal.

She struck a chord about my personal relationships and friendships that had not moved since I had in 1988. They were as solid as a rock. I had moved but they had not and in that respect, there was much to return to. Besides that, it was all so hazy until Guruji wanted me to gain clarity on the situation and then it would all fall into place.

No amount of introspection is done without Guruji participating in it! Whenever there is an internal dialogue with its many perspectives Guruji is the one lending me clarity and certainty and the confidence to forge ahead with courage and conviction.

On viewing the breathtaking sunset from the restaurant that overlooked the shimmering sea, I asked Guruji, 'Please lead the way Guruji. I'm lost!'

Within seconds, I experienced a whiff of His fragrance and I knew in my heart that He was going to walk me to my next phase.

29

Travel Blessings

I was exhausted from my travels when Astha and her husband Gaurav came over to my place where I had prepared dinner for them. Sitting on the sofa Gaurav asked casually if I would like to accompany them to Iceland.

With its many waterfalls, glaciers, hot springs, its blue lagoon and volcano lava and sand covering a vast area our trip was out of the ordinary. On striking a conversation with the taxi driver, we learned that there was no cancer in Iceland as their crops had no pesticides and the country was eco friendly.

Iceland was the first country in the world that had a political party formed and led completely by women

Iceland is considered the most peaceful country in the world according to Global Peace Index.

I was continually learning while traveling and it was all so fascinating. The diversity in cultures and their mindset was inspiring. Guruji had given me wings to fly the globe staying and soaking in the many different sounds and sights of His beautiful world. Wherever I went, I went with all my heart and being accompanied by Guru sangat enhanced the entire experience. I still have a thirst to travel more as I feel the need to experience God's beautiful creation first hand.

Next port of call was my sister in law Rittu's 50th birthday celebration in Ibiza. I have always found the island to have a calming effect on me even though it is popular for its party scene. For me it is about connecting with the water element and walking on the sandy beaches that elevate me. Ibiza was a dream with the family and after two wonderful nights of celebration, I flew to New York. Sonakshi had planned a road trip with Vivianna, her very dear friend and I. On setting foot in New York, I messaged Deepa Mehta and a few days later, I found myself on her side of the woods.

I flew to Toronto to spend three days with Deepa and her partner, which was incredibly heart warming as she soaked me in her love. One evening Deepa and her partner had a social commitment so I sat before the TV and watched every single movie of hers. Since I was alone I took the liberty of bawling, as most of her films were heart breaking. I did not shy away from releasing all my emotions that were instigated by her every story!

Prior to meeting with Deepa, I stayed with Anita Verma aunty and her family. The evening I arrived, they held the most divine satsang and the following day we spent the day at the Niagara Falls with some of the Canada sangat. What a delight to see and appreciate God's beautiful world with His devotees. We had the best time ever as amidst us there was Guruji's grace that exuded His love. The proof of that was the glow on our faces as we loved, laughed and appreciated the sight and sound of the Horseshoe Falls and the Bridal Veil Falls. It was truly phenomenal.

I first met Deepa some several years back when she was in Delhi releasing 'Midnight's children' with Salman Rushtie and I was literally forced to be there by my brother, Sanjeev, who said it'll be a change for me as I was jaded with all the radiation sessions. Without an ounce of energy, I went. Deepa and I meeting was no coincidence as we were meant to go to chota and bade mandir together and to become friends.

Even today, it is a joy to meet her and any relationship that Guruji ties, exudes sincerity and a lifelong fragrance. On returning to Canada, she held her very first satsang at her home in which Guruji's presence was evident as it always is.

I returned to New York and told Sonakshi how magnificent the Niagara Falls

were and that whet her appetite! She said, 'Mom I'm taking you right back and this time we'll all stay in a hotel just opposite the falls and we'll go in the boat and so it was. We set our journey into motion by road, stopped by a few vineyards and crossed the border to get to the other side into Canada. We experienced the falls in the boat where the Horseshoe Falls was up close and personal, feeling the mist and the thundering roar of the water. Since we were staying right opposite we returned in the evening to enjoy the light mist experience with illumination of the falls.

As the scenes of those times project before my eyes, I recall the magic in them and all of us were simply mesmerized even though I had just been there a week back! No matter how many miles I travel, Toronto is the one place I hope to return to. The vibe is pure, the people are simple, and simplicity, as we know, is the ultimate sophistication.

On returning to New York, I messaged the master chef, Vikas khanna and he invited me over to his restaurant Junoon.

He had prepared an excellently presented and most scrumptious Indian meal I have ever tasted. Each course was a piece of art on a plate.

I had taken Guruji's swaroop for him and he kept it alongside the others, which I had given him the first time I met him a few years ago.

Guruji plants thoughts into our heads. Back then, Om publishers were releasing Vikas khanna's book, 'Khanna sutra' and so I attended the event. Our eyes met but we could not speak, as he was signing autographs and was surrounded by the media. I left without congratulating him.

The following morning, Ajay Mago, the director of OM publishers called to ask if I wanted to meet Vikas in person and I agreed. I rang Sumi Kumar to accompany me and before leaving I went into my cupboard to extract my book, 'Turning the page,' Guruji's swaroop that I had drawn in calligraphy and Guruji's calendar.

On reaching Leela hotel where he was staying along with his mother we went to his room and on seeing Guruji's swaroop he hugged it and said, 'He is probably who I've been seeking all my life. Thank you for this and please share your experience.'

I shared with an emotion that brought a glow to my face and that love exuded profusely throughout the room charging it with Guruji's grace. Vikas was overwhelmed and he connected to Guruji. He immediately said that he would read the book on his flight back to NYC and he would place the calligraphic sketch outside the kitchen of his restaurant.

We all went to Bukhara restaurant in Maurya for lunch and he shared his magnificent journey about how his mother encouraged him from a very young age to do seva at the golden temple in Amritsar. He learned the significance of seva-simran-satsang from his mother. He was already God's child and was probably seeking a clearer and focused direction.

His temperament that was calm, composed and confident was inspiring. He knew exactly who he was and his personality needed no garnish. He was comfortable with his innate capabilities and his character. He was clearly very respectful and loving towards his mother and worshipped the ground she walked on. She was his goddess who had mentored him his entire life and he was successful owing to her blessings. Above, there is God to bless us and here on earth, we have parents and there are no greater blessings than theirs. Always treat them with love and respect and life is bound to be a smooth run.

There is known to be nine characteristics that facilitate learning and they are open-mindedness, self-awareness, tolerance, alert mind, and the ability to set goals, willingness to take risks, self-discipline, and the capacity to value, accept and undergo change.

All these attributes I recognized in Vikas and I learnt through his life experiences.

Behavior is a far superior a barometer than words.

As he reached the airport, Vikas, on checking in and going to the immigration he realized that he had left my book and swaroop at the check-in counter. He hurried back to fetch it when on the floor of the check-in counter was his green card! He had not realized that he had dropped it and so Guruji had called him back to collect it.

That is how we connected and how he connected to our master.

Love will not knock on your door unless you have it in your heart.

30

Toronto Treasures

I had it in my heart to go all out in my travels by engaging in diverse activities and to meet people from different spheres of life.

Abundance was the key word in my dictionary of faith as it expanded my platform of experiences with remarkable people. People Guruji was connecting me to overflowed with possibility and positivity.

I attended yet another satsang in Toronto after New York, which exuded His grace on His sangat. I met Meenu Chopra for a leisurely lunch where we discussed life, love, Guruji and His eternal grace. I had met Meenu earlier in Delhi too through Sudha aunty but wasn't acquainted with her until now and her satsang resonates mine in many ways and is deeply inspiring. We each find a glimpse of ourselves in another's story.

Meenu Chopra's satsang

I met Guruji in April 2005, a couple of years after I began getting panic attacks. My doctor prescribed anti depressants that supported me for the first few months but then the panic attacks crept up thereafter. I was dealing with a constant nagging feeling that I was going to die. I was 34 and my three children were very young so the thought of leaving them motherless broke my heart. To top it all, there were serious problems in my marriage and there

was minimal support or understanding from my husband. I desperately wanted to quit my marriage but could not financially support my children and both my parents had died so there was not any kind of maintenance available. I was deep into depression and needed help.

When the disciple calls, the Guru appears and so was the case with me. My support first came in the form of my brother who was a devout Radha Swami disciple. The concept of a Guru was very familiar to me because my mother was a strict Radha Swami follower and compelled me to attend satsangs as a child. Despite this, my belief in God was shaky because if I cannot see or hear Him then how I was expected to believe in Him. He lives inside us, I was told as a child but then how can I not feel Him if He is inside me too? Formerly, I was not interested in these questions but now I wanted to know. This understanding came through my brother who imparted the knowledge of the Guru and God. I started attending satsangs and read many books on spirituality. I understood that God takes the form of a Guru to help humans realize God and to achieve salvation. I also wanted a Guru and the only way was to get initiation or naam daan. I became a vegetarian, which was one of the requirements of the Radha Swami path to get initiation.

In 2005, I visited India to get initiation. I could have received it in Canada but I longed to meet the Guru in person for initiation by Guru Maharaj in Beas. This was my first trip to India alone and I was nervous taking my 5-year-old son. Everything fell into place and we were in Beas dera with a crowd of hundred thousand people. There were long lines and my turn finally came and I was screened by a sevadaar as part of the selection process. He asked if I was a vegetarian to which I answered yes. He then asked if I cook non-veg for my kids and I said yes. I was declined initiation as a result and I was devastated. I had come thousands of miles just to meet my Guru. I pleaded with him and told him I will die if I do not find a Guru. He said there was nothing he could do, as I needed to adhere to the rules. I felt like my life would be over soon.

I left Beas that same day not knowing what would happen now. How could I be so unlucky and was I not deserving of a Guru? These questions were running through my mind. On my return to my relative's place, I told my sister that I was turned away by the sevadaar. She reassured me that we will visit Guruji in Delhi and I had heard about Him from my other sister. I saw a glimmer of hope and went to Delhi after a week.

Getting to Empire estate was not an easy task as it took hours to get there and the sangat had already arrived. Within minutes of arriving, I was ushered by Sudha aunty to meet Guruji in His room. Guruji was lying on the sofa and I touched His feet. He told me to sit down and asked my name. "Connection di pahn hai?" [You are connection's sister.] He called my sister Connection. I responded in the affirmative. Then he asked me who was in my family and asked my husband's name which I answered. He then told the uncle sitting on the floor beside Him "Ainu heart da satsang sunaa" [Share the heart satsang.] As soon as He said that, I started crying and the tears would not cease to fall, as He knew precisely why I had come. Most importantly, He accepted me without any conditions. These were tears of gratitude and I knew I was going to be safe now because He would take care of me as my Guru. Guruji then told the uncle to share his aunty's satsang about Guruji curing her cancer. As I listened, I noticed the intense fragrance of roses in the room. After the second satsang, Guruji motioned me to go outside and sit with the rest of the sangat. My son had been sitting on my lap in Guruji's room and his hair had the same fragrance and so did my hands. I was in absolute awe.

After a few minutes, Guruji came out into the main hall after having changed into a chola [Divine attire] and sat on His gaddi. [Seat] I kept gazing at Him. It felt like a dream and I was there but not quite there. We had chai prasad and then it was time for langar and Guruji gestured for me to sit closer to the front of the room to have it. Afterwards Guruji said to one of the aunties sitting close to me, "Ainu heart da satsang sunaa". The aunty shared her satsang and it proved to me once again that Guruji knew of my fear of dying of a heart attack. I listened as others shared their satsangs and hoped we would spend the night at Empire estate to have more time with Guruji but our departure that night seemed imminent and soon we were to leave. I bowed before Guruji' to take His permission to leave and I rested my head at his feet for a few seconds. It felt at that moment that He had penetrated my soul and as I walked away from him, a wave of emotion filled me. I wept piercingly and did not have the strength to walk. He gestured to my sister to take me out and once outside; I composed myself but hesitated to leave Guruji. I went back inside to seek His blessings but as I was leaving, I cried again. Not the quiet hushed cries, but the ones heard when a child is pulled away from his mother. I did not know why I cried and in the next second, I was laughing loudly like the happiest person in the world. I, intermittently, cried and laughed and I thought I had gone insane! My brother-in-law said Guruji had blessed me.

That was my first meeting with Guruji and I met Him again a week later in

Baddi where He went for the inauguration of a college. I wished I had more time with Him before leaving India but there was no such opportunity. Soon I returned to Canada with renewed hope and confidence that my life would improve and it certainly did. I no longer had panic attacks and for the first time, I enjoyed life and my kids. I had lost my job in September 2004 but was not worried about my financial situation. After my severance and employment insurance ended, I came across a career exploration program through the Government of Canada. To my utter surprise, I was eligible and got approval to attend a full time government funded education program for a year. In addition, I would receive funding support while I studied. I knew this was only possible thanks to Guruji since I had already exhausted the employment insurance that is available to workers.

I commenced my studies in September 2006 and could not attend my niece's engagement in India. My husband attended it and met Guruji through my sister and I was hopeful that Guruji would bless my husband and my marriage improved. He met Guruji but did not connect with Him but I still hoped that one day he would.

In April 2007, I completed my studies, got a full time job and began earning the same salary as before. On May 31, my world crashed as Guruji had taken mahasamadhi. I did not know how my life would go on and who would look after me. I feared my panic attacks would return but I had read enough books to understand that Guruji had merely left his physical form; He was still with us in His unmanifested form. This understanding became real in the passage of time. In July 2007, unexpectedly, a recruiter for a job at another bank contacted me. They needed someone with my specific experience and expertise. I got the job in September 2007. The salary was 50% more than what I was earning, and higher than the target I had set myself to become financially independent from my husband. I opened a new bank account that allowed me to separate my finances from him. I did not know where these changes were leading me to but I had faith in Guruji to steer my life in the right direction.

The following year, my marriage was still on shaky ground. I had expected my husband to change after meeting Guruji as I had read some aunties' satsangs where their husbands changed for the better thanks to Guruji. That was not the case with me and I was torn between staying together and

ending the marriage. My husband quit his job in 2008, which placed further strain and doubt about our future together. Despite this, my faith in Guruji did not falter. My mental health was better and I was stable financially. I could finally leave him but I needed Guruji to decide what was best for me.

In March 2009, we visited India. My husband disliked Canada and had always wanted to return to India. Before leaving, I asked Guruji to help me decide about staying together or leaving. If we had a good time and did not get into conflicts then I would take it as Guruji's sign that our marriage would survive. Sadly, things did not go well and we fought often while there and upon returning to Canada, I asked for a divorce. It took me three years to make this decision, or for Guruji to give me the answer.

The next few years were extremely difficult as my husband refused to divorce. We fought frequently and I felt like a hostage to him. I prayed to Guruji to end this quickly for me to move on in peace. My husband ultimately agreed to divorce in 2012. This was nothing short of a miracle as he refused to leave the house and would not let me leave with my kids either. After we settled our finances and he moved out, I felt a relief like never before. I realized for the first time how restricted my life had been while married. I now understood why Guruji did not bless my ex-husband; we were destined for different paths.

Guruji blessed me tremendously by granting me good health, a stable job and pulling me out of a toxic relationship but I was missing something very important; love. I was deeply engrossed in my life as a wife and mother that I did not realize that love is important for our soul. I was not living; I was merely surviving the years while married. I wanted to live now and one day, while looking at old pictures of myself, I felt deep sadness and cried in front of Guruji's swaroop. I asked Him for love because I did not want to die without experiencing it. It is unbelievable that within a month, I met a man and after a few dates, we both knew we wanted to be together. Guruji had brought this wonderful man into my life at a time when I needed a companion. How did I know that Guruji brought us together? His apartment number was the same four digits as the code I had been using for years for my work login ID and on my iPhone. I did not notice this bizarre occurrence until 2013, a year after meeting him.

My journey with Guruji continues. Over the past few years, I have been fortunate to attend satsangs in Canada. His answers come through shabads and satsangs as well as our inner voice and conscience. He resides in our heart and talks to us from that space. I lamented over why I had two brief meetings with Him while other family members spent days and weeks with Him. My question was answered a few months ago; when my search for a Guru started, my deepest desire was that I should find a Guru who graced me with His touch. I wanted the physical connection with Him just as a mother forms a physical connection with her child. This is why I had gone to India in 2005. Guruji had mercy on me and called me to Him so that I could feel His physical presence. I did not feel deserving of it but Guruji gives more than one desires or deserves and I am a living proof of it. My life is completely different to what it was 14 years ago and much more than I imagined.”

Our outer life’s every disaster turns into a dream and our inner life of turmoil turns into tranquillity.

Float like a butterfly and sting like a bee.

31

Brain Stroke is Cured

A white butterfly floated above mom's balcony as I stood and absorbed the scenic views of the grounds ahead. It was typically England with lush green trees and the clear blue skies above with air as fresh as can be. I inhaled deep to oxygenate every cell of my being. There was nothing to beat it and I mean nothing!

The air I have breathed has been incredibly clean and rejuvenating in two places Manchester and Toronto. I could sit quietly in these two cities on my own amidst nature and just keep breathing while watching the world go by.

A reservoir of sadness and resentment towards my mom's sickness prevailed for a long time and no matter how much I travelled away from it I returned to her home to feel the ocean of sadness and enter the tunnel of memories.

I decided to put the apartment up for sale after much deliberation and discussion with my younger brother Sanjay and his wife kajal.

I must add here that the haze that covered my mind at this point was not lifted but Sanjay and Kajal were as clear as day about my future being in England. Health wise and other wise England made perfect sense. I was in a state of flux between England and India for a while as has been the story of

my life.

Guruji had also stated to me more than once. 'Bahar riya kar. Ja vaps London ja. Jaga jaga ja aur satsang kar.' [Stay out. Return to London. Go from place to place and share your satsangs.]

His hukm is for our highest good. With minimal understanding, I left the sale of the apartment literally in His hands and returned to Delhi.

You can imagine my struggle on returning to Delhi's lead laden air and as Guruji used to say, 'Dilli di hava bahut mari hai.' (Delhi's air is very poor.) He meant that literally and metaphorically as the latter meant that the collective energy was very heavy often weighing people down.

The reason for my return was primarily Anishka as Sonakshi was still in New York working hard in Macy's, chota and bade mandir as well as satsangs. Spending quality time with Sanjeev has always been one of my cherished joys as we bond over a movie and dinner on a weekly basis. He has always been one of my warmest coats that I wear around my heart. Amit also accompanies us and he too carries a light hearted and merry energy.

Sanjeev and I went to bade mandir for our weekly dose of healing and spiritual growth. On exiting the mandir, I met Shalini Vig who asked me if my girls and I would walk the ramp in the festival of hope of which she is the founder. The platform raises cancer awareness as it renders hope to those suffering and it applauds those who have survived. As I had been a cancer survivor, she was keen that I walk as a figure of hope to others.

All three of us; Anishka, Sonakshi and I did walk the ramp later that year and it was a pleasurable experience.

Shalini's journey with Guruji is as follows in her own words

'In 1998, my father and ex defence officer had developed a terrible skin rash over his body and face. He underwent tests with no results as to what was causing it. Doctors were recommended whom we visited almost everywhere but none who could cure him.

One of his force's friends, Colonel Chatterji then told my parents to accompany him to Guruji and my father who never followed any Gurus agreed. The family started going to chota mandir for langar whenever possible and within a few months dad's skin improved. Today he takes medication but is free from the condition. Whilst we knew about Guruji, we did not have a regular routine to visit the mandir and then after my marriage in 2000 I stopped going altogether.

In 2010, I was disturbed personally and professionally and our work suffered major losses throwing us in debt. I quit my corporate job due to company politics and started my own foundation that promoted cancer awareness. During one of my events, I met Dr. Amit Bhasin who invited me for a satsang at his place. Thereafter I reconnected with Guruji and I remembered Him keeping His hand on my head years ago to bless me.

Life became easier and things started falling into place gradually. I felt as though someone was guiding us through this tough journey. My family, however, was still not connected.

In June 2016, my mother suffered a brain stroke. The first MRI showed a clot in her neck that had stopped the blood flow to the brain. Doctors suggested we wait two days before planning the surgery. I had opted to stay with mom at the hospital and since I was with her, I asked my children to get Jal prasad [blessed water] from chota mandir. They each prayed for her along with my niece. I gave her the jaal prasad every few hours and two days later her MRI revealed that the flow had started, past the clot, to the brain. Mom was home on the seventh day of the stroke and was walking by the third. My entire family was then connected to Guruji; both my sisters and my children. My husband who is a Lord Hanuman devotee too started following Guruji and subsequently contracts came his way and work just flowed.

My foundation-festival of hope was titled, '50 most innovative social initiatives globally' by the world CSR congress at the world CSR day in 2016. Many individuals and companies connected with my fundraiser to help the less privileged.

My daughter completed her class 10 boards in 2018. Her mathematics exam

had us all worried, as she could not complete her paper and may have to repeat the exam. We prayed to Guruji. As a mother, I did not want her to go through the stress of a retest. I opened her result before Guruji's swaroop in my mandir at home as my entire family stood in anticipation. She had cleared most subjects with over 80%. She herself could not believe her marks. Maths was the only subject in which she scored 60%. She passed with 92%.

On 27 November 2018, my 8-year-old pet Nawab was diagnosed with high levels of creatinine and urea in his blood; almost 200 times higher than what it should be. Normal level is one, his was 24, and this shocked his doctor. He confirmed that any other dog would have collapsed ages ago but Nawab remained his own self. He quit eating but otherwise active. On enquiring about treatments, we were told it was too late for even dialysis.

I began taking him to bade mandir almost daily and made him eat the blessed food. My prayers to Guruji were not to let him suffer. Nawab loved his walks and played in the park until he collapsed on 17 December, Monday morning. That morning on rising, he went and lay before Guruji's swaroop and it was there he released his final breath. We planted a tree where we cremated him in our garden.

My morning ritual is to light the jyot in my mandir at home which Nawab used to be a part of. I was breaking down every morning, as now no one was a part of this anymore. Except one-day max, my other pet followed me to the mandir and waited there until I completed my puja.

My life has had its share of pain and gain. Guruji has held my hand all along and given me strength to go through it all. Today all my decisions are left to Him, His ways, His will and His blessings that never cease to amaze me. He has come into our lives to remind us that God does exist and to walk on His path that is love, compassion and humanity. The only true religion that ought to be followed is the path of goodness. Never hurt or hate anyone and never be or do wrong to others. Guruji awakens our conscience and teaches us to step down from a complex life to a simple, peaceful one void of falsifications. Once we begin walking on His true path there is so much love and learning that we do not want to stop.

32

Destinies Change

Each stop I made was a necessity to get me here.

The best part of 2015 went in travel and finalizing the purchase of what was to be my new home in Vasant Vihar, New Delhi.

I had viewed many surrounding that particular colony but never within it, as I did not believe I could afford it. Sumi kumar who has always been there in the thick and thin of my life reminded me that Guruji had stated your next home after Panchsheel Park would be Vasant Vihar. I resisted for a while until I viewed the one with its number adding to thirteen [tera- meaning Yours]

The vibe felt right, as it was located directly opposite a well-groomed park and a lane away from Sanjeev and two lanes away from my other brother Ajay where my badi mom also resides. It was Guruji's divine plan and perfect as my world, besides Guruji's ashram, revolved around the vasant kunj malls and the airport!

I met up with my neighbours and I secretly hoped and prayed to Guruji to introduce Himself to them too as He had done with my previous neighbours in Panchsheel Park home. That sense of comrade becomes stronger and the bonding turns into one of family.

On November 30 of that year I celebrated my big one; 50. My brothers Rajan, Ajay, Sanjay and Sanjeev organized two nights of celebration in Dubai. I went much earlier to celebrate with both my daughters and at that time, Anishka was staying at the Jumeira living apartments in Dubai. Part of my routine was sitting at its rooftop to complete my next fiction, 'Cappucinno confessions.'

It was during this time that I had become increasingly close to Sanjay and Sonia Vij who coordinate the satsangs in Dubai held every Friday.

We had so much fun together splashing in the waves of the beach water like children. During my teenage years living in England, I found poetry in most things; trees, clear skies and the crisp clean air and I was even smitten by the rain. Nature always had a way of enlivening my senses and making me feel that I am part of something much bigger.

Being with Sanjay and Sonia brought out the child in all of us and they are as fun as they are responsible and mature. In fact, they are both an epitome of Guruji's teachings as with absolute humility they conduct their seva [selfless service] of coordinating satsangs for many years with complete dedication and love for Guruji.

Sonia Vij's satsang

'Around 2005 we heard about Guruji from Sanjay's brother, Sandeep and his wife Kavita. They spoke highly about their experiences with Him and one day we got our calling. It was truly divine and whilst taking agya [permission to leave] He stopped us and started inquiring from Kavita who I was...

'Ai Kaun Hai?' [who is this?]

'My Jethani' [my sister in law]

'Ki Naa Hai?' [What is her name?] He asked

'Sonia' she responded

Kithe Rehndi Hai' [where does she live?]

'Delhi' responded Kavita

'Delhi wiche kithe?' [Where in Delhi?]

'Kalkaji' she said

Kapde da kam kardi hai! [She deals in clothes!] He stated

'Nahin Guruji, hamara family business hai rubber ka.' [No Guruji our family business is of rubber parts.]

I still recollect that smile Guruji gave after this answer... as if you do not know anything!

While leaving Empire Estate I had a strange feeling that we will not be returning to this place. That was our first and last Darshan of Guruji and as He had stated 'kapde da kam' exactly one year later, I stepped into clothes designing!

Within a few days of our visit to Empire Estate, I obtained a stamp size picture of Guruji. It was with me for six years and after the exact same number of years our calling came and this time at Bade Mandir.

Beginning 2011 there was a magnetic pull and Guruji was on my mind day and night. I wanted to learn more about Him and so I searched the net and came across websites where devotees shared their satsangs. My connection deepened and by then I was truly devoted to Him.

End June 2011, my maternal uncle was critically ill due to a blockage in the bile duct, which affected his liver and kidneys. Doctors were not very hopeful.

I had read in one of the satsangs that Guruji's swaroop was placed under the pillow of a patient and He cured him completely. The stamp size swaroop that I had with me for six years, I slipped under his pillow in the ICU with this faith that Guruji will heal him. During an endoscopy procedure for the removal of the blockage, the doctors found a growth at the stomach opening for which the procedure had to come to a halt halfway through. According to doctors, it was 99.9% a cancerous growth so the samples were sent for biopsy. After 3 days, an MRI was done to check the blockage and the growth in the stomach. To everyone's amazement, the growth had completely

disappeared leaving no trace of cancer.

Our first visit to Bade Mandir was on 4th July 2011 to pay our gratitude to Guruji for curing my uncle. Our weekly visits to Bade Mandir were every Monday and Friday. Our first Guruji's satsang on Sunday, 3rd March 2013 took place in CR Park. Guruji chose the date and satsang was organized in just a week. Sangat attended from all over Delhi and Guruji's presence was felt throughout the satsang.

The biggest blessing of our life- On Monday 4th March we reached bade Mandir late and so it was closed. I call it Guruji's leela...we met Isha Aunty at the gate who was there to discuss the decorations for the coming Shivratri celebrations on 10th of March. She asked us to wait and then went inside the office. We both sat outside enjoying the serenity of the place when suddenly out of nowhere we got the chai, laddoo and samosa Prasad that we had missed on reaching late. We sat there for more than one hour and no one asked us to leave.

While we were leaving heading towards joda ghar [shoe room] we heard a voice and it was Gaurav uncle. He asked us which days we come to Mandir and we told him it was Monday's and Friday's. He called his manager and asked him to note down Sanjay's name and that we would be doing bhog sewa on the coming Friday that was 8th of March. We both could not believe what was happening as this was something unbelievable... we had never thought of this in our dream.

Finally, on 8th March we reached Mandir before time. We met the uncle who had noted our name and he asked us to sit at a particular place until the moment arrived to meet Guruji in His room. One thing that uncle told us which we both could never forget was that we are not there by chance, we were there by His (Guruji's) choice. Just the two of us inside Guruji's room with Him... the most amazing, divine experience of our life.

We both had not imagined what Guruji had planned for us in the coming future as we moved to Dubai in September 2013. When we started attending satsangs there, sangat used to be around 60 to 70. Now the Sangat has grown exponentially as we are a Guru Pariwar [Guru Family] of almost 900 Sangat and more.

From attending satsangs regularly Guruji gave us the sewa of coordinating satsangs initially in devotees homes and then at banquet hall in a hotel as the sangat grew enormously. We both are soaked in His love and grace. He has occupied my mind with healthy happy thoughts of planning the satsangs.

Both our sons are in the U.S and are very happy in their chosen fields. We are settled and content living in Dubai and our entire existence revolves around sangat and a few whom we meet and greet outside satsangs too. As Guruji used to state, it is imperative for our personal and spiritual growth to stay in good, healthy company of like-minded people who lift us and not drag us down. Our vibe attracts our tribe and we are friendly with people seeking His love and want to serve humanity for the sake of goodness and nothing else.

Now I understand why Guruji asked my sister in law where I lived as He was about to change my address, my career and my destiny!

33

Tumors are Cured

Destiny is not a matter of chance but a matter of choice.

Everything is a continuous state of evolving, refining, adapting, enhancing and changing.

In April 2016, I moved into my new home in Vasant vihar and as I mentioned earlier, this too was a satsang as every other aspect of our lives is! Back in the day when I was about to move into my panchsheel home that Guruji had blessed He casually stated, 'Next time I will bless you with a home in Vasant vihar.'

Faith is an unseen electric force that turns on the engine of a car and my belief too was the power that fuelled my own passion for life once again. I turned upright and firm as I settled into my new home that was synonymous with a new beginning. My daughters moved in though they had wheels under their heels that kept them on the move. We are a family of many adventures and we embrace that in each other. It is what makes us grow individually in our chosen garden and the garden Guruji has blessed.

The walls of uncertainly caved in, as my new home stood erect. I felt myself glow as I became more buoyant and free from the enduring angst and ache. It felt good releasing the permanent lump in my throat and the heaviness in

my heart that felt like a permanent fixture like the fan in the center of my room.

It has been clear throughout my living years that Guruji is the architect of my happiness and here too He had built a new home for my liberty and renewed joy. I trusted Him once again as the single most qualified person to know and to make amends to my future. He even rectifies the parts that appear sadly irreparable owing to our past karmas.

You never forget your past; it is like the memory of your first home or your first love that simply resides in the storeroom of your mind. It is rarely unlocked but it is there. Likewise the memories of living with my mom and my spirit dying with her did not quite pale into insignificance but the pain was not as sharp.

I had indeed made a conscious choice to live this new chapter with strength, dignity and more than a touch of adventure. More than anything else, in life I chose to be happy and healthy. For the first time in years, I wore an expression of serenity and soon, I adapted to the rhythm of Delhi life though I decided not to be a territorial creature. I also ended the conflict between whether to call England my home or India, as both were.

As I drove to Guruji's mandir, I passed the old familiar streets, came across the urchins at the traffic lights and as I looked at the rear view mirror I realized how many years had passed by. Anishka, my angel, had turned 25 earlier that year on 7 February; I was 25 when I had given birth to her, which was a miracle in itself. I had bled profusely in my third month, was hospitalized, the gynecologist had done a DNC on me, told me I had lost the baby and I was shattered. A few seconds later, my sister in law Selena's mom, a renowned gynecologist, Dr Usha Kothari moved me to another hospital, did an ultrasound and there was the baby Anishka's heartbeat. She was meant to come into my life to become my heartbeat.

I held two satsangs in my home within two weeks; one for Anishka and Sonakshi and the other to bless my new home.

In May, as is customary for as long as I can recall I left Delhi's scorching heat to soak in the English landscape.

When I attended Anju Kapoor's satsang in Manchester, I was taken aback by the growing sangat. My eyes widened at the sight of them and my heart expanded with a joy I cannot express as I recounted the time we began with merely five of us.

Anju's satsang

"My journey with Guruji began four years ago when I lost my young 40-year-old brother. I was depressed beyond words and had trouble sleeping and eating. I was in such disarray that I hardly left the house except one day my friend, Pumi aunty, a devotee of Guruji invited me for a satsang at her place. I gathered the courage to go and on arriving I was overwhelmed by the tranquility and could not stop crying. I immediately connected to the gurbani shabad to the extent that I returned home and played them on my CD player regularly. I began to feel better and at ease with myself.

Since then Guruji has become an integral part of my life and whenever I am down, I listen to the shabad at home or in my car and I feel uplifted.

Back in 2015, my left eye was protruding and after many tests and scans, doctors discovered a big lump behind my eye that was growing so large that it was pushing my eye forward. Doctors determined it as benign but because it sat on my optical nerve, it could be critical for my eyesight.

The surgery was very sensitive and delicate and I was petrified about losing my eyesight. As I was leaving for the hospital, I asked my husband to carry a small swaroop of Guruji for me to take into the theatre. On regaining consciousness, I saw Guruji first and then my doctor showed me his fingers, which I could see clearly. Although my entire eye was bruised, my vision was clear. Doctors were amazed at my speedy recovery and all through I knew it was Guruji's grace.

My daughter-in-law had a bad back hence did not want children and that really concerned me.

One night I saw Guruji sitting on my dining table in His yellow chola. I was overjoyed, as I knew then that something good was about to happen. Within

days, I received the much-awaited news of my daughter in laws pregnancy. I have a three-year-old granddaughter now who is the apple of my eye. Besides these noteworthy experiences, many small but not inconsequential incidences just work out owing to His grace. I love attending His satsangs in Manchester, which is my hometown, and where I hold an annual or biannual satsang.

Once when I was in Delhi and longed to visit Bade mandir there was torrential rain since past three days and my relatives discouraged me from going owing to the dense traffic. On reaching there, it might have been even slippery and muddy. I was returning home on Saturday and Thursday was the only remaining day. I prayed hard for Guruji to call me and suddenly around 3pm, the rain stopped and the sun appeared! I prepared and left without a moment's hesitation and I had the most magical darshan. I cannot thank Him enough for His unending blessings. He has taught me to rise above the trivialities of life and to focus on Him and His name. I feel so connected and protected at all times. I am truly grateful to Him for accepting me in His divine fold.

Life is so beautiful with Him being at the center of it. I feel He cradles me in His arms all the time.”

34

Guruji's Verification

The time has come when I can no longer cradle my daughters in my arms so I cradle them in my heart.

I returned to Delhi in August of 2016 after my summer break and as soon as I stepped on Indian soil, my skin flared up aggressively all over beginning on my face and travelling down to my feet. I was deeply disturbed physically as it was itching and bleeding and its ghastly appearance was unbearable. I was devastated even though my skin has always had a mind of its own being born with eczema that never disappeared but managed by me over the years. No two days are the same with it; sometimes my skin is as clear as day as if I have no skin ailment and then the next, it unpredictably decides to resurface leaving me applying ointments to alleviate the itch.

I did what I ordinarily do which is stepping up on my faith by frequenting Guruji's ashram and having the curative langar as often as I could. However, my energy levels had dropped and I was unaware of what was happening to my system.

One evening on watching a movie with Sanjeev and Sudha aunty, I crunched with excruciating pain in my abdomen. It was so severe that I could hardly breathe. We rushed to Fortis hospital and there they concluded that perhaps it was an infection of some kind, gave me a painkiller, prescribed antibiotics

and discharged me within an hour.

I waited a month for my skin to settle but it did not and then my girls suggested we travel to Italy as perhaps the European air might clear the rashes as the polluted and sultry August air of Delhi may have contributed to it.

Sonakshi was already in Rome and I took a flight to meet with her. We spent a couple of nights there and took a train to Naples, stayed overnight and continued to Capri. All this while my skin was itchy but somehow managed myself to the degree of not falling apart. The beauty surrounding me and exploring an unvisited territory abated my suffering.

We did much as from Capri we traveled to Positano and Sorrento. It was probably the most picturesque canvas of seaside towns with the most vibrant beach culture I had ever seen. It was both relaxing and therapeutic for me. We spent sufficient amount of time in each place as neither of us were in a hurry to get back. One rainy day we spent inside the hotel to watch the remaining episodes of 'Narcos' on Netflix! We had the most incredible time despite the skin ailment and my lack of energy. We caught up with Anishka in my favorite city in the world; Florence where we stayed for an entire week in an apartment.

The girls and I engaged with each other over organic cafes, the Chianti wine tour, strolls around the squares and a touch of shopping. It was truly magical as Guruji blesses every aspect of our lives. However, I slipped into a pharmacy for a hydrocortisone cream for my skin, as the rash particularly on my shins was getting worse. It was itchy beyond control and then our vacation neared its end and we flew back to our respective destinations.

I was troubled by my skin condition as unfortunately nothing changed. It was third week of September 2016. On returning, I dived into the warmth of my bed, as I could not bear to have anyone comment on my skin's condition. I finally succumbed to a blood test and the report stated I had autoimmune disorder and my skin was erupting as an early symptom of it.

I read about it on the net and whatever it stated I was already going through. I had fatigue, achy muscles, swelling and redness, low-grade fever and of

course the uncomfortable rashes.

In an autoimmune disease, the immune system mistakes part of your body-like your joints or skin as foreign. It releases proteins called autoantibodies that attack healthy cells.

Because the incidence of autoimmune diseases is rising, researchers suspect environmental factors like infections and exposures to chemicals or solvents might also be involved.

In a word, I was terrified as my brother Sanjay suffered it in 2010 but with Guruji's infinite and definite grace, he was cured.

On being told I was not doing at all well I visited my heaven and haven; Guruji's mandir. I sat before Him and broke down. I was not prepared to leave this world yet and my internal dialogue with Him was just that. 'Guruji I'm not ready to go as my daughters aren't married yet and I haven't fulfilled all my responsibilities and duties as a mother.'

I must mention here that Guruji's ashram is not a wish-fulfilling factory, which upon visiting we lay down our wish list and expect Guruji to tick them one by one. However, He does bless us primarily with good health before any other boon and so I prayed in earnest for my recovery. I was fatigued and my appearance revealed it. My eyes were drooping and my skin was full of rashes. I was not at all in a good space and I was terribly self-conscious. Delhi was still humid and I continued visiting Guruji's ashram and even went to Dugri with Gaurav uncle; Guruji's nephew. I had the blessed langar there and prayed hard to Guruji to alleviate my redness.

Anishka, meanwhile, introduced me to her ayurvedic practitioner. What he stated was a wake up call as he looked at me and confirmed the toxicity in my body; the emotional and physical. He advised me to get my act together if I was to recover.

He taught me specific breathing exercises and physical movement that would strengthen my immunity and detox the mind as the body will follow. He said, 'There have been certain emotions that you didn't take responsibility for, allowing them to turn toxic hence the cancer and now this! The first step is to express yourself clearly and to cease lying to yourself.'

When you suffer, it is your problem to solve. Introspect and work on transforming yourself inside out and you will be empowered. Practice Pranayama for immunity builder. Destiny lies in the choices we make consciously and subconsciously.

There is an infinite power in you that will awaken but your mind and body are too jaded to realize your true calling. Self-inflicting and self-imposing sadness will dissipate once you make the inner changes through courage. It requires practice and perseverance as well as emotion. Conspicuous benefits will arise when you believe you are healthy and you have decided to feel it. Commit to changing your mindset towards yourself. Cleanse yourself of the negative emotions or else you will attract more diseases.' He concluded.

Thank God, for this bump on the road too as it awakened me to my complacency towards my health, taking it for granted and not proactively working towards it. I was sleep walking through life and taking Guruji almost for granted.

I marched towards regularly visiting Guruji's darbar, practicing pranayama, and reading my Shiv Purana as Guruji had instructed. In addition, I practiced healing meditations available on U tube. There was another very powerful tool of sending out unconditional love to all those who had caused me hurt at one juncture or another through life and thanking them for the experience. It was difficult but the act of forgiveness helps to release the hurt from the subconscious mind.

The wolf and the sheep reside in each one of us but it is which one we feed that dominates us. There will be moments when we feel life is talking down on us making us believe we have no concrete direction. We are left believing at times that there is nothing besides the randomness of our thoughts and actions. I learnt through opening up my soul to him that I must view my life with kind sight and to stop beating myself up about things that went wrong. Instead of asking 'what was I thinking?' I now ask the kinder question what I was learning. It was indeed glaringly obvious to me that I needed to shift my mental make-up.

I was never encouraged to express excitement about my aspirations and prospects so there came a time when it seemed so beyond reach and I

stopped aspiring. My hidden treasures revealed years later as I began writing at the age of 45 and from then to now so far six of my books went into print. Guruji turned everything around and one day while He was making me address some wedding card envelopes He very kindly stated, 'Teri best handwriting hai purey India de vich.' [You have the best handwriting in the whole of India.] I remember having tears in my eyes when He stated that, as my self-belief had turned fragile.

One evening on leaving Guruji's ashram an old sangat nudged me and in astonishment asked, 'Anita aunty you're alive?'

'Yes uncle I'm very much alive.' I giggled.

'You know Guruji showed me in a dream that you were lying lifeless, He was standing beside you and He said, 'Menu phir enu bachana piya. Allie edhi jimivariya poori nahin hui. Edi betiya da viya nahin hoiya.' [I have again had to rescue her, as she has not fulfilled all her worldly duties, as her daughters are still not married.]

These were my exact words on breaking down before Him in bade mandir the day I had received my report. He validated yet again that He listens to our every word and is in touch with our every emotion. Within weeks of visiting His ashram and building my immunity my skin cleared and the doctors were confused, as Guruji had cleared all my reports too. He once again reduced the mountain of an issue down to a molehill.

To our every question, faith is the answer; it is that simple.

35

Transformations

It has been simple. For me it has always been about my inner journey to seek my truth. The only place in the world that gives me my answers is Guruji's ashram.

It is in silence that He speaks to us and it is in silence that we see our own truth. When we close our eyes to the world, we open the eyes of our soul to Him. Seek and you shall find so when I go to bade mandir I endeavor to be alone as much as I can particularly during langar. Guruji advocated the importance of staying silent whilst having langar, as that is our medicine. Consume it as medicine and it is most effective but on chatting with one another, the effect is lessened as the intent behind the langar changes from curative to social. There was pin drop silence during Guruji's time and I for one prefer to maintain that, as I need to maximize His blessings for my health. We are together through love, harmony and cooperation and I do feel it is critical to guide and maneuver others into Guruji's direction and His teachings in case they are tweaking. I am certainly not an authoritarian but I am saddened to see people not gaining maximum benefit by not complying with His ways. As we learn to surrender to His will, our cup begins to fill. Teri Raza mein Hi razi Guruji

Consuming langar, by being totally in the moment, in silence makes us reflect and when eaten with the intention that it is medicine then it is exactly that.

Equally, if we have it with the intention that it is food to satisfy our appetite then it is exactly that too. The choice is ours. Mehenat meri Rehemat Teri. [The effort is mine but the grace is yours.]

During the month of November, I met Anjali Rajpal, a Delhi sangat and a seeker of her higher self. Some people are evidently on their inner journey whilst others are gazing outwards only; away from their true nature and into the yonder that is always a mirage.

Every experience teaches us about ourselves so whatever we encounter is meant to strengthen us. Any experience that we have is not meant to victimize us or make us small. It is merely an experience and it is our perception that makes us either a victim or a victor. On shifting our energies, we never attract the same experiences. Being happy is true wisdom as it means we are in a state of constant gratitude no matter what. Below is her satsang.

‘Despite being from an affluent and loving family, I was not happy. There was something missing but I was unable to lay my finger on it. As a child, I was anxious and as an adult, I depended on others for happiness. I was overwhelmed with feelings of loneliness and negative thoughts that lead to a stressful life. I was constantly worried about something or the other and this affected my relationship with my family, friends and my work. I never realized that there was something wrong with me, hence blamed people and circumstances, and it started taking a toll on my health and well-being. I eventually spiralled into depression.

Once we are in Guruji’s Sharan, He becomes the Director of our life and everything happens as per His wish and command. He teaches us the right way in the most practical manner and I realized this once He healed me mentally and physically.

In September 2015, due to a sudden death of a young colleague, I became anxious and believed that I, too, would contract a disease and die. I panicked and underwent medical tests that turned out fine but I continued feeling low and thinking the worst thoughts possible. I was against taking anti-anxiety and anti-depressant medicines. I used to cry in front of Guruji’s swaroop and begged Him to end my misery.

Guruji started guiding me on how to change my mind set and I engaged in activities never done before like meditating, changing my dietary habits and exercising that included yoga. During that phase, He called me frequently to Bade Mandir to have Langar Prashad, which gradually healed me. He continually blessed me with His fragrance and Darshans to keep me strong and to assure me that He was beside me throughout. With His immense Grace, I came out of my deeply instilled fears and anxieties without succumbing to medication. I now live a stress free life and feel like I am re-born. Guruji has washed old mental and physical dirt away in the most practical ways.

As I reflect back, I realise that Guruji transformed me and taught me the way to live. He taught me the art of living in the literal sense and I am not the same woman I was when I first set foot in His ashram in 2014. With His blessings, I am progressing on my spiritual journey as I have shed my negative emotions and traits. I am more empathetic and compassionate towards others and I have realised the power and value of gratitude. I have also learnt to be content with all that I have and to find blessings in suffering too because I understand now that everything happens for a good reason. Instead of complaining about the darkness, I take the initiative to light a candle and enjoy the glow of hope even when I am enshrouded in darkness. Marie Curie- the Polish and naturalized French physicist who conducted pioneering research on radioactivity said 'Nothing in life is to be feared; it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more so that we may fear less.' Interestingly she was the first woman to win the Nobel Prize. In fact, she was the first woman to win it twice.

When we become calm and understand more about ourselves in relation to God, His world and His creation we begin to fear less. On embracing the many laws that drive our lives such as the laws of Karma, laws of attraction, laws of synchronicity as well as others then life begins to make some sense. Faith becomes the driving force of our lives and nothing can harm us as Guruji's angels are always protecting us.

Guruji connected me with his loving Sangat who gave me strength and guidance. People now consider me a positive, calm and happy individual and I am thankful to Guruji for this.

Guruji taught me that the spiritual journey is not a bed of roses or smooth sailing. Apart from innumerable blessings, the journey is also full of tests, turmoil and turbulences but the individual is able to sail through it with strength, patience and faith. With His grace, every moment is a satsang.”

One day Guruji said to me, “Anita tin jija di bareh hogi [Anita there will be showers of three things.] Cancer, divorce aur depression. Sab nu kehe ki rab nal juran. Rab nu yaad kita karo. Chal de phirde karo yaad aur bet ki vi. {Tell everyone to connect to God. To remember Him whilst going about their day’s activities and to sit in silence.}

Since we are obsessed with technology and people are immersed in their mobiles, I pads and lap tops we find it almost impossible to switch off our minds and to shift the mode to a spiritual one. The only way to be technically spiritual is to remember Him, thanking Him, chatting with Him whilst we are on our respective tablets. Our hearts need to exude love for Him in the most practical sense and Guruji in any case knew that in this age of chronic busy-ness it is almost impossible for us to set aside time to perform rituals to remember and worship God. He stated that rituals do not necessarily bring us closer to Him as by performing them we do not necessarily become sensitive to His love. Rituals are perfunctory and remembering him otherwise and chatting with him is an emotional connect that leads to pure love for Him.

Destiny is not a matter of chance but choice.

36

Guruji Blesses Businesses

It was in 2017 that Sonakshi, my younger daughter, determined her destiny.

She resolutely forged ahead to start her yoga line; eco friendly yoga mats with handmade designs. 'Who can I employ as my designer?' mused Sonakshi.

With a glint in her eye and her customary cheeky expression, she declared. 'Mom, get to work! You are my one and only designer!'

With a stroke of triumph and a dot of trepidation, I scribbled my designs on paper as my first attempt before progressing to the more intricate ones. My hand danced across the drawing paper as I completed each design within a few days. After approximately a month, we had a collection of designs that Sonakshi loved and she added color and sent them to manufacturer to print onto the mats!

Each time I sat at the table to work, I played His shabads and silently prayed to Guruji to bring out the best in each design and so it was! They had gained Sonakshi's approval, which made me her official designer. From being a calligraphy teacher and a writer, Guruji added one more notch to my belt. I became a designer of a new company that was soon to go international with His unremitting grace. My calligraphy was applied most productively and for

that, I am eternally grateful to my daughter, Sonakshi. The world is her oyster and she could have chosen and employed just about anyone but she chose me; her mother. The mats are branded under 'Shakti warrior' designs and sell online as well as in various exhibitions across the globe. My potential as a calligrapher/writer/designer gained recognition and on working, I felt energized and enthusiastic. Work is worship and we must be grateful for any kind of work to fall on our laps, as that too is His blessing.

All three of us are a team and complement each other like never before with Anishka being a qualified yoga and meditation instructor in Dubai who has mastered her art skillfully after undergoing formal training in Bali, Sonakshi the yoga warrior and I the spiritual designer. This team managed by Guruji has a common goal of doing and being its best and to giving nothing but its best to the consumer. It is a conscience company mindful of the environment.

This was a new lease of life and I chose to be active and alert in business. I remember working on the following designs with the kind of intensity and focus of a professional chess player. My eyes transfixed to the designs and I lifted my head only on completing them. It was as magical as it was meditative.

Sonakshi and Viviana prepared an itinerary for Leh Ledhak soon after we completed our work. It is probably the most adventurous trip I have made and despite discouraging advice owing to high altitudes there, I forged ahead after seeking His blessings. The panoramic mountain ranges beat Switzerland hands down. I was immensely impressed with the raw beauty of India that is unappreciated by many and fly across the Indian oceans to appreciate and mull over what people believe to be non-existent in India. The two mightiest mountain ranges, the great Himalaya and the Karakoram spread across abundantly making it superbly scenic and serene.

Pangong Lake was stunning as was Nubra valley where we rode on a camel once we descended after making that ascend to the highest motorable pass. The journey there was unnerving as the roads were slippery, steep and narrow. My heart was in my mouth throughout and I played Guruji's shabd in the car as we escalated to the top. Reciting the mantra jaap for hours while we reached the top afforded me a tad relief from the anxiety of it all. Once

we arrived at the summit I felt I had mastered the near impossible! I released a sigh of relief as I stood on the peak with slippery snow beneath my feet. The view, naturally, was breath taking and the air was cold as I inhaled it deep in my lungs.

Altogether, it was an adventure and it probably diluted many of my fears after that, including Acrophobia. [fear of heights] We loved returning to the hotel in the evenings after our daylong excursions to enjoy further views whilst relishing the local meals. Guruji was taking me out of my comfort zone to increase my courage quotient. 'I recall His words, 'Ja ayesh kar. Full blessings deti thenu.' [Go enjoy. I have given you full blessings.] Having said that, each one of us is blessed completely by Guruji and it is our responsibility to live by His vachans. [His word]

He knows what each one of us needs and most times, even when He was in the physical form, I would say nothing but He read everything. Connect telepathically as He listens.

Travel is indeed the best education as we learn from another's art and culture and some symbols we came across I made a mental note of to add to my design portfolio.

The most important lesson I learnt from this trip was that nothing is impossible when Guruji is with us. I was advised not to go and if I was obstinate enough to take a chance then I must buy an oxygen cylinder on arriving there; I must rest as much as possible and take it easy as I would encounter difficulties with my breathing. I was as fine as fine could get encountering only the joy of breaking the shackles of my conditioning and false self-belief.

Every travel experience most definitely goes down in our memory bank and this I will never forget, as it was significantly different from anywhere I had been. The fire of adventure ignited in me and I was more confident after engaging in something out of my comfort zone.

For me, one of my most rewarding life lessons has been to be thankful for everything I already have while I pursue everything I want. Gratitude is easily the healthiest human emotion that gladdens the heart making room

for more reasons to be thankful.

Oprah Winfrey said, 'Be thankful for what you have and you will end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough.'

Psychologists state that gratitude changes our brain waves and shields us from negativity. It eliminates stress and makes us 25% happier than what we were when we did not feel or express gratitude. It heals and it improves our sleep, boosts our self-esteem and improves our relationships. It also enhances the laws of attraction.

We can grumble that roses have thorns or be grateful that thorns have roses. That is the miracle of gratitude; it shifts the perception of the world to such an extent that it changes the world we see.

Guruji has taught me to appreciate the small and the big. In fact, the small is the big and in hindsight, we always revel in the memories shared with family and friends and the simplicity of it all. No one ever recalls how grandiose an event was but how much love and joy there was at a particular phase of our lives.

Helen Keller said, 'So much has been given to me that I have no time to ponder over that which has been denied.' She was the first deaf and blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree. The American educator overcame the adversity of being blind and deaf to become one of the 20th century's leading humanitarians. She received many honors in recognition of her accomplishments.

I cannot claim to have no regrets but to class any of my life's incidences as a remorse would make it harder for me to be a constant state of gratitude. I move on, safe in the knowledge that there are decades of happiness ahead and innumerable new blessed chapters that far outweigh the old ones.

All in all Gratitude puts our lives into perspective by making sense of the past, rendering us peace in the present and creating a vision for the future. Struggle ends when gratitude begins.

37

A Baby is Born

What began was a new chapter of many adventures

It was around March of the same year that I found myself traveling around India sharing satsangs. My first call came from Lucknow, the city that gained its reputation for Urdu poetry, music and its elaborate cuisine. I could see remnants of its rich historic culture as I drove through it to stay with Guruji's devotee, Indu Bhugra who is kind and is as beautiful and magnanimous. She has learnt that the setbacks in life are barriers that turn into breakthroughs when touched with Guruji's grace. He takes into account our good deeds, our good intentions and lifts the barriers to let us attain our goals.

It is indeed a common enquiry about whether or not one should follow other deities when in Guruji's sharan. [His fold]

The idea of respecting other deities whilst worshipping the one form of 'one truth' wholeheartedly and single-mindedly goes deeper than we realize. On worshipping one form, we do not risk splitting our energies and we can therefore go deep in our sadhana. We must devote all our energies into one as we invoke our God's grace to go deep in our practice. Reciting the mantra jaap is equally important to burn our previous bad karmas and to elevate us in our spiritual journey in this life and hereafter. It is advisable to chant the mantra, 'Om Namah Shivaya Shivji Sada Sahay. Om Namah Shivaya Guruji

Sada Sahaya' with absolute love and devotion not for mundane menial gains but for it to reveal our true nature and to draw us closer to our Supreme power.

Once His grace falls upon us He states, 'Ja tera kalyan kita, hun jaa aish kar. Aur chinta nahi chintan kar mere vaal.' [You are blessed. Go enjoy! Do not worry only meditate on me.]

Thomas Moore- Humility, that low, sweet root from which all heavenly virtues shoot.

Indu's satsang

I have two sons and both are married and my elder one has a son but my younger one had no children. I left no stone unturned in finding solutions for my daughter in law to conceive; medically and spiritually. I prayed for divine intervention and sought blessings from various Gurudwara's, temples and pundits but nothing came of it.

One day on face book, I connected with a long-lost friend after 34 years. Her name is Renu and we chatted endlessly about the lost years and the gaps in between. We then spoke about our families and I shared my plight to which she advised me to attend a satsang in Lucknow and to make sure I had langar. Renu lives in Agra and was attending the satsangs there regularly and she tried hard to find one for me here in Lucknow, my hometown.

On one unexpected day while I was in the local market, I came across a woman wearing Guruji's pendant and I struck a conversation with her. Much to my delight, she told me there was a satsang that very evening. I returned home, changed and attended Guruji's satsang for the first time and I was at peace, as I knew He would take over my problem.

My entire life changed in one instance except there was one major hitch. None of my family members believed in Him and was in fact very against my going to His satsangs too.

One night, on Guruji's mahasamadhi day 31 May 2017, I dreamt that my daughter-in-law sat in a satsang. On waking up I asked her to accompany me

but she blatantly refused because she did not believe 'in all this' but I persuaded her to go for me and she did. She sat throughout and even had the blessed langar. As we bowed to leave the host of the satsang approached us stating that she had a vision of my daughter in law bowing before Guruji and He blessing her with a boy as He stated in Punjabi, 'Ja tenu munda bless kita.' [go I have blessed you with a baby boy]

The following year, on 31 May 2018 her vision came to fruition as my daughter-in-law had a baby boy. I cannot thank Him enough for all His blessings. Some are obvious and others obscure so I thank Him every moment, as I do not have an account of all the positive changes that He has brought into my life. He is blessing my family too and we hold satsangs regularly at home in Lucknow. Life is enriched manifold with His presence in our lives and whenever I feel low or lost, I turn to Him as my best friend, my father and mother figure. I sit and connect with Him, as I know He listens to my chatter. He may not be in the physical form but He is with me in spirit and He leads the way. He really is the be all and end all of my existence.'

When our faith is pure and simple then Guruji and the good forces rush in to make the unlikely likely. When a child wants something, it wants it with absolute warranty and not, 'mom and dad give me chocolate if you want but in case you don't it's cool except it isn't but whatever! 'Mom and dad I want to go to university and make something of myself but in case you think I shouldn't then I won't study further and instead of that something I will do nothing.'

There is a definite conviction in the child's voice and he or she has its wish fulfilled, as it has no reservation in asking, 'Mom and dad I want that chocolate and I want to study further.' It does not doubt its self worth or its credibility before asking. We all deserve the very best that life has to offer and Guruji, without exception, gives us the very best. The interpretation of 'mano mango nahin' is because as creatures of wants we may just ask for what may not serve us in the larger picture of life hence to surrender to His will, to keep the canvas of our mind clear and clean with vibrant possibilities is the key to His grace and to sustaining happiness. Dream big but be realistic; aim for the moon and surely you will touch something high up there. In case you miss the moon, you may just fall on a star or on another cloud of possibility.

Nature has a way of blowing the winds in your direction

38

A Mother is Revived

My direction turned from Lucknow to Goa to have the time of my life with my girls. I loved the vibe and believed that someday I would be writing a book here. It was conducive to creativity and charged with an uplifting energy that I find absent in Delhi.

As I sat in an outdoor cafe having lunch with my girls I received a call whose tone was something like this, 'Hi I'm Guneet Monga. You may know me or not but I have produced many Bollywood movies and one of them is 'lunchbox.'

'Wow isn't that amazing. I recently watched it on Netflix and absolutely loved it.' I responded excitedly as I was suddenly filled with nostalgia when Guruji stated, 'Tu heran hondi jayegi ki kon kon ayega mere kol. Ek ek banda connect hoveyga.' [You will be astonished at who all will come to me. One by one they will all connect to me.]

'And so I would like you to attend my amrit vela satsang in Mumbai. Please let me know when you can fly over.' She concluded. 'And yes please do come and stay with me. I absolutely insist.'

Although it was easier to take a flight from Goa to Mumbai, I needed to return to Delhi for a breather, as I was physically tired of traveling. One thing was

certain; I was drawn to the voice that spoke to me, as it was sincere and sure. I could gauge that she was genuine but I kept the trip to Mumbai on the back burner until Guruji gave me a sign to proceed with it.

On returning to Delhi, my path crossed Tahira Kocchar's, the daughter of my childhood friend and Anishka and Sonakshi's teacher from the British school, Komal Kocchar. I do recall taking Komal to Guruji while He was in His physical presence and presumably, it was not her time to make a deep connect. Rather He had not ordained it until years later once He left His physical garb. I was pleasantly surprised when one fine day she called me to invite me for her satsang, as I was unaware of the deep connection she had. Today, I see a staunch Guruji devotee in her. Moreover, her daughter Tahira's faith is steadfast which is inspiring to other youth of today to follow the path. Tahira is today's young lady with modern aspirations and her independent nature could have potentially landed her in various webs of lies and deceit from the outside world but Guruji's protection and guidance enabled her to follow a dignified path. Through spirituality, she understands her self and the journey she has embarked on with the right values. Beneath the delicate and dainty façade, there is a beautiful young lady who unholds strong and sincere devotion towards our Guruji. If I could hear Him now He would probably say, 'Changi kuri hai!' [She is a good girl.]

I have personally witnessed the grace showered on her as she has changed many vocations in life to find her real one. While no experience is futile as there is learning in everything we experience, Guruji ensures taking us to where we belong to benefit others and ourselves through our work. Our dreams are never denied, only fine-tuned to draw out the best image possible. The metric of success is not always monetary or career related. It can be a holistic equation.

Sometimes the best-laid plans of our life blow up in our face in which case our spiritual strength enables us to cross the hurdle. Being in Guruji's fold, no amount of damage is irreparable.

Tahira's satsang

"Mera aapki Kripa se sab kaam ho raha hai, karte ho tum Guruji.... mera naam ho raha hai!" [With your grace, all my work is done; it is You who does it and

yet I am the one who gets the credit] This shabad could not be more appropriate.

I began modelling at the age of 18 while I was in my final year of the International Baccalaureate at The British School, New Delhi. Plenty of modelling offers poured in and it started as a part time hobby besides my gravitation towards the glitz, the glam, the makeup and being before a camera that was all a thrill for the 18-year-old me. During my second-year course in Business studies, P.R. & advertising, I was called on by The Times of India to audition to be a part of 'The Miss India' pageant that year. In short, I made it to the top 18 girls that qualified to take part in the Miss India pageant. At a relatively young age, 20 years old, living away from home, in a competitive environment, 18 beauties competing for that crown and been trained meticulously by the very best in the industry, I have to say it was an enriching learning experience. This made me further independent, courageous, confident and comfortable in my own skin.

Soon after the pageant, a number of movie offers poured in. This had been a childhood dream as I was enamoured by our movies, the song, the dance and the drama. Although this seemed like a far-fetched dream, considering one had to have a base in Mumbai and have the relevant contacts.

After thoughtful hesitation and then an enormous no from my dad, I did land up in Mumbai in mainstream, commercial, romantic comedy, multi starrer Bollywood movie at the age of 21 years as the film's main female lead. The film titled, "Rabba Main Kya Karoon!" Yes! Rabba Main Kya Karoon?

It was a huge ensemble cast with veteran actors and I was the only 'non filmy' girl. I have to admit it was a challenging, creative, educative and an intense learning curve. As far as the cliché of 'the big bad world of Bollywood' is concerned, I was protected and blessed with the best team, director and producers who treated me nothing short of their family, in fact like an absolute princess.

I saw my childhood dream come true, as it unfolded magically. My mom and I moved to Mumbai and found a gorgeous apartment ironically in a building called, 'Shiv Shakti!'

Following this is where my real struggle began; the second movie! There was pressure of having it to be bigger and better while refusing to settle for anything less. Day in and day out auditions, casting meetings, dropping in and out of projects and that too, the big-bannered ones. I was in and out of Yash Raj Film studios – dropped out of a Shahrukh Khan starrer one day before signing the contract, after having done a look test in the films clothes. Soon after this, a prized scene from a Salman Khan starrer, that I was meant to be performing in, cancelled a night before the shoot. This can play sheer havoc with anyone's psyche – the continuous highs and lows but clearly, Guruji kept my head firm on my shoulders and feet on the ground. This made me more patient, understanding, expressive and humble.

He blessed me with huge brands, great shows, fabulous TV commercials and ample work to keep me going but I often wondered why not that 'one big' dream project.

On one of my trips to Delhi, at the Bada Mandir, an elderly uncle asked me, 'Aunty! Aap kya karti hain?' I told him my movie, 'Rabba Main Kya Karoon' had just released. He did not bat an eyelid, looked at the Shivling on top of Bada Mandir and said to me, 'Ab Rabba keh rehe hai NA kar!' – I died! Of course, nothing is a coincidence but then we are advised to keep our connection direct.

Presumably, we always take away what we want to, or maybe I had not fully surrendered then. I was stubborn about chasing my dream, therefore continued in Mumbai. I was back to the full drill – auditions, casting calls, endless meetings, look tests, rehearsals, always achieving 9/10 but there would always be some obstruction before sealing the deal and this was deeply frustrating.

My parents knew I was not getting my due and after working endlessly and not getting, what they believed I deserved they finally put their foot down. After buying some time, I went back on the 1st of July'16, as 7th July was Guruji's birthday and I wanted to start on a positive note.

Back in Delhi there was a sudden void post the daily madness of Mumbai. What was plan B? I had fire in my belly to work, achieve and be self-sufficient. After being in the glamour industry for ten years I was now lost and went completely blank.

People were kind to offer me ideas but nothing excited me. I completely surrendered to Guruji. I went to the mandir as often as I could, because that was the only favourite part about Delhi then. I sat and shared my plight with Him and I waited for Him to lead my destiny.

Lo and behold, Guruji lit the light bulb in my head. Nutrition, Diet, Weight management and this is a booming industry currently, with acute awareness in people, they are more conscious of fitness and wellness – My Guruji hit the nail on the head for me.

It made perfect sense, it's what I've been surrounded by the last ten years, all the tips and tricks learnt through the pageant, my modelling days and the film set. Time to put all this first hand accumulated knowledge to greater use – to help others achieve their goals.

Since I had the practical knowledge, Guruji had me enrol in the best course possible – Dietics, Health and Nutrition. It was an intensive, one and a half year course, back to the classroom, a methodical routine, discipline, exams, practicals, monthly tests and submissions.

In one of my chats with Guruji after a hard day in class, I remember asking him, 'from my film spot boys chasing me around, to now struggling in a classroom. Guruji, aap kya kar rahe hain?

My exams were nearing and believe you me I gave it my all. I believe I never studied this way back in school and I was a bag of nerves. Prior to my exams, Guruji gave me His Divine darshan in my dream. He was sitting in a classroom, as radiant and glowing tremendously, wearing an orange chola writing an exam paper! I woke up ecstatic. The results as you can imagine were phenomenal as I scored 100% in my practicals. Meri Mehnat-Teri Rehmat.

My happiness knew no bounds, I was eager to launch my clinic by Jan'18. However, it happened according to Guruji's timing, which was eleven months later in December'18. It was a lengthy wait but when He brings us so far, He does what is best when we are completely capable.

Today, three months into sitting at my clinic, Guruji has blessed me with tremendous success stories – weight loss, improved blood reports, people quitting medicines that they were highly dependent on. He has made me a part of a number of recognised panel discussions, more often than not being the youngest panellist. To top it all, a waiting list of clients until two months ahead.

Another window of wisdom has opened up in my mind; when we are young, our dreams and aspirations are as immature as we are and then we grow up and our past desires turn foreign. Today my desires are mature; I do not want to change the world but I do want to make a change and Guruji has granted me that opportunity. No amount of Shukrana is enough. He has done so much for all of us and last year He saved my mother too.

It was Sunday, fourth of March'18. My father was shell shocked to enter the house to find my mother collapsed in their bedroom. In that state of panic, worry, cluelessness, he tried everything he could for her to gain consciousness but she lay there pale and lifeless. Soon after, dad reached out to his brother, who lives directly behind our house and together they rushed her to the closest hospital.

A number of procedures took place but mum still lay there pale and lifeless. No one understood what had happened. Once they got her oxygen mask on and managed a fully equipped ambulance, they rushed her to Aashlok hospital, knowing how important every second was.

I stood on the road right outside the ambulance door. She was taken out of the ambulance and rushed into the ICU. I froze! - For me then, from what I saw, I had lost my mother.

On examining her in the I.C.U doctors confirmed, she had choked on her vomit and that her lungs had clogged up with it. This condition carries a very high mortality rate and the chance of survival is almost nil considering no one knew how long she had been unconscious. They were doing their utmost to revive her and I kept praying for a miracle, until Dr. Ashwini Chopra himself called up my maasi to say, 'This isn't looking good at all, we've tried everything but she isn't responding to anything and we've now put her on life support.'

Crushed and uncontrollable I cannot and never will be able to express what I went through in that moment. My father then, pulled out a picture of Guruji from his pocket, which always lay on mum's bedside table, and handed it to me. In absolute shame I admit I pushed his hand away, as clearly I was not in my right mind.

Nevertheless, Guru's Mehr - soon after there was a certain strength and calm in me and at 1:30 am, a doctor rushed out of the I.C.U. to inform us that mom's hand had moved.

My Guruji's grace had begun. Only one person was permitted to see her so I rushed in with the warning not to be emotional so not to have her choke on any pipe, if at all she opened her eyes.

I drew a deep breath, did mantra Jaap before seeing her lay there whitish and limp with pipes in every part of her body, face dislocated with the mouth pipe, drips and needles in her soft skin. I tried my level best to get a reaction out of her but I failed. My father and I stayed in the room upstairs at the hospital, while mum was in the I.C.U. downstairs and as soon as we reached the room, I kept Guruji's swaroop right next to me.

At 6am, the doctors informed us that she opened her eyes. My happiness knew no bounds and we rushed down to the I.C.U. but again she lay there whitish, with a hundred pipes and no movement. At 10 am the doctors said that despite opening her eyes, things were not looking good and in spite of being on the ventilator her parameters were haywire.

It was an unfair game played with me - take my heart out of me, put it back in, take it back out...

Up until then, my father, who was my pillar of strength, fell apart. I too was helpless and I felt like everything was slipping away and I had no control over it. There was no concept of day/night, food/water, sleep/no sleep and I lost count of days but then one night, I finally dozed off and I had a dream - Gurujis Darshan!

My recollection is that there was a festive satsang - possibly at the bada

mandir, but I could not get in. Disheartened I went to some art show around the corner. Just when I cross the satsang location to leave for home, I see Guruji, tall, elegant and dressed in a red chola with a few rose petals at the back of his head. A beam of light drops to highlight His path that leads to His bedroom in Chota mandir.

That was the first night I slept and woke up to hear that mom was being shifted to the room from the I.C.U. As soon as I heard that I vividly remembered the dream I had a couple of hours ago, which clearly insinuated from a big area, (in this case the I.C.U.) to Gurujis bedroom in Chota Mandir (in this case from I.C.U to room)

As the famous saying goes, 'God gave us our relatives; thank God we can choose our friends.' Ever since the word spread about mum's health, the undying support of our family and friends is what kept my dad and I afloat but the family that my Guruji chose for me - our Guru parivar, I can't thank them enough for the innumerable prayers, love and support.

The same evening, when mum came to the room a member from my Guru Parivar made her way through the door carrying two bottles of jal prasad from chota mandir. She was wearing a red chola like outfit, precisely what Guruji wore in my dream the night before and now I was certain that Guruji sent her to us for healing my mum.

Mum, who was not responding to any treatment and was on the ventilator, one Sunday before, returned home the following Monday. This was actually a miracle that I have witnessed with my own eyes and if it were not for Guruji, my mother certainly would not have been alive today."

Positive thoughts keep you in harmony with the laws of attraction and abundance.

39

We are never Alone

Abundance is what I am blessed with at this stage and age of my journey.

In April 2017, my daughters challenged me to make a trip abroad alone and to spend at least a week in a city I had never visited. They planned this for me after attending Guneet Monga's satsang and on staying with her. We chatted, bonded and shared our satangs for hours before she asked me to rest, as I would need to rise at 3am and be ready for her 4 am satsang at her residence. It was my first Amrit vela satsang ever and I had the opportunity to share my experiences. When Guruji blesses an aspect of our lives then it flows with His unending grace as I shared profusely until 8 am! It was then that I met and befriended Karan Anand, the renowned Director Siddharth Anand's younger brother. He held a satsang the following evening and I stayed over with his mom and him at their Juhu home. I was elated as from all quarters as I was showered with love by the Mumbai sangat. One evening I went to Guruji's mandir, which was, in fact my very first time there. Indeed a trip wholly blessed by Guruji.

I flew to Manchester in May of that year and two days later, a new threat immediately cast its shadow over the entire nation. Manchester arena was attacked by terror and it shook us all. Ariana Grande, the renowned singer was performing the evening of that ghastly attack where many teenagers were killed.

My plans to travel to Madrid alone also shook momentarily until my brother Sanjay whom I was staying with and Kajal who has been a sister to me encouraged me to proceed with my plans. Faith navigates troubled waters and the choice is either to rise in faith or to shrink in fear. Since my life was driven by it, there was no room for the latter. Obstacles are only in the mind so I drew strength and courage from Guruji's love and marched on.

My motto is to have very few regrets as possible because the saddest words that roll of anyone's tongue are 'it might have been' or 'if only'

Madrid.... I felt free owned by no one and held back by nothing. I had come home to myself; free and fearless. I had once read that the deeper meaning to travel was finding oneself through the different landscapes and it was alone that we had the opportunity to cultivate a harmonious relationship and when we learn to love ourselves, it is a lifelong romance. I was in Madrid, a city I dreamt of visiting for a long time but ideally with friends or family. I was grateful to my daughters for enlightening me that sometimes we are our best company providing we carry with us a positive and liberating attitude and a feeling of protection.

I walked the streets of Madrid, sat in Plaza Mayor for a Spanish omelet as I sipped on black tea and people watched with a smile on my content face. Some were alone while other young couples walked together holding hands and then there were vagabonds standing in the corners of the shops that covered the entire square. I slipped my bread into my bag with the intent of offering it to one of them. Subsequently, I hopped onto the tour bus to visit the world famous cathedral de la almodena at the affluent Salamanca area. I felt a strong emotion of having reclaimed my life. I felt an air of freedom and youth and Guruj'si presence in the very heart of our trip. It was ideal to reconstruct my confidence and self-assurance and the visit opened up my skies like never before, as I no longer believed my options were limited and that I had less time to achieve everything I longed for. I ceased to regret the fact that my youth was robbed of me in the time I was married for 18 years. Guruji had given me more energy, enthusiasm and the means to achieve whatever I desired and I was exactly where I needed to be. Gazing up at the incredibly azure skies, I was filled with so much gratitude that I wouldn't have changed any of my previous chapters. The realization that everything

happened for a reason and that all is perfect in God's plan dawned on me that day.

I viewed it all so differently now; a new chapter with new changes with limitless benefits. I understood in that moment that I would never be a territorial creature. Travel was my destiny and with His Grace the meaning of travel had been redefined as it was now to inspire and infuse faith in sangat who are making their enquires and testing the waters of faith.

None of us can be everything or do everything but each of us can do something to make a pond of a difference in this infinite ocean of life. I could not fit the shape of each bottle no matter how adaptable I was but I would fit the shape of the right bottle that Guruji had shaped for me.

I walked to this quaint café down my hotel street to have an early meal of avocado croissant and cappuccino and read 'autobiography of a yogi' which is a book that Guruji had asked me to read and I recommend to anyone who is in pursuit of an inner journey and the greater meaning to their lives.

I struck up a conversation with a woman sitting alone. She was from Holland and married but travelled alone as her husband did not enjoy new places or faces, as he was deeply entrenched in his comfort zone. She on the other hand was ready for adventure and told me how important it was for a woman to perceive the world as a beautiful place where opportunities for them were ample. She was from a generation where women spent their lives in domesticity and here she was in her late sixties sharing her words of wisdom.

I asked her if she was on face book and she responded cheerfully.

'Alone together site? The site that perhaps causes maximum resentments on seeing others virtually happy? No, I am not Anita! I much rather do coffee with you; make a real connect than a virtual one and to not be in another's face. My life is private and if I have two or three friends who are there at the drop of a hat then I am the most blessed person alive. Our emotions emanate from the heart and my brain is not wired to embrace emoticons online or feel towards them. I love watching the human face smile and see the lines of experience appear on their foreheads and around the eyes and lips. I respect the real and cringe at the virtual. In fact, there will come a time when taking

out our mobiles when in company will be considered anti social and uncool. Selfies will disappear and people will learn to live and enjoy the moment. Tell me Anita, can we capture this moment on our mobiles and if posted on face book will the viewer be able to grasp the emotion of your picture? My guess is no. Every experience granted to us by God is for us and it leads to our truth.'

She resonated my feelings about people's obsession with social media. People were preoccupied engaging themselves in the virtual and denying themselves their reality.

I asked her where she was going from Madrid, if at all she planned to, which again she responded most wisely.

'Sure planning does help and adhering to schedules is even better but I don't do either! You are probably the type, and I say this without any judgment; who revels at arriving at her destination on time whereas I am the type who is constantly late as I get off the train or the bus to explore new towns on the way to my final destination so I enjoy my journey to the utmost.

I just happen to have this innate talent for living. I cannot say I have achieved unbridled happiness but that is not possible anyway. Sublime happiness is unachievable but there is always joy found in the quotidian. I am a very positive woman and these positive emotions help me to function better making me more productive, creative and resilient.

What greater freedom than travelling to the unknown alone to know yourself. The feeling of air sweeping through you is invigorating and I learnt in my time the cause of unhappiness is actually, when we give the reigns of our lives to the judgments of others who directly or indirectly set our standards for us. Why become a spectacle for others to laugh at us or be envious of our life choices.

I am leaving for Marbella tomorrow to be on the beach for two days. I simply love feeling the sand between my toes when walking barefoot.'

We chatted and I laughed with her all evening as she spilled out many of her life's learning and when she stood on her feet I noticed how groomed she

was from head to toe. She combined grace and power with unsurpassed elegance.

Today women have more stories to tell outside their home than within its four walls. Their obsession of being on the consumer treadmill where their only mission in life was to buy the latest bags and shoes is reducing as they are venturing into travelling alone and developing their character. They have understood that what they do in terms of gathering experiences is far more fulfilling than what they own.

Fear was a sensation that used to hang around me like an unwelcome friend but I noticed Guruji had made it disappear in Spain. I had surrendered my fears to Him a while back at bade mandir and I noticed its absence from my solar plexus. I had untangled a web of emotions and the fog of anxiety had cleared too. Travel clears the mind and lightens the heart. After a week of being in a new place and even striking up conversations every evening at the coffee shop with a new face I introspected on the flight to Barcelona. With my baggage of karma and the traits, I picked up along my journey like fear, anxiety and pain Guruji shed with time. There is no period to this and He does it when it is right for us hence it may take years as it did in my case. Ordinarily, I would not have struck conversations with strangers but on doing so I gained some illuminating and insightful wisdom.

Landing at Barcelona, Guruji's sangat awaited my arrival at the airport. I have no idea how this works but it does every time. We are discouraged from childhood not to talk to strangers and not to trust anything they say to lure us. Here it is the exact opposite. We do not know each other from Adams and yet on arriving at the airport, collecting my luggage and walking out of the exit door I see many Indian faces but I gravitate only towards my sangat who I have never met! Inexplicably I know them as they know me. We greet each other with 'Jai Guruji' and they, Mahendru uncle and his son drive me to my hotel that is a walking distance from their restaurant, 'moti mahal' and after settling in I attend their family's satsang there. There was up to thirty devotees of Guruji and their devotion was as pure and as simple as they were. I was overjoyed to meet them. They were warm and their devotion was pure.

I learnt here that no matter where we are in the world Guruji's satsang is

heartwarming and uplifting. His langar is as blessed it is back home be that in Manchester or Delhi. On the darbar we barely notice how grandiose or minimal the flower arrangements are as the focus is only Him. Fortunately, in places like Europe or the US where there is not an over emphasis on the décor, there are more chances of connecting and imbibing the shabds as well as His vibration. There are no distractions and no sense of competition of whose langar parsad is more lavish or whose décor is grander. The one and only focus is Guruji and feeling His presence in our heart. Rich or poor, lavish or minimal, Guruji's feels only our intention and our connection and not the amount we spend on decorating the satsang to dress to impress.

On returning to the hotel, I decided to go for a walk on la Ramblas and by this time it was midnight. That particular year there had been many terror attacks primarily in Paris and Germany. As I walked, I suddenly felt a pang of anxiety on noticing a white van racing on the road besides the path I walked. I prayed to Guruji not to let anything terrible happen here. God had protected me more times, than I can count or imagine. There are blessings that pass unnoticed and it is only in retrospect we are able to see and appreciate them. All was well and I returned to my hotel feeling altogether refreshed and fulfilled. With Guruji in the core of our existence, the world does appear safer somehow.

I returned to Manchester to Sanjay and Kajal for a few days completely satisfied for having met the challenge my daughters had set for me. I learned that such challenges put contact with a part of ourselves that we are not aware existed. A manageable amount of stress or pressure makes us psychologically stronger and prepares us with difficult situations in the future. Achieving goals big or small has a positive impact on our well-being. Everything is a stepping-stone to our inner growth and the more diverse experiences we have the more substance we have as a person.

Sanjay and kajal took me back to Spain except this time it was to Marbella, the Spanish Riviera. They treated me to the most sumptuous resort there; Villa Padierna Palace. We had the most enjoyable and enriching three nights stay and that is imprinted in my memory because we bonded as we feasted our eyes on the lush surroundings of the property.

One evening whilst walking down Porto buenous a familiar voice called out to me and it was Kenny and kamal, my very dear friends from Delhi.

After some weeks Sonakshi, Anishka, Vivianna and I engaged in a road trip around Europe and this was my dream come to true to say the least. We had spoken about it in Delhi the year before and Guruji had made it possible. I joined them in Vienna, Austria after they had covered Budapest and here we spent a few nights before we drove to Salzburg to enjoy the place where the movie, 'Sound of music' was shot. We visited Hallstatt- a UNESCO heritage site and a must visit with the largest salt mine in Europe, had dinner in the Eagles nest in Germany; Hitlers hangout and then drove in the evening to Venice. We covered Burano, San Marco Realto, Palma; yet another heritage site, Porto Rico, Lake Como, Milano and the last but not the least Chinki Terri. We drove and stayed in most towns and cities for just over two weeks and believe you me the entire trip is recorded in my memory as the best ever. It was an ideal time with my daughters and Vivianna who too is like my daughter. Having said that I do not know how many more girls in the sangat I wrap in my love. I have a soft corner for girls and they too gravitate towards me for maternal love.

My daughters Anishka and Sonakhi are undoubtedly my sincerest friends and greatest well-wishers. It is all Guruji's grace that we share a strong and understanding bond. Children loving their parents is also entirely His benevolence, as many in today's 'selfie' world cannot see outside their own insular thinking. There seems to be marginal space to accommodate parents and while it is said that we must love ourselves first and to live our lives to the utmost it is not to be interpreted as neglecting our parents. Having a balanced view on this and giving love to one's parents is the greatest Seva and as Guruji used to state that nothing is more important than that as the blessings of our elders benefit us and our children. Hence, to say that we are spiritual, attending regular satsangs, loving Guruji while neglecting or completely rejecting our parents is the greatest sin. In today's world, we hear people literally disposing their aged parents into an old age home and then refusing to visit them. It is heartbreaking and inhumane to disown them.

The most overwhelming key to a child's success and well-being is the positive involvement of its parents. Later the well-being of its parents depends largely on the love and nurturing received from their children.

I am, today, in the position that I am owing to the abundant blessings of my Guruji, my parents and the love of my daughters.

Honor and respect those who raise us.

40

One Master – Many Lives

I raise a toast to the good children out there who honor, respect and love their parents. To care for those who once cared for us is one of the highest honors.

There are incredibly good examples of son's and daughters loving and completely showering their love on their parents and one such shining one is Aman Narang- His satsang

'We had the privilege of coming into Guruji's sharan for the first time on His Birthday, 7th July, 2001. It was a magical moment, which only dreams are made of and it sounds completely out of a fairy tale, but it was truly 'Love at first sight!' The Master welcomed my parents and I with open arms and, before we realised, we were sitting amongst the privileged sangat members in this mesmerizing environment under the eyes of the 'Mahapurusha' - whose aura can't be explained, whose powers can't be defined and whose love for his devotees can't be expressed in words.

Being a teenager, who was not an atheist but often questioned the existence of God, I was reluctant to go there but my father had already visited Guruji and on hearing his experience and upon his persistence, my mother and I accompanied him. One would normally imagine walking into a Mandir with idols of God all around, and a saintly figure sitting in saffron clothes reciting

mantras or giving a sermon on morals, values and ethics but this was different. A décor better than that of royal Indian wedding, thousands of people flocking to the place with their faces lit up with joy, excitement and anticipation.

We climbed up the steps of the Bade Mandir, stood in a queue and observed a comely young man sitting on a throne dressed in an elegant outfit, with a radiant glow on his face, and people bowing before Him seeking His blessings. Had my father not apprised me of Guruji's physical appearance, it may have been difficult for me to accept that He was the Guru. Honestly, between that day and today, I can say with firm conviction and great pride – I have seen God, and experienced His immense blessings since arriving on His doorstep. This is no ordinary Guru. He is the creator, the preserver and the destroyer. Whether you call him Lord Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva, or give Him the title of any other deity you may worship, Guruji is the supreme power that we all seek in God. I remember coming to Him initially with questions in mind but after a couple of visits I was completely awe struck not only by His aura that surrounded the place, but also by some of the things I witnessed.

With His unconditional love for the sangat, He has displayed some of His miraculous powers to humankind by healing them of misery, suffering and incurable ailments which doctors have not been able to fathom. In this way, he has granted people a new lease of life. He has assumed the form of other deities and given His 'Divine Darshan' to His followers in the form of Sai Baba, Shiv Ji and Guru Nanak Dev Ji; thus reiterating there is only one God, and if we have faith in Him, we do not need to run helter-skelter to seek His blessings.

Guruji's philosophy was very simple and relatable to us in the most practical sense. Firstly, Guruji never preached and neither did He impose any 'Do's and Don'ts' or give any religious sermon, nor did He ask His disciples to abstain from eating meat or drinking alcohol. He believed in the theory of 'Karma' and advised us to do good for people, and if we cannot do good, at least do not do bad. Everyone has to pay for their 'karmas' but once we come in His divine fold, he reduces our suffering and pain by 90%. However, the rest 10% still needs to be borne by us. Secondly, the Sangat at the Mandir was highly educated. It is easy to bring an uneducated person to the same

place repeatedly, as he might go with the herd mentality. However, an educated person will come once or twice to such a place, upon which he shall refrain from coming unless he sees some sort of rationale in doing so. Ranging from senior politicians to top bureaucrats, corporate honchos to the common person, not only was everyone treated equally with the same amount of dignity and respect, they also shared the 'Langar Prasad' from the same plate, thus inculcating humility amongst themselves. This appealed to me that there were many educated people coming here, were willing to shed their egos and sit under one roof sharing food from the same plate in reverence to Guruji.

As mentioned earlier, Guruji never preached Himself. Nonetheless, He often asked His sangat members to narrate their experiences. This he called Satsang – a true narration of the incident being shared with the audience ('Sat' derived from the word Satya which means truth, and 'Sang' refers to the people who are seated around, which is the Sangat). We initially thought Guruji was trying to boast His powers by asking people to narrate instances where He had blessed them through His divine powers. Later, however, we realised Guruji's concept - only when we listen to experiences from the horse's mouth itself, do we realise the intensity of the situation and the tremendous blessings that the devotee has received from Guruji. This is what helps us build faith, and faith is all Guruji asks of us followed by complete surrender.

We, as a family, have had a number of incredible experiences under the sharan of Guruji. In an endeavour to highlight his unending 'Kripa' on our family, I hereby narrate some of the Satsangs we experienced.

Shortly after coming to Guruji, He sent me abroad for my education and after a few months, I caught bronchitis. I returned to India for my winter break and this confirmed with a patch on the lungs. I went back in January with my complete medical kit, but the severe winter with the sultry weather did not help. I had a severe asthma attack one night, where I was gasping for breath for at least an hour and a half. I tried every possible medication including the inhaler, but to no avail. Sitting alone in my room in the university, I was left with no choice but to call an ambulance, when I suddenly remembered Guruji and realised He had blessed me with one of His personal belongings before I left the country and it was lying in my cupboard. Today, after having

gone to Guruji for many years and having had many divine experiences, the first thought that comes to my mind in any awkward situation is Guruji. However, back then, it had only been six months since we had started going to Him and it takes time for complete faith to develop. I did not even remember Him once in that agonizing moment but when better sense prevailed and I thought of Him, I took out His blessing from my wardrobe and touched it to my chest praying hard to Him. Honestly, it was probably just 1% faith and 99% desperation because we will do anything to gain relief from suffocation. Having remembered Him, within a minute or two, without any exaggeration, I was breathing normally. Moreover, it has been a long time since this incident and, with Guruji's blessings; I have not needed an inhaler since. This life changing satsang in our family instilled in us tremendous faith in Guruji.

A couple of months later, I had to cross a road where the pedestrian crossing was about half a mile away. Being lazy, I just looked to my left and then to my right, and spotting no vehicle I began running across when suddenly, a car came speeding and was about to run me over and I suddenly stopped. Normally, if one is running across a road, one looks on either side before crossing, but does not stop in the middle of the road to look out for on-coming vehicles. Guruji cautioned me to stop half way and look to my right. By the time I slowed down, the speeding car's front wheel had already run over my foot. I fell back on the ground, my eyes shut, and suddenly I saw Guruji's image before my eyes. I lay on the road before being lifted by the driver and taken to the side, as I was unable to walk on my own due to an injured foot. When the cops and the ambulance arrived and questioned us on the occurrence of the event, they refused to record our statements, as our version of the sequence of events seemed completely implausible to them. They were shocked to hear that during this entire episode no other vehicle passed by. It seemed unbelievable that no other vehicle passed by on that usually busy road that ran across the city connecting two highways. During this period, any vehicle coming from that blind curve would have either dashed into the stopped car, or else would have run me over, as there were only two lanes, and the car and I lay parallel to each other, blocking both lanes. In an accident, this would have been fatal or led to major injuries. I escaped with a mere hairline fracture of my big toe. He reduced the burden of my karma, saving me yet again!

In December 2010, we were on a family holiday in Kerala when Guruji gave a new lease of life to my father. We were at the Tata tea estate in Munnar, a remote hill station 4 hours from Kochi, where my father suddenly developed an angina pain. He was sweating profusely, accompanied with heaviness in the arm - classic symptoms of an attack. My mom and I immediately screamed for medical aid, only to be told that we were in a remote area, and the closest doctor/ambulance was at least half an hour away. We again requested the people around us to organize whatever aid best possible, and prayed hard to Guruji to come to our rescue. Within a couple of minutes, a doctor and a nurse appeared from nowhere. Incidentally, the doctor was carrying a blood thinner tablet in one pocket and a Sorbitrate (one of the most common medicines used in this scenario) in the other. After administering these drugs, the doctor drove my parents in his car to the closest hospital. The doctor was in a self-driven Tata Indigo and I followed them in a Toyota Innova, which was a cab. The cars are of great relevance here because despite me following in a bigger vehicle and driven by a professional driver, at a speed of around 80-90 km/h, where on a hilly road one dared to go beyond 40-50 km/h, we were unable to keep pace with the doctor. This is when I realised his car, was not being driven by the doctor, but Guruji Himself was steering that vehicle. (It remains a mystery how the doctor and the nurse landed up there, as no one had actually called for them. The doctor mentioned that these medicines were in his pocket as he had visited a heart patient two days ago and by chance he happened to wear the same coat. Nevertheless, as Guruji reiterated, there are no coincidences in His bhagat's lives - nothing happens by chance and only as per His will, as He Himself steers the wheel).

On reaching the hospital, Dad was taken into emergency where medical aid was given. However, because it was a small set-up, we were advised to move to Kochi, the closest big city (which was also about 4 hours away), in order to get better medical facilities. Not aware of the area, we landed up at the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences, upon recommendation, only to learn later that this was one of the best hospitals in South India, ran under a charitable trust headed by a spiritual woman widely worshipped in that area named Mata Amritanandmayi (or the 'Hugging Mother/Amma'). After being taken into the cardiac unit, tests were carried out without any diagnosis. The doctor announced to my father the following morning that he was going away for the day for his monthly visit to Amma's ashram, which was about 4

hours away. However, the doctor returned early evening and told my dad that he had experienced something very unusual that day. He was on his way to the Ashram when he heard a voice, loud and clear, stating he should return to Kochi and attend to his patient. To re-confirm that he was not imagining, he asked his wife sitting next to him in the car, and she replied in the affirmative. This had never happened to him in the past 17 years of being a devotee of Amma. By the time, he returned to the hospital, my father's problem had been diagnosed.

The line of treatment the doctor recommended was either an angioplasty that he himself would do on the spot, or a bypass surgery that would be undertaken by another doctor the following day. Being in a dilemma, we frantically called our known doctors in other cities to take their opinion on how to proceed. In the mean time, Guruji came and told my father, who lay on the bed in the cath lab, "Stent pawa teh ghar ja!" which meant 'get your stenting done and return home.'

With Guruji's blessings, an angioplasty was done the same evening. The next day the doctor went to visit Amma's ashram and was shocked to hear Amma enquire about the patient from Delhi (my father). The doctor narrated this upon his return, and the fact that Amma normally never enquired about any patient. He asked us whether we had put in a word to seek her blessings, which we had not. Furthermore, after he told her about my father's health and the line of treatment administered, she exclaimed "Shiv Shiv," which he had never heard her say. Obviously, this was no one but my Guruji at work! Within a couple of days, dad was discharged and we flew back to Delhi. On arrival, we visited Bade Mandir to thank Guruji. While dad thanked Him in the Samadhi, he felt bad and apologised to Guruji that he could not bend down to seek His blessings, as he was not permitted to do so awhile. Guruji instantly heard his prayer, and the next thing we saw was Guruji's face, crystal clear, in the 'Jyot' (holy flame that burns 24/7). We were elated on seeing this, and quite a few sangat members in the vicinity captured this 'Darshan' (visual appearance) on their phones.

A few years later, my father was diagnosed with a heart condition again. An angioplasty was fixed for the 8th of March, a day after the Mahashivratri function that year where he had langar parsad. He was admitted on the seventh and the next morning, doctors carried out the procedure and inserted three stents. We were told that it all went off well. Shortly after

arriving at the recovery room, my father complained of breathlessness. The doctors discounted it by stating it was just a foreign body reaction and would take time to settle in. They regularly did their ECGs but all seemed normal. Thanks to Guruji, better sense prevailed upon my father and he pressed the panic button, as he had experienced stenting in the past and knew exactly how one feels post angioplasty. Senior doctors were consulted once we raised an alarm, and they took him back into the procedure room to check him.

During the procedure, one of Dad's arteries had ruptured which led to internal bleeding. The blood collected between the heart and the lungs, and he found it difficult to breathe – what is medically termed as pericardial effusion. The doctors were unable to figure out the exact point/points where the artery had ruptured; therefore, it was an extremely critical situation, since post angioplasty he was on blood thinning medication, which is essential to keep the stents in place. However, these blood thinners were increasing the internal bleeding, not helping the cause. It was a catch twenty-two scenario! The doctors were trying their best, but the situation seemed grim. The chances of having this kind of pericardial effusion due to arteries ruptured in an angioplasty are extremely remote so the chance of survival becomes even rarer. This is when the Big Boss, i.e. Guruji, Himself stepped in, in order to salvage the situation. Besides guiding the doctors on how to rectify the situation and come out of it, there were numerous instances where Guruji showed his presence in this agonizing time for our family.

On the morning of the procedure, I received a call from an unknown person on my Father's phone. We did not know each other but she had a dream, tracked us down and gave us the re-assuring message before the procedure that Guruji told her that my father would recover.

Another aunty had a dream about my father and her and her husband, visited him in hospital the next morning. She insisted on going into the Heart Command (special ICU where my father was admitted). On being refused, she described the exact location of dad's bed inside the Heart Command. Guruji had appeared in her dream and shown her this in addition to Him walking inside that room, blessing my father.

Similarly, there were instances wherein various sangat members

periodically dreamt of my father's progress though doctors and family members still saw him critical.

One day we wanted to give Divine Prasad to my father, but somehow my mother forgot to carry it while coming to the hospital. That same evening, one aunty from the sangat visited us in the hospital, carrying Divine Prasad for my father.

Some sangat members got together to sit and pray for my father's recovery, as per Guruji's message received by them.

The hospital lobby and cafeteria flocked with sangat members all day, with some spending the night in the hospital. They came in large numbers on a daily basis and took complete charge - organizing food and drinks for fellow visitors, all at their own expense.

After being critical, dad recovered well and was back home fit as a fiddle. I highlight here the role and contribution of the 'Sangat' (fellow devotees). Guruji emphasized the importance of sangat and He ensured they were taken care of. He confirmed that sangat is family to us. Family members may or may not be around, but sangat would always be there. In our own case, I respected the importance of the sangat only after this incident. Not undermining the role and effort of our family and friends who were a pillar of strength but the sangat members stood like a rock besides us. In Delhi, where distance and traffic can be a deterrent sangat came without hesitation to offer their moral support and bring Guruji's Prasad. Hats off to all these people and I acknowledge how blessed we are to have each other.

In another incident, my 'mama' (maternal uncle) was driving up from Chandigarh to Kasauli when he wanted to hear Guruji's 'Kirtan' (holy songs). However due to no kirtan CD being around, he visualized Guruji in one of Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's songs that was playing - 'Tere bin dil nahi lagda soniya.' He was driving up the hills, overtaking a truck, when unexpectedly he saw a bus approaching from the opposite direction, and he had the valley on one side and a head on collision on the other. An accident was inevitable, he blanked out and even today, the incident is a blur to him. In the next instance he realised he had overtaken the truck and the accident was averted. Shocked and shaken he stopped the car to regain composure and to thank Guruji. Upon reaching his destination, he met the passengers

from the car he had overtaken and they asked how he had managed this remarkable feat. He was speechless and further shocked when the person exclaimed “Aapki gaadi hawa mein thi” which means that the car was airborne.

A few weeks later, my mama dreamt that Guruji and he were driving up the hills and the vehicle soon met with an accident. He saw many body parts scattered around that area, and Guruji asked my mama to gather them and to bring them to Him. Guruji took them and absorbed them inside His own body. Clearly, Guruji had taken my mama’s karma upon Himself and blessed him with a new lease of life!

He said once we come in His fold, He regulates our lives completely and so there are no coincidences. He first gives us life, health; and then blesses us with worldly gains. Only He knows what to give and when.

‘Faith’ and ‘Complete Surrender’ are what Guruji asked for and by doing this the course of our lives begin to alter. We cannot our Guru but He can test our devotion. We need to be firm in our faith and have the conviction that He will always keep us in His shield. Adapting to the maxim, ‘teri raz mein hi razi’ brings with it much peace and acceptance into our lives. “Mango nahi... Manno” is surrendering to His Divine will as our vision is myopic and cannot possibly know our lives larger picture; taking into account our past karmas. He has proven time and time that we worry needlessly. He said, ‘Chinta nahin Chintan karo.’ [Don’t worry, only contemplate on His name.]

Guruji said, ‘I am a practical Guru.’ He was averse to fasting, rituals and superstitions. Cultivating a direct connection with Him, improving our ‘karma’ and remembering Him in our day to day activities is our one and only religion.

His magnanimity and love for his devotees is unparalleled. He smoothes out this otherwise rough journey of life and forgives our erroneous karmas by either negating or minimizing the repercussions. Sharing and narrating satsangs is a way of rendering hope to others and reinforcing His grace, which is beyond what we can quantify in words. My soul thanks Guruji for accepting us in His ‘sharan.’

Robust optimism and faith that drives out fear is what keeps the human spirit resilient in the face of adversity.

41

Adversity Turns into an Advantage

Adversity transforms into advantage and boon when we steadfastly hold onto faith and patience.

By late 2017, I settled into my life in my new home and I had struck a fine balance between Delhi and my travels. I followed my heart and acutely listened to my body when it instructed me to leave the city on feeling bogged down.

Satsangs were flowing in Vasant Vihar as Guruji's following was growing by leaps and bounds and one of the reasons I was emotionally settled was because my neighbors' in my apartment building had also connected to Guruji a year later, 2018. This was one of my prayers to Guruji on shifting here, to connect my neighbours Versha and Sangeeta. Versha and I now attend satsangs together and visit bade mandir for our weekly langar parsad. It is an unmeasured joy to have that comrade, as we are both single, connected to Guruji and living in the same building. Guruji's ways are simply magical. Versha's satsang

"Jai Guruji. We, His devotees have definitely understood that Guruji has His way of connecting each one of us to Him. When we say we are connected we are referring to acknowledging His presence consciously in this life, though He has been with us for eternity.

I attended my first satsang in late 2018 in my apartment building. It was a turning point in my life in every aspect, specially my spiritual journey. Initially I was hesitant to go, as I had no idea what I was in for. Satsangs that I had attended with my mother back in the day had bhajans that devotees sang aloud. Here it was a contrast to that as devotees sat in complete silence with melodious shabd played. Candles and flowers surrounded Guruji's swaroop and there was a warm and comforting energy penetrating the room. It was meditative and I quietly sat down in an empty chair and closed my eyes.

Antaryami nu ki dasan hal dil da.

Guruji knows each one of us, inside and out from kalpas. I was very close to my mother and as I had recently lost her, I was missing her. The next few bhajans that played were the ones I would hear daily with my mom. I felt a warm sensation run through me and I was enveloped with my mother's love and her presence. I had chai and langar parsad that I had earlier declined. I learnt that it was medicine and had incredible curative powers for our body and soul, particularly when consumed with the intent Guruji blessed them. It has the overwhelming power to overcome our sufferings from our karmas and to change the course of our destiny. I pray to Guruji to never let go of my hand that He is holding today.

Guruji connects us through another sangat and my calling came through my neighbor Anita. Thereafter we began our journey together in attending satsangs primarily in our vicinity as Guruji has made it convenient having them on our doorstep. It does not matter where you go He is omnipresent and when you connect to Him, we connect anywhere. Who is holding the satang is irrelevant, as we do not go to connect with the host; only to God. He is the one that pulls us through difficult situations and carries us to the other side of the shore.

His love knows no bounds and with Him in our lives, we feel safe and secure. He prevents each one of us from doing wrong by awakening our conscience. Animals also eat, breathe and sleep but the difference lies in human compassion and empathy. If as humans we are not compassionate towards others and self then we are no better than animals. Having Guruji in our lives makes us resilient so no matter how dark the days we bounce back. An

animal no matter how hard its life is will not go and stand in the middle of the road to get run over but a human that can no longer accept life for what it is mindlessly commits suicide. I believe when we bring Guruji into our heart we don't give up because He becomes our driving force. Our focus from the problem shifts to Him. Tu hi tu becomes our life's maxim. The more we live by His word the more He shields us from the evil of the world. The deeper we delve into His love the more we want to be loved by Him because we come to the realization His is the only true love. Over the course of attending satsangs and visiting His mandir our thoughts change and as they do our priorities too shift. From wanting anything material, we want to experience His presence in our lives.

Having practiced Buddhism actively since past 10 years I understood His teachings better. It flowed within me like running water. Initially I would seek Him outside myself, looking for signs from Him to see if He was around me. Because of years of practicing and chanting with my eyes open, I found it difficult to sit still with my eyes closed, connecting to the Divine Light. Gradually when I started meditating and connecting with him on the soul level, I found Him within myself and needed no external signs all of the time.

As I am now looking within, I am experiencing all over the same; love, compassion and wisdom. Though they existed before, now every cell in my body is vibrating and absorbing His energy that has brought consciousness to a higher level.

Gratitude was always a part of me but the way of looking at things with gratitude has magnified. He, my Guruji, has changed me from the depth of my soul. Shukrana, Gratitude, Thank you are too small a words for this frequency He has created.

This is how He has taken me under His wings. Today He protects me, guides me, talks to me and every moment I feel His presence. He has bestowed me with His unconditional love as my parent. He became that father, mother and friend to me whom I sought after losing my family. [Tumhi ho Maata, Pita tumhi ho, Tumh ho bandhu, Sakha tumhi ho.]

What can I give Guruji in return. What do I have that is not His. My complete surrender, my doubtless faith, my selfless love and to live up to His teachings

and to follow three paths of SEWA, SIMRAN and SATSANG.

Hame aur rasto ki zaroorat nahi hai, Hame tere paio ke nishaan mil Gaye hai.”

Be driven by faith or the world will steer you in its empty direction.

42

Dialogue with Guruji

My direction on Novemeber 24th 2017 was Dubai with Sonakshi to be with Anishka and to celebrate my birthday with them. Sanjay and Kajal were visiting so it was a warm family celebration. The remaining days that I was there, my doting daughters treated me to many of the unexplored sites of Dubai that were simply fabulous. I felt deep gratitude for the pampering, from luxurious massages, fine dining to shopping. Every moment spent with my girls goes down in my memory book, as they are most cherishable. I attended the satsangs there and went for my usual round of dinners with Sonia and Sanjay Vij whilst we each shared our experiences with Guruji.

On my return, at Dubai airport, whilst checking in, I was told that I would not be permitted to return to Delhi, as there was no space left in my passport for them to stamp. There was a small gap for a stamp but he stood firm while I crumbled at the thought of not flying back and obtaining a new passport was not a day's task. I was at first flustered and very nervous and I broke into cold sweat.

I asked them to give me a few moments; I prayed and pleaded with Guruji to let me go. After several minutes, I nervously approached the man behind the check-in counter again and this time he consented to checking me in. Though he was hesitانت and warned me that Delhi airport may not be so lenient and could even deport me back to England. I rang my brother Sanjeev to

arrange for my arrival and he did.

In a way, I was relieved that I needed a new passport as for years I had to contend with the most unflattering passport picture!

‘Anyone who angers you conquers you.’ Instead of reacting and getting flustered at the man behind the check-in desk, I asked for a moment to connect to Guruji and by doing so I actually saved time and energy. In my journey with Guruji, I have learned to centre myself before responding to challenging situations instead of impulsively reacting. Having said that, I still do gnash my teeth when a totally impossible and intolerable situation arises. Then the steam does come out of my ears as I blow a fuse!

The journey is to become the finest version of ourselves and to awaken from sleep walking through life where our behavior is on autopilot. Being in a state of mindfulness, I am able to give myself a moment before I act on my response to any given situation. Inherently, I have been quite impulsive in my decision-making throughout my life but I have reached a stage where I draw a deep breath and ask the recipient to be patient.

Guruji used to say to, ‘Ek chup Sau Sukh. [Silence leads to peace] or silence is golden and amidst chattering lips, I learnt to keep my peace instead of offering my piece when it is not necessary.

‘Ninda nahin karo’ do not gossip about others or worse, tear them to pieces, as this He stated is not good karma. You, who gossips take on the person you are gossiping about their bad karma and give them your good. What an unnecessary imbalance in our karmic account we create!

If you cannot go the extra mile for others then at least do not bring them harm and conversely if you cannot say anything nice about them then hold your tongue. These values were inculcated in us as children but as we matured, we became oblivious to them. Guruji as the most compassionate and loving father reminded us, His children.

There is more strength in good than in bad. Good begets good and with Guruji’s undying grace, we gain victory in situations that were otherwise impossible. Every trial morphs into triumph.

One evening on sitting besides Guruji I asked, 'Guruji can you please make me shrewd?' Guruji turned towards me and said 'Boliya da Rab hunda hai.' [God belongs to the simple]

Again in His words He asked, 'Mein twanu ena dinda ha, tusi me nu ki de sakde ho. [for all the blessings I give you what can you give me in return?]' 'Sirf achha insaan bano. Chunge karm karo. Marey karm da phal mara hunda hai.'

'Simple reh Anita, man hoye change te nulke da pani vi Ganga [stay simple Anita, if the heart is clean then tap water becomes the sacred Ganges.]

Simple does not translate into Naïve; it simply means to be modest and humble and not to get on a high horse about anything. What we achieve and receive is impermanent. In the changing climate of today, resigning to a low profile life and simple brings immense peace and pleasure.

Another life lesson is taking responsibility for my every thought, word and action so if any negativity creeps into my mind I disperse it by immersing myself in Guruji's vachan. [His word through the shabd Gurbani] My energy transforms from negative into positive. Another invaluable lesson is not to expect but to accept all that is and to find something everyday to be grateful for.

Expectation leads to disappointment. Guruji gives us more than we probably deserve so there is no need to carry our shopping list to Him. Trust Him and His timing; Surrender to His Will. He knows what is best for us so love Him with every fiber of your heart and soul.

Guruji said, 'Positive rah karo.' [Stay positive] What keeps me afloat is my regular visits to Guruji's temple, attending satsangs and sharing my satsangs as by doing so I am healing myself. Whatever seva Guruji grants us, is for our physical and spiritual purification and evolution.

There is abundant love, empathy and honesty amongst sangat but being discerning is important as not everyone has our best interest at heart. Their intentions may not be noble and as Guruji Himself said that not everyone is in the same class or grade. Only He has a record of our progress and the idea is to keep doing our best and permitting Him to do the rest.

Guruji drives the vehicle of my life and in the passage of time, I have learnt to be a patient and trusting passenger. There are still aspects of my life that I am uncertain about but with His guidance and grace, I am arriving at the place He wants me to be.

He teaches us all to embrace the crowd but not to disappear in it. The aim is to be the force that inspires the crowd.

43

Skin Ailments Cured

A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.

Anishka, Sonakshi and I were in Goa first week of January 2018 to soak in the sun and to escape the Delhi chill. We discussed and planned the inauguration of Sonakshi's store, 'Spiritual Warrior' in Santushti complex in Delhi, which she designed and conceptualized.

We inaugurated it on 22 February and many sangat were there to bless our new venture. It was an enormous success and I could not thank Guruji enough for making this possible.

I had conceptualized and designed a coloring book for adults. Its purpose was to de-stress the mind and to improve ones creativity. It is titled 'My garden of Happiness' and because it was in harmony with the vibe of our wellness and yoga store Sonakshi decided to keep them there as part of our inventory. It was yet another chapter in my life as I enjoyed being at the store. Initially the enthusiasm of being there was on another level but with time, it simmered!

Anishka had worked tirelessly to become a recognized yoga and meditation instructor in Dubai and at this juncture more doors had opened up to her. Her students loved her energy. Simultaneously, she attended satsang weekly

to draw in His Grace. I noticed she was at home in her space and the glow of contentment was evident on her face.

Usually I visit Guruji's ashram on a Thursday so I went one evening from the store. I observed the ocean of new faces and understood that the common desire of every human being is to be happy. People from all occupations flocked together under one shared roof with common worldly ailments and each was seeking a direction whilst longing to be wrapped in His divine love and light.

The faces I observed humbled me filling me with gratitude for having received Guruji's immense blessings; not just tangible but the intangible ones that alter our inner landscapes and our mindscapes. My thought process had changed as now I chose to be surrounded by people who were good for my soul and who better than sangat looking in the same direction as us.

The cause of our unhappiness is when we give the reigns of our lives to the judgments of others who directly or indirectly set our standards for us. Guruji removes the dust from our eyes enabling us to see and distinguish between those who are genuinely fond of us and those who pretend to be. Hence, at the risk of repeating myself it is vital to remain low profile as Guruji used to state 'nazaro se bachho.' [Be mindful of people's evil eye]

Guruji has instilled in me confidence in my own dignity, self worth and my own identity. I no longer give permission to anybody to make me feel that I am a 'nobody.'

Guruji wanted some of us to share our satsangs as by doing so we inject faith in others and lend them hope. It was during that time after launching Sonakshi's store that I received a whatsapp call from a sangat in distress. Since I had suffered immensely from skin ailments I empathized with her suffering.

Sumita Verma shares hers in her words

"I have a chronic auto-immune disease, commonly known as Psoriasis that prevails since my childhood. I had allopathic treatment but none that offered

me relief. The medicines had harsh side effects and one was chronic cough. The intensity of the cough rose, triggering breathing issues for which I took an inhaler.

At the change of season, psoriasis and my cough precipitated and I had difficulties sleeping. I switched to Ayurvedic treatment to avoid side effects. I met a Hakkim who claimed to have a solution for such skin diseases. His treatment comprised of applying a self-made gel on the affected skin patches. This would remove the toxins present in the body and then heal it. It was very painful and led to swelling in my legs. It felt like somebody poking sharp needles to my sensitive skin that induced tears in my eyes.

I would call out to Guruji, praying in earnest for relief so that I could pursue my routine work. My arms and legs ached intensely and could not stand and cook so we hired cooks but most left after seeing my ghastly condition. My mother in law prepared meals instead for the next two months until we found a cook who stayed. My condition did not bother her and even said, 'Mujhe aapse koi wehem nahi hai, main ek plate mai bhi aapke saath khana share kar sakti hu.' I felt immense gratitude towards Guruji for being able to have wholesome meals at home.

However, my skin condition worsened and it oozed blood and pus so I was not able to wear clothes normally as the cloth came in direct contact with my body and caused unimaginable pain. Moreover, my body profusely shed 'flakes' which soiled the bedsheet and floor. I spent the entire day applying coconut oil on the affected areas for temporary relief. It was such a pitiful sight and those who saw me, sympathized with me. My spirit remained tough and I was still filled with gratitude and I never forgot to say, 'Shukrana Guruji' as it might have been worse and I did not lose hope to get better. Below I share the three miracles that took place in my life through His blessings.

A day before Guruji's birthday, I was listening to Shiv Kumar's satsang, Guruji's childhood friend [one can google to know about Guruji blessing a south Indian dancer aunty by making her dance to the song- 'Tu cheez badi hai masst masst' in Empire State]. The following day, Guruji's birthday, my husband bought sweets, which I offered to Guruji as 'bhog and tried playing a song by connecting my phone to bluetooth. Despite continuous efforts, the

song did not play. I accepted that Guruji wants it that way and I placed my phone on the bed and to my surprise the song 'Tu cheez badi hai masst masst' started playing. It was not by coincidence I had listened to the satsang related to this song so I danced to it, becoming oblivious my aching body. I knew this was a miracle and Guruji was healing me.

Second miracle was in September, my birthday month. I was advised to stay off sweet and sour foods and instead I was consuming only green vegetables and healthy food. However, I was craving for Jalebi and I thought, 'Ab Guruji hi mujhe jalebi khilaenge.' On entering bade mandir, I wanted to sit on a chair as the floor would be uncomfortable for me but as Guruji said, 'Apna dimag bahar chhad ke aao.' That day Guruji made me sit inside the hall and even for langar, He made me sit on the floor. I was elated on seeing Jalebi instead of Halwa parasd. Guruji pampered me no end.

On Karvachauth day, I was hesitant to bathe at 3 am before having the traditional sargi as both hot and cold water stung my tender skin. I recited my Mantra jaap to draw the wisdom to do the right thing and to my surprise, the water felt neither hot nor cold and s I was relieved.

When winter arrived, my condition worsened. Psoriasis spread to my legs, knees, back and stomach and sleeping was uncomfortable. Usually in winter, I wore many layers but the oozing skin did not allow me to. My house cleaner refused to clean my room as I shed flakes all over so I cleaned it with duster and broom though it was difficult. I became frustrated and I increasingly turned to Guruji's Shabd for strength and hope. I also changed my doctor.

I visited a Tibetan doctor who also disappointed us by telling us that because I had psoriasis since childhood, it was impossible to cure it with ayurvedic treatment. We were emotionally disturbed and returned home with sheer disappointment. I spoke to Madhu Popli, Guruji's sangat, on the phone. I was at my lowest ebb and she touched my life like an angel. She advised me to call Anita aunty for her to share her satsang with me. Madhu aunty had met her at Gurupurav at Guruji's mandir. Guruji made Madhu aunty sit beside Anita aunty and throughtout she selflessly thought about me. I was hesitant to call her, as I knew it was Guruji who did wonders so it was pointless calling anyone. The same evening, my husband in his dejection stated, 'Kuch samajh nhi aa raha, ek kaam krta hu mai zeher le aata hu aur hum teenokha lete hai.'

I reassured him that Guruji had not abandoned us and no doctor is God hence he cannot determine my destiny whereas Guruji can. Despite calming him down, I was filled with serious doubt. I entertained the thought that perhaps He only blessed the old sangat and the celebrities and not the common people like us. Maybe the gaddi at bade mandir is just an empty chair without Him actually sitting and blessing everyone. Soon I lost interest in listening to shabds and taking medication. In complete despondency, I finally called Anita Kumar aunty. I was emotionally disturbed and unsure how to initiate the conversation. After all, she is not Guruji. I called and introduced myself and when she responded she said, 'I'm not Guruji!' However, she said the best way she could help me was by sharing her satang with me, which she did at length. She told me to believe that Guruji is your father and you are his daughter so He will bless you immensely. I felt blessed that Anita aunty took out time to share and afterwards I felt lighthearted and my mind was at peace. That evening I was about to whatsapp her, but before I could, I received a message from her that said, 'Whenever you're low, and need advice, call me. I'm your mommy.' My heart filled with rapture and I felt Guruji sent yet another angel my way in the form of Anita aunty. I consulted another doctor who practices in Faridabad and he reassured me that my condition would cure in time. The first 2-3 months would be allopathic treatment followed by Ayurvedic for the rest of the tenure. I was reluctant to take allopathic due to its harsh side effects so I surrendered before Him. With His grace, I took only Ayurvedic medicines. Guruji was holding my hand, giving me the strength and blessings and within 3 months, I felt better. My angel, Anita aunty reassured me I would bounce back to good health before I knew it. I used to be afraid of pouring water over my body but then I heard Anita aunty's satsang (in which Guruji said, 'Tu darra na kar' and Anita aunty prayed to Guruji to remove her fear] I prayed to Him to remove mine too. A miracle happened and I actually felt the fear dissipate in 15-20 days. I pleaded with Guruji to give me good health before the Navratras and so it was. Anita aunty shared what Guruji had instructed her to do which included listening to Shabad, reciting the Mantra Jaap, lighting Diya in front of His Swaroop and she advised me to follow all these if I wished to. I decided to follow the first two practices but not the last one, as I could not bath daily at that time. Then Anita aunty told me, 'Guruji bolte the- Jab mann hoye change, the nalke da paani bhi Ganga.' [if your heart is pure then even tap wayer is holy water]

My mandir at home is not at a level where I could stand and light the diya and sitting on the floor caused me discomfort. A sangat told me about the power of imagination and rather than physically lighting the diya, I could imagine the entire ritual before His swaroop. By the unimaginable grace of Guruji, my condition improved and was blessed by Him more than I deserved. I thanked Him immensely by visiting His ashram. I thank Him for all the good and I apologize to Him for all the bad I may have done and said; particularly when I stated that, He is there only for the old sangat and not the new as that is not at all true. He blesses everyone indiscriminately and no one is old or new. We are connected to God for many eons; since the beginning of time. My way of connecting to Him today is by living according to His way. Listening to His vachan via shabds has completely changed my mindset. Worry, anxiety and fear are for me, emotions of the past. In the passage of time, I have learned to cultivate unflinching faith. I love Him in a practical sense by merely having depth of emotion for Him and His teachings. Thank You Guruji for loving me.”

Guruji makes each one of us count.

44

A Daughter's Love For Her Father

What counts is making the effort to go from step one to two and then eventually progressing to 10.

Every soul needs a spiritual path and this realization dawns on us at different phases of our lives. I found Him at a juncture where I was depleted physically and spiritually. Spirituality is synonymous with our value system, our beliefs and conduct. Coming regularly to Guruji is much more than taking a vitamin dose. He supplements our minimum daily requirement no doubt but He also purifies our every thought word, action and perception.

My search of many lifetimes found its destination; its home and its peace. As a wanderer, I found my shelter and now I do not run helter skelter with a spinning head. What better than a composed mind and a cheerful heart watching the world run on the treadmill of life.

Ironically, as my world has expanded through travel and sharing satsangs across the globe, my inner world of desires has shrunk. I pace it and not race it. From restlessness, I am restful and whatever I need in terms of love, friendship and nurturing, it visits me. I am what my creator chooses me to be and has bestowed on me much more than I can probably deserve.

I reinvented myself through the power of faith. We have the choice to fall apart or to fall into place. We are all entitled to play our hits but sometimes

we stumble on people or situations that hamper our growth.

I found courage to go through the grinding process and to come out the other side stronger. I felt imprisoned by my patterns and my history. He empowered me to escape the smallness of my mind and to live in the dimension of His boundless blessings. He moved me from gloom back to bloom.

However, while we are connected to Him there may be a sudden storm that makes us lose our equilibrium. We may lose heart awhile but He shows us that He is calming the storm and that by being composed we are trusting in Him and in His timing. The sun is, assumingly, the centre of the universe with the earth rotating it. In our lives, Guruji is the centre of ours and faith orbits Him.

At bade mandir I sat on the floor to relish the blessed food with this young and devout follower of Guruji. We learn from our seniors and we learn much from our juniors. An open mind is an evolved mind.

Chaahat Jain in her words

‘Tere dar par sukoon milta hai, Tere charno mein junoon milta hai. Jo bhi aa gaya tere charno mein Usse kuch na kuch zaroor milta hai.

‘My journey with Guruji started around 2011, the year I left India for my undergraduate studies to Boston, America. As a child, I longed for God to reveal Himself to me if He did exist. Little did I know that He was going to reveal Himself in the most inexplicable magnificent form of divine creation that exists.

I could write prolific satsangs but I do believe somewhere when we do not have a tragic experience to share, we are blessed as Guruji has protected us and our loved ones from harm’s way and that is the most blessed satsang.

In hindsight, there is a sharp contrast between the person I was before my journey began with Guruji and the person I am today on being accepted by Him. Every individual’s journey is different, and we must be non-competitive, embracive of whatever the others journey holds. We each have

our own truth so never judge anyone else's path. For me personally, the greatest blessing has been the eradication of fear, acceptance of abundance and opportunity. The journey was not easy as for practically seven years I had low self-confidence and suffered heart-breaking moments but today I embrace completely as part of the plan. We must know that whatever does not kill us only makes us stronger and my belief is that Guruji places each of His disciples through those hardships and tests that He knows will make them grow and evolve.

Through this narration, I share one of the most vivid incidents that we encountered as a family and that Guruji sailed us through. After an extremely tough year, October 2018, my brother was curating his annual Food festival, 'The Grub Fest,' at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Delhi and I was exhibiting my food delivery brand by the name of CJ's Fresh. It was Friday, the first day of the show and I recall my brother leaving the stadium for some work and asking me if it was going to rain. Our parents reached the stadium at around 5pm when there was an overcast followed by rain and a dust storm, so harsh that all the canopies of the stall fell as did the decorations. Within seconds it was an unsafe mess, and the show had to be shutdown and people evacuated. After five minutes of the storm, my father received a call from my grandmother at home saying that a wildfire had broken out behind our house and it was rapidly spreading into the boundaries of our farm. I can only imagine the state of panic my father was in, right after which one of the iron poles from the ice-skating rink at the festival fell on my fathers face, saving his eyes and nose but badly bruising and injuring him.

I was handling my stall and staff when, panic-stricken, one of the team members informed me that my father was rushed to the emergency. We went numb, nobody knew what was happening and when we reached home, our fathers' sight was not pleasant but he was saved and so was the house. The wildfire travelled up to the servant quarters and burned some of their clothes but did not reach inside the house. I dare consider the more serious repercussions this could have had so I take a moment to thank my Guruji for saving, protecting and forever being there with us. Shukarana har pal aapka Guruji.

My mother asked me, 'Chaaahat, you believe in Guruji so much so why don't you ask him why this happened? My mother had a small temple in her room

with a picture of Gurujis charan and below the book 'Surcharged with Divine Love'.

I closed my eyes, prayed to Him and opened a random page from the book. I cannot precisely remember what those two pages read but at that moment, it could not be more apt, 'We humans are like inverted vessels on planet earth, and God's (our Guruji's) blessings are like rain water that fall over these vessels. Once washed and strong enough, a few chosen vessels are capable of erecting themselves and can collect the rain water (blessings) within them, to the point they can fill themselves up with the water to the top and start washing all the other inverted vessels around them'. Read that again, it is deep but so beautifully explained by Guruji to me. Shukarana again Guruji. It also said, 'where your thinking stops, that's exactly when mine starts and I take over.'

The following day my father went to the festival again despite being advised medically to rest. My brother and I left the show on getting a call that he fainted, turning blue and was non-responsive for over thirty minutes. I am cutting the story short here but how we managed to get him down from my uncles' house on the second floor without an elevator and to the hospital is a story in itself. He went on the ventilator and the doctor told us that if we had been any later than five minutes, there would not have been any chance.

In other words, Guruji's kripa was always on us. On pulling my father's blanket on the hospital bed Gurujis swaroop that I had left on his heart flew into the ground after which my father started responding. I believe He was assuring us that He was with us. I cannot thank Him enough for keeping me at His lotus feet. Thank you for accepting me.

I wish to achieve so much and I know He will unfold and establish my identity when the time is right. Yeh meri arzi hai Guruji, woh mein ho jaun, jo apki marzi hai.

Shukarana har pal aapka. Sarbat da Bhalla."

Your wish is my command.

45

Being Practical

He commands us to live, laugh, love and learn which we do when we listen.

The following is an excerpt I read on one of the satsang groups that sums up every individuals connect. The person who wrote it chose to remain anonymous.

On arriving at Guruji's darbar and bowing to His lotus feet, I knew I did not need to seek beyond Him. I renounced practicing Reiki on realizing that Guruji is the ultimate healer. I relinquished practicing chanting because nothing made more sense to me than chanting, 'Om namah Shivaya Shivji sada sahaya, Om namah Shivaya Guruji sada sahaya.' This has become the ultimate source of strength and wisdom and nothing compares to it. Why? Repeating this mantra penetrates the depths of the unconscious mind adjusting the vibrations of all aspects of our being including aligning our chakras that are our energy centres. Whether we recite it aloud at home or in silence, focusing on it allows its benefits to seep into our soul.

Reciting this mantra regularly and with focus has multiple other effects. Medically and scientifically, it stimulates the endocrine systems, which is in charge of releasing hormones and chemicals throughout the body and the brain that balances the body and has a healing effect on it.

In this era of constant change and relentless restlessness, the one thing that settles me is Guruji's satsangs. No matter what state of mind I am in before entering a satsang, on sitting and connecting to Him my mind is almost immediately calm and centred. I feel joy emanate from my soul and irrespective of the measure of my problems my perspective shifts from 'I have problems to I have Guruji.'

He is the Supreme master and there are testimonies of people with cancer, diabetes, asthma and many more minor and major illness cured with His one glance and one langar. Sickness extends to innumerable other conditions out there from excessive greed, to stark financial issues that may involve getting into serious debt to falling into deep depression. Substance abuse is another common addiction in the modern era that leads to manic behavior of diverse types. Not being able to sustain a single relationship be it marriage or courtship is the illness of losing our attention and interest as the mind is jaded. Children being disrespectful to their elders and not going down a particularly good path is another source of tension. To sum it up, world afflictions are diverse and many but with one powerful source of love, protection and guidance everything is eased and altogether erased.

The one and only sustaining strength that holds us even amidst the chaos of ego clashes, satsangs getting tweaked, turning into social or material platforms and other inevitable contamination, is our own connectivity. That is it!

Soul to soul, 1:1 connect with no mediator or any bigger ego telling us how to love our Guruji. For me, He is my master who assumes the role of my mother, father and best friend and depending on what state of mind I am in or what my emotional quotient is I address Him accordingly and all are correct. I may feel He is my Krishna, on another day I may prefer Him to be my Shirdi Sai Baba or even my Shiv ji. All are correct as there are many lamps but there is only one light. The focus is to connect to the source of all that is.

My faith is unwavering and is not confined to satsangs and His ashram. I believe He is a jyot that resides in me hence I speak to Him no matter where I am geographically.

I am a banker but the greatest investment I suggest anyone to make is in

faith. It gives us the best return and makes us rich beyond our imagination. Most importantly, we will never be spiritually bankrupt.

In today's 'practical world' non-believers ask, 'What have you gained by going to Guruji?' the answer may be nothing more than, 'It is more about what I have lost. My anger, anxiety, depression, fears and all my negativity including negative friends and relationships. I make better and healthier choices for myself and I am far happier when I shed off the inessentials from my life.

Guruji, in His most, practical ways has illustrated to us that God exists in the very essence of our lives and He has done that by healing us of our illnesses and fulfilling some of our material desires to validate His existence. He reminds us of His existence by performing a 'miracle' just so we can say 'YES! God exists!'

What we need to remember and appreciate is that the small changes that come into our lives that are not exactly worthy of being documented are also His way of saying that He loves us and yes that He exists!

In the kingdom of faith, ego not only knocks us down but prevents us from getting close to Him so it is vital to work on dissolving it by solidifying our connect to Him and to surrender to His will. He is our most dependable navigator and well-wisher. Today's friend very easily turns into tomorrow's enemy but Guruji is forever our companion. Love Him and He fills our cup with untold blessings.

I learnt and trained my mind that was governed by an endless stream of negative thoughts to focus on His name and soon my obsessive thinking turned calm and clear. My resentments towards others melted and I was filled with no expectation but only anticipation of His love. I consciously choose faith over fear and if anyone gets into a tussle with me about how to connect to Guruji I choose peace of mind and happiness over the compulsive need to be right. My objective of coming to Guruji is not to make anyone unhappy as Guruji resides in every devotee's heart and I believe we all have the power to either love or hate but beware of the law of nature that states that whatever we give out boomerangs right back to us. Even if we cannot be nice on the face, at least wish people well because that wish also carries a

good vibration. Smiling uses less muscles than frowning and has a positive impact on others. As Guruji always stated 'Be positive' and 'Kush raye kar.' Taking the high road always leads to a peaceful destination.

I have never met Guruji but then I do not believe that I have not as it profoundly feels like I have known Him for all eternity. It does not matter whether you connected before or after His Maha Samadhi, 31 May 2007, because no one is old or new as He used to state. This is an eternal relationship between Guru and disciple.

One must talk to Guruji directly and we do that by sitting in meditation. We all swing and sway between stillness and movement but through regular practice and discipline, Guruji does bless our meditation too.

By merely sitting in satsangs we are blessed more that we can imagine. There is no need to run manically here and there after coming into His fold, as Guruji is omnipresent and omniscient. Have patience, as He knows the best time to bless us with what we need. Talk to Guruji even in the absence of His swaroop, in your heart as He surely listens to your every word. No rituals are required, only love is needed so fill your heart with love and do not eclipse it with doubt.

To sit in satsangs and listen to shabads is a blessing as well as a sewa. Not everyone gets a chance to sit beside the master Himself and enjoy the shabads. Guruji grants us the seva He needs us to do, in His time. It is His will. Listening to shabads and learning important life lessons from the Gurbani [sacred text] is essential as Guruji used to state that it cleanses our soul and even if we have heard the shabads or anyone's satsangs more than once, it is still a blessing as there will always be something new to learn. Once you have made your connection to Him by practicing sitting with Him [Upasana] you will be able to receive His guidance. As He purifies and awakens us, we are less judgmental of others and their life choices, more compassionate, tolerant and patient with perhaps less anger and reactivity. So altogether, we become better and not bitter.

Guruji's satsang is usually for two hours and some devotees' feel that Guruji leaves after that but I have seen Guruji seated on His gaddhi after the prescribed satsang duration is over. We are limited by only our thoughts whereas Guruji is limitless. Though no evidence is required when He was in

the physical form Guruji was present at more than one place at any one given time.

We cannot fathom how blessed we are when we come to Guruji and visit His ashram. Keep meditating on His name and He will remove the darkness.

46

A Ray of Hope

'Darkness comes to bring new rays of hope for tomorrow.'

Satsang by Ekta Aunty

"Thank you Guruji for accepting me and transforming my life from hell to heaven. My life was fraught with predicaments until 'Guruji' took me under His sharan. I cannot articulate the measure of His grace but my heart and soul knows that only Guruji has pulled me out of the gravest of problems.

Guruji heard my silent 'Ardaas'. I was so engrossed in sorrows that I wanted to end my life. No one was there to look after us, to help us in the darkest hour of my life.

It was 31st December 2011 when Guruji called me to Bade Mandir for the very first time. My five-year-old daughter was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer. Doctors told me that she would survive only until the medicines worked on her. After sometime, the medicines stopped working including the ones we imported from the USA. Doctors then advised bone marrow surgery for my daughter, which was expensive; almost 35 lakhs and the chances of her survival were about 25% after the surgery. I was shattered because my daughter's condition was deteriorating rapidly and she was in intense pain. The side effects of her chemotherapy distressed me as her

entire body swelled up due to the injections.

My in-laws stopped supporting me and told me to stop her treatment, as there was no point in wasting time, money and energy on her. My father passed away which made me even more vulnerable. My husband was indulging in all kinds of unscrupulous habits so he was most unsupportive and uncaring. He used to steal the money that I saved for my daughter's treatment for his drinking.

My brother assisted me in this difficult phase and took the responsibility of my daughter's treatment. Much to my shock and dismay, destiny took a cruel turn. My brother, who was my support passed away too leaving me completely devastated. The broken pieces of my heart could never mend with one tragedy after another.

On first coming to Guruji, I told him about the baggage of my sorrows and pleaded with Him either to bless my life or to take my life away. Guruji's plans are always positive no matter how negative we are as from the very first visit; Guruji began showering His blessings on me. Within a month of His Divine Darshan, my situations began to change. After having His langar prashad, my daughter's cancer cured by 0.5% within a month. Her body began showing signs of recovery, the chemo stopped, and after a point, the cancer completely vanished from her body. She made full recovery without surgery.

Today, she has turned into a beautiful teenager with a glow on her face and devotion in her heart, which is only possible because of Guruji's Blessings.

II. Removing Negative Relations:

This is how Guruji helped me getting rid of my negative relations. Guruji opened up my baggage and rectified my problems systematically. My husband, who was a major cause of my problems, ran away and finally agreed to give me a divorce, which turned out to be a miracle for me. Guruji helped me get rid of the relations that were a liability in my life. He cleared my karmic account and helped me in obtaining a divorce.

III. Guruji helped me build my house:

I was living in a rented home that was in a bad shape with my ailing daughter and a growing son. My mother gave me a property for my daughter's treatment but it was not selling due to some issues. Nevertheless, Guruji changed my stars and sold the property on double the original price. He bought me a beautiful new house where I stay with my children and my mother. The head of the family and the owner of this house is Guruji.

IV. Guruji helped my Son:

My son who lacked confidence and courage was a below average student. Guruji blessed him and changed his personality overall. Today, he is doing a hotel management course. He has turned into a caring and a confident boy. Guruji gave him a reason to smile and he has given him the love he lacked in his childhood.

V. Guruji cured my daughter's hearing problem:

My daughter was cured from cancer but she was unable to hear properly due to the side effects of chemo. By the grace of Guruji, a hearing machine was transplanted in her ear. Today she is able to hear the sounds. I had no funds or courage to go through this process but Guruji always sent his medicines. Gaurav uncle not only helped her financially but also showered her with love and concern.

I have no words to thank the master of this universe 'My Guruji'. He has changed my life completely and filled it with utmost happiness and security. Everyday is His Grace. Thank You Guruji for showering your countless blessings and taking me out of hell."

The best view comes after the hardest climb and do not sweat if you fall as long as you rise again.

47

Our Pet Dog

Rise to reach great heights in all that you do and be His shining example.

It was once Anishka left for Dubai and Sonakshi left for New York, Mojo our pet dog was becoming increasingly sick. He had his own satsang because despite his sickness he was alert and in good spirits.

I held a satsang at home for him and when the darbar was set Mojo was the first to bow before Guruji before he retired to his room where he listened to the shabads.

I sat in the satsang and closed my eyes and I imagined Guruji sitting before me. I brought my awareness to my breathing as He sat before me and smiled. I was anxious about Mojo particularly as Sonakhi was not with him and I surrendered the anxiety to Him.

Whenever a challenge befalls me, I hand it over to my almighty father who takes over in a heartbeat. I asked Guruji to take care of Mojo and to not extend his suffering.

He opened His palms and gave me love. I took it from Him and filled my entire being with it. I opened my eyes with the feeling of exuberance and a renewed vitality inhabiting my physical body and my soul.

Sitting and remembering Him is vital in centering our energies. He speaks but we are able to hear Him only in silence and not when we are noisily multi tasking. It is possible to be in a state of gratitude and internal dialogue whilst going about our daily lives but sitting, closing our eyes and vividly remembering Him and doing His seva or merely feeling His presence is making a profound connection. Everything is a habit so instead of waking up first thing and greeting our mobiles we do benefit greater when we simply sit and meditate on Him even for a few minutes.

My favourite and most practical meditation is closing my eyes, going to bade mandir, bowing before Lord Ganesh ji, then taking my round and sitting with Him with my family in the garden near the fountain. I imagine the most delightfully cool weather with the gentle sounds of water from the fountain. Guruji motions one of the sevadars to get chai Prasad for us. We sit in His presence while He smiles benignly making our soul smile. Our faces beam with His love and we are completely calm and content.

God has gifted us with a vision and the capability to imagine, hence, we can create our own scenery to connect. The objective is to feel His love and to be in tune with the higher energies. Therefore, whatever works, work towards it consistently. Become truly worthy of Guruji's love and aspire to be an example of His supremacy and His greatness. Be His child full of love, grace and empathy.

Be mindful of the demons within us and outside of us. Remember each one of us is on our journey at our level so connecting with Guruji is also special and unique to the individual.

Be smart as not everyone's intentions are as pure as our own. There are people who represent a certain open-hearted earnest sincerity that sometimes feels incompatible with modern cynical sensibility.

With Guruji at the core of our existence, the shaky modern world does seem steady and safe somehow and below is an excerpt I extracted from one of the sangat who chooses to remain anonymous. It is a clear illustration of our naivety at times and alerts us to be more discerning in our decision-making and most certainly not to trust anyone blindly.

“Jai Guruji, I am sharing what happened with my family on 19.06.19 at Param pujya Guruji’s bade mandir. My wife and kids along with my sister’s family went to bade mandir for darshan and after having langar parsad they walked to the parking area and hired a paid shuttle van to the metro [and not the usual free shuttle service by sangat as the queue was very long]

Besides the driver, there were two women and another man already sitting in the van. Everything seemed normal until the van reached the T point and one of the sewadar uncle recognized the van and the driver and began banging on it and urging my family to get off. The driver was a criminal but to my family’s shock, the doors and windows were centrally locked and the van turned right at the T-point and started speeding. My family yelled out to the driver while the other passengers sat quietly.

Just as the car went ahead, the sevadar sangat who had already informed one another on their wireless now encompassed the van in their respective vehicles coming to my family’s rescue. They helped my family getting down from the van and aided them in getting a taxi home. The gang was handed over to the police.

My family, on arriving home, was in a state of shock but I believe and know that it was Guruji Himself in the guise of the sewadar uncle who first recognized and banged on the van to make it stop. I shudder to think what wouldve happened to my family had Guruji not protected them. I am in deep gratitude to the sewadar uncles who work tirelessly to navigate and protect sangat and most importantly I bow before Guruji’s feet for bring my family to safety.”

Light and dark exist in each one of us. What matters is the path we choose to act on; that is who we are. Once we are with Guruji we aspire to walk on the right side of the pond. In fact, He ensures that and when we focus on being a blessing, Guruji makes sure that we are blessed in abundance.

There are some things you learn best in calm, and some in storm.

48

A Girl is Born

Guruji turns every storm into calm.

I noticed a chemical change in my body on coming face to face with people from my past who had hurt me. However, on sending them Guruji's love and light I suffused them in it and detached myself from ill feeling. The biggest disservice we do to ourselves is to not becoming and doing better. Remaining complacent even after connecting to the higher power does not clean up the table. Our intention needs to be supported with action. Our life is a love story between God and us. Every individual, experience, gift, loss and pain comes our way for one reason only; to bring us back to Him. The best apology to others is changed behaviour so instead of judging them send them a silent prayer of forgiveness. The one who wants peace will never fear asking for forgiveness and for forgiving them in return.

My ineptitude was learned behaviour and after coming into Guruji's fold and through my experiences with people I learned to see things differently. It is easy to blame past failed relationships for the emotional baggage that we have today. We perceive failure of relationships as negative but on shifting our perspective these so-called failures are essential, as it is the springboard of our success today. All associations are a part of the never-ending process of learning and soul growth and a teaching tool that bring a new lesson and an insight. Each encounter with an individual shows us what aspect we need

to work on ourselves.

All relationships are merely mirrors for us, always reflecting back what we need to learn and see.

When I meet the so-called new sangat and their undying devotion to Guruji, I learn that there is much ease in their devotion with least resistance. I remind myself that there is no new or old sangat. As Guruji used to say that with God, we have an eternal relationship. For those who have never met Guruji in the physical in this incarnation are no less and perhaps even more than those who have met Him. The idea is not to differentiate but to completely and utterly focus on ones own journey with Him.

Priyanka Sethi's satsang

The most opportune time of our lives came when our beloved Guruji Maharaj accepted my family into His divine fold.

In June 2013, we moved to India and observed every second car in Delhi had a 'Jai Guruji' sticker on it. I pondered, 'Who is this Guru and where is he?' Some days later, our neighbors and relatives began an impromptu discussion about a temple in Chattarpur area where people receive blessed Prasad.

It was compared to a Gurudwara in cleanliness and discipline. It piqued my curiosity to know more. I was not aware, at that point, that Guruji had left his chola/physical body and that it was the same Guruji whose stickers I had seen on cars.

One of my maternal aunts had invited us over and on reaching there, we saw a huge swaroop of Guruji and out of curiosity, we inquired who he was. My uncle and aunt keenly answered our queries and most amazing was the coincidence or rather the way Guruji orchestrated everything. We realized He was the same Guruji we had heard about from various quarters and saw the stickers of behind cars. I was disheartened to learn that Guruji had left His chola. We went for His darshan that very evening and were mesmerized as it felt like a slice of heaven on earth. There was peace and calm with the melodious shabad gurbani filling the air. We followed the instructions of

sewadars regarding standing in queue, langar prasad, chai prasad and Jal Prasad. Once outside there was an uncle who handed over Guruji's swaroop and Charan darshan to us.

We continually visited with a desire in my heart to have a daughter as my second child. We attended satsangs and listened to U tube videos of fellow sangat pariwar. We learned more about Guruji Maharaj on His website. It would be a lie to say that I believed instantly as I did question the veracity of these experiences. I questioned why He had not taken us under his divine fold when he was in the physical. My subconscious mind answered my own enquiries and I felt it was, perhaps, our karmas that disallowed us to see Him in His physical garb. Nevertheless, He gave me darshan via His divine rose fragrance that His body exuded which my maternal aunt and I got in the parking lot of Bade Mandir.

In February 2014, I was pregnant and after three months, I was advised complete bed rest. By the fifth month, my doctor felt that the amniotic fluid was almost negligible so I went frequently to the hospital for the refilling of amniotic fluid. I had never felt so scared and lonely in spite of the whole family taking care of me whenever they could, as each had their own commitments. I started spending more time with Guruji. On one of my radiologist visits, the doctor, also a devotee of Guruji handed me the book 'Light of Divinity,' my saving grace in my difficult hours. Someone shared a pdf version of 'Surcharge with divine Love' on my Guruji's whatsapp group. The more I read the more my soul longed for experiences with Guruji. I disputed the claim that there is no new or old as not being able to see Him and have Him glance at us in person simply felt unfair.

From then on, I connected on a deep level with Guruji and He gave me darshans in visions and fulfilled my desire of having Him glance at me. My reasoning put it down to excessive reading and listening about beloved Guruji Maharaj and my subconscious mind was just acting on it. As time progressed, I realized that the visions of Guruji are actually His darshan and it is not at all necessary that you may have them regularly.

Another experience I had was with the book, 'Light of Divinity' -whenever I held it in my hand; open or closed, I felt there was life in the book, almost as somebody was breathing and my backhand could feel the rhythms of

someone inhaling and exhaling.

My complications in pregnancy resulted in numerous hospital visits with daily injections and finally I was admitted because there was no fetal movement and the placenta aging prematurely aggravated the amniotic fluid issue. This affected the nutrition to the baby, as it was not adequate for growth. The doctor wanted me to wait at least 35 weeks before I delivered. I surrendered it to Guruji and prayed fervently to protect us both. My doctor had reassured me that she had done her best and now God would do the rest and medically there could still be growth related issues once the baby is born.

When the time arrived, I underwent C-section as normal delivery was ruled out and with His blessings, I delivered a petite baby girl. However, on one of the pediatric visits we discovered that the hearing in one of her ears was impaired so we visited an ENT specialist. The result confirmed this and we were advised to repeat the test when she was three months old. My husband was jittery but I surrendered it to Guruji Maharaj. I visited Empire estate mandir (chota mandir) since Sudha aunty had opened it for regular sangat. On bowing and sitting, a sewadar uncle handed me my prasad and a toffee prasad along with it. I instinctively knew my daughter would be cured as I opened the wrapper and made my daughter suckle it. On our next ENT visit everything turned out fine thanks to Guruji's Meher.

Life was smooth until my daughter was 10 months old; I was on the brink of losing her forever. I was busy cleaning the wardrobes with my house cleaner and instructed my 9-year-old son to keep an eye on her as she played on the mat. I was also looking out for her from the corner of my eye but in a fraction of a second my daughter reached the bedside table, stood on her feet with the support of the drawer that opened and she picked up the coin box. My son was also distracted with some toy. She pulled an old one-rupee coin and put in her mouth. My son and I saw her at that very moment. My house cleaner and I tried extracting it but to no avail. I alerted my parents and my paternal uncle who was visiting us accompanied me to Cloud 9 Children hospital, which is closest to Malibu Town in Gurgaon. My daughter was in deep discomfort and was gasping for breath. In the ER, the doctor needed to do an x-ray to see the exact location of the coin but she was gasping and could not lie down straight. With an oxygen mask on her, they monitored other

parameters. It was heart wrenching to see her suffer and cry incessantly. The memory of it is still vivid as if it happened yesterday and I was guilt-ridden for not keeping a constant eye on her.

The doctor suggested calling a surgeon. My world crashed before me, and all I recall is the beeps of the monitors and my petite baby amidst all this because of my irresponsibility.

My uncle went with the doctor to see the x-ray and my mental dialogue with Guruji was, 'I know this is my fault but please meri beti ko baaksh do even if it is our karmic debt. Please spare my daughter the surgery. You shower your grace on millions and my daughter Siddhangana is your blessing. I began reciting the mantra jaap.

My daughter was not able to lie straight so she lay as a monkey twirled on a branch on my left arm. I continued reciting the jaap with my eyes closed and my house cleaner started screaming, 'didi aagaya' and then she shook me, 'didi coin bahar aagaya.' I opened my eyes and there on the floor lay the coin. I rushed to inform the doctor and he showed me the x-ray with the exact position of the coin in the side of her throat pressed against windpipe/foodpipe and some nerves. We heaved a sign of relief as we thanked Guruji and took her home. My daughter was quietly glancing at Guruji's swaroop from one side to another as His swaroop was hanging on both the walls. It seemed as if her soul was feeling indebted to Guruji just like mine. I cannot thank Him enough for His divine grace.

Earlier my husband had not wholly accepted Guruji because his logic clouded his mind but now has accepted Him. It is not that life is a bed of roses but we have learnt to trust Him with each passing day.

I am forever indebted to Guruji for showering His grace and introducing Himself through my maternal aunt as a medium. Guruji is like a vast ocean whose depth cannot be fathomed and everyday is a new learning, new discovery and new experience. May Guruji keep us all under his loving and divine grace for all eternity. Jai Guruji

His Grace, His Love, His Way.

49

God's Way – The Only Way

There is no other way than God's way.

Satsangs render us a sense of safety and well-being, which is critically important in these conflicting and volatile times. The notion behind sharing our experiences renders us a strong sense of community spirit and a reassurance that we are not alone as the human suffering is similar to each one. We are not isolated as each one sharing is connecting us to a higher power and lighting the flame of hope in us while fortifying our faith.

We also share our blessings in the spirit of profound gratitude, and this often makes the reader or listener positive about its own life. Hope is seeing the brightest stars in the darkest night sky.

We trust that the ordeals have their own reason and Guruji is acutely aware of them and will reduce their intensity when the time is right for us. When we do not get success in a certain area then it is not meant to be. Having patience for Guruji to reveal a better and higher calling is what will lead to success. Often we do not consider the solutions and outcomes due to our myopic vision but Guruji gives us the best and for that it is imperative to put our over thinking head to rest.

Most of us are caught up in the idea of how things should be and try avoiding

situations that we fear most but they may be the very ones that are necessary to strengthen us even humble us.

Learning to let go and let God is a maxim that benefits our spiritual journey. Restlessness and reactivity abate and alongside our fears, 'what ifs and 'if onlys' drop. They are substituted with statements that are largely positive. I confess I have a mind that tends to over think but because of my heightened self-awareness I'm able to steer it in the direction of surrender.

An openness to receive is very important but if you don't have faith in Guruji then it probably won't come. What you resist will persist and I have heard people say 'We find it a challenge to worship a human figure but we have nothing against the mellifluous music.' 'So be it!' I mutter. After all it is Guruji's will who He draws into His realm.

After coming to Guruji my life affirmation became, 'my life is filled with joy, love, respect and a deeper possibility of becoming closer to Him.' My perspective on life changed completely from being a victim to be a victor in every situation.

Guruji is more than a source of strength in a crisis.

Without spiritual development, it is impossible to let go of control that makes us believe that we are the ones managing our lives. We are no doubt co creators of our thought, word, and deed and the grace to think, say and do better is His. Rehemat teri and mehenat meri.

World over people are connecting to Guruji's satsangs no matter what their religious orientation and as they surrender control to a higher power life begins to shape up for the better. Surrender frees us from the overwhelming responsibility of trying to fix everything and not being able to, as without His grace our tiny tight knots of Karma cannot be undone. Surrendering in itself means that we are handing the reins of our life to a power that knows and does better than we ever could.

Because we have access to spiritual nourishment, we become less vulnerable to the action of others.

Some of us are on the fence about whether Guruji is paying close attention to us by downloading our prayers that we have placed in the system. The fact of the matter is that He definitely reads them but he deletes everything that does not serve us in the larger scheme of things.

When I was a child my father was my God, my hero, my protector and my mother my disciplinarian and my nurturer. I drew immense comfort from their presence in my life. They could not always shield me from the torrential rain or the hailstorms.

My father once said, 'I wish I could do something to see you happy.' my mother stated, 'a mother can give birth but cannot write her child's destiny. I wish I could give you happiness.'

They both passed on and I felt unanchored.

Then I had a vivid dream. My father was helping me over a wall; a tall thick wall that appeared insurmountable. I was perspiring heavily as I forcefully climbed the wall. I panted weightily out of fatigue and reduced to tears at my lack of strength.

I was also confused as to why my father was pushing me adamantly over the wall. What was on the other side and why could I not just remain in my comfort zone? What on God's earth was his problem?

Dad, while making the final push, smiled at me in his most charismatic and content smile. The gleam in his eyes made him look shrewd but altogether angelic as he let go knowingly and I fell to the other side onto the dense flurry grass. He called out my pet name from the other side in a tender tone with a sense of pride and victory.

I stood on my feet and looked around with my heart still pounding and thumping. I, then, began to fly across the lush and flawless green lawns that were almost picture like. I soared high over the demons of my past leaving everything I did not need anymore. The golden sun shot its rays on me and into me. I was at peace as I dreamily stared at the clear blue skies as I did as a child.

I landed onto the ground and I called out to my father. I could not see him but there was a peaceful and calm silence between us. He knew I would be fine as I was about to begin my new chapter.

Guruji once said to me, 'tenu ohh pyar nahin mileya jo milna jayeda si. Hun dekhi mein tenu pyar karanga. [You have not been loved the way you should have been but now I will love you.]

Tu hun bahut kush rehegi. [You will now be very happy.]

What my parents wanted for me Guruji gave me. My mother gave me birth and Guruji rewrote my destiny. My father wanted to see me happy and Guruji showered me with a joy I could not imagine. Tu mera pita, Tu hai mera mata. Tu mera bandak tu mera bratha. You are my father, you are my mother, you are my friend and you are my brother.

Many people will walk in and out of our lives but only Guruji will leave footprints in our heart.

50

My Heart and Soul

My heart and soul are His and my home is His world.

As is customary I was Manchester for my summer break and this season was hot and sultry. I was there for a relatively brief stay and there was no relief from the ongoing heat.

I received a call, one morning, from Deepika Sakhuja and Rekha Bhatia asking if my Panchsheel home was available for rent.

Strangely and most inexplicably a few months prior I was concerned about its deteriorating state as it was empty from February onwards when my previous tenant, Anmol Sud, Guruji's sangat had vacated it.

I considered either selling or leasing it but it had to be someone reliable and Deepika and Rekha rang on behalf of Isha Saini, who decorates bade mandir every function as well as at various sangat homes. Her aesthetic sense is prasieworthy and can only be the blessing of Guruji. I had barely made my acquaintance with her but because Deepika vouched for her I consented to her staying there as my tenant while I was still in Manchester!

I was attending a Satsang in Newcastle at Varsha Seghal's home and the following day I met Kiran Lally, an old sangat member who regularly visited

Guruji in the physical form with her husband, Ripu Lally in chota mandir.

Kiran Lally's satsang

The earliest memories I have of Guruji is when I was about three years old. I used to have these vivid dreams of Him and on waking up in a cot bed; I would see my mother looking down at me. There was a bald man in a majestic robe standing on a long red carpet with a grand gold chair behind Him. I would be standing on the other end of the carpet and He would pull me towards Him. Sometimes I was pulled over mountains and other times over rivers. Each time I reached Him, I would wake up crying. For the next 22 years, these dreams did not recur.

I was born and raised in Delhi and was married in Punjab at the age of 25 into a family who were Guruji's devotees so after our wedding they wanted to introduce me to Him. On my first trip back home, I went to chota Mandir with my mother in law. I can distinctly remember Guruji wearing a bush shirt, trousers and black Armani socks (he was so stylish) sitting on a console and swinging His legs. I felt He did not have the demeanour of a Guru and I was skeptical. In India there are religious leaders a dime a dozen and the dubious ones often spoil it for the genuine ones as we mistrust before we trust them implicitly. He looked at me and unfolded my life story to me but my cynical head reasoned that anyone could have filled Him in about me. He jumped off the console and said one line to me, 'tera mera connection toh birth se hai.' After which He entered His room to dress up as it was time for the sangat to arrive. On re-opening the door, I froze.

This was the man I dreamt about as a child and here He stood in His majestic robe before me and when I looked closely, I saw the red carpet with the beautiful gold chair, Gurujis aasan. [seat]

As you can imagine, I was spell bound and had goosebumps all over my body. He walked past me and enveloped me in His rose-like fragrance and I connected immediately.

Guruji would call us every weekend from Punjab for the next several months from seven to eleven or more and sometimes have double langar parsad. My husband Ripu's health was not good at the time so we were seeking His

blessings.

My friends teased and ridiculed me by asking, 'What is wrong with you? You need to be out socialising, but you are sitting at some Guru's place.' Today most of those friends are followers of Guruji. Guruji read my mind 'I know you want to go out and socialize and are thinking when will Guruji give aagya but some day you will sit and reflect on how fortunate you are as there are only a handful of devotees I keep behind.' Guruji engaged us in activities to test our devotion. For instance, He made Ripu and I wake up at 4 am and walk for weeks but we wanted instant results. The point is when sitting in Guruji's fold and listening to people's satsangs, I used to think. 'jab yeh sabh mere saath hoga main tab believe karoongi.' [When all this happens with me only then will I believe.] Although I claimed to have faith, I always questioned His Supremacy and I did not deeply connect until He chose to discard His physical coat. Presumably, because we did not love unconditionally, we did not get the answers we were looking for.

When Guruji took Mahasamadhi, my myopic thinking asked if He was as powerful as people claimed Him to be and if He had given health and lives to innumerable then why could He not have helped Himself? I was not aware that He had taken the burden of their karmas upon His physical body. I never understood then that it was His choice to leave this world so that He could bless the increasing sangat world over. People were falling on difficult times and the only way life's burdens lightened was by connecting to divinity. Previously, I failed to grasp the larger picture perspective and I altogether, in my ignorance, stopped going to Chota and Bada Mandir. I believe I lost my connection awhile.

A year after our first born, our son, we moved to Newcastle, England. For anyone born and raised in India the transition to moving abroad is challenging. I was dejected and unable to adjust. Something was missing and we considered having another child but could not conceive at first as I was having hormonal issues.

I started praying and in that very month I conceived and the first satsang was held in Newcastle. Varsha, a friend of mine hosted it but I did not go in my ignorance as I did not know it was our Guruji's satsang.

Thereafter, I met Varsha at a friend's party and I asked her, 'can you show me a picture of your Guruji?' and when she opened the phone to show me I was spell bound. The Guruji I had let go of had not let go of me. I left him in India but He found me in Newcastle when I needed Him the most. I choked with emotion.

I began attending satsangs regularly and for the first time I believed in Him unconditionally. He blessed us with a beautiful baby daughter and we were overjoyed.

He guides me like a father figure; holding my hand and giving me direction. I start my day by handing over the reins in His very capable hands. Versha and I, in jest, call ourselves Gurujis chawkidaarnis ensuring satsangs happen adhering to His principles.

Whilst sitting with sangat in Chota Mandir Guruji would call various people to press His feet and I used to think, 'I hope he doesn't call me as I won't be able to do it. Now I wish He had called me as now He has converted me from being God fearing to God loving.

From ten, we have sangat over 65 in Newcastle and what a journey it has been. I am the only who had the privilege of being in his divine presence though only He knows who is more blessed as to believe in the old and new sangat is a false notion. We are all souls and probably in some incarnation, others have met Him and not I so we are His children connected from many lifetimes.

Once boiling water fell on my hand and I screamed 'Jai Guruji' only to find no burn mark but instead an OM sign. I have smelt roses often when I have thought of Him. My wishes are fulfilled simply because I believe. I have seen OM on my window, Guruji's Darshan on His swaroop, the jyot splitting into two, peacock feathers dancing to His shabads. His blessings are endless and I know He is with my always.

We travel frequently and wherever we go we hold a small satsang in the hotel room. All it takes is a swaroop of Guruji, a bottle of water, some fruit and a pure heart. We play a shabd in the hotel room and we feel so blessed. My children are growing up with Guruji and what more could anyone ask for.

They believe and daily they pray as a family listening to shabds and celebrate with parshad.

I feel immensely blessed to be part of this Guru Parivaar who are my true family. It gladdens my heart to cross a shop or a car that has 'Jai Guruji' or 'blessings always written on it.' Usually as we age, we begin thinking of God but how blessed and fortunate we are that Guruji has connected us to Him in our youth while we are strong enough to make the changes necessary for a fulfilling life.

I always advise new sangat, 'apna connection khud banao' and don't feel discouraged if you don't experience anything or feel disconnected because you will when the time is right for you.

Ripu's family has been blessed with recovering from illnesses and various other problems. I truly believe, 'One person's faith can cure their whole family.' Guruji gave me the willingness to learn to cook, drive, and to manage my home and my children. Being raised in India I was very dependent but He has made me completely independent.

The fact that I am writing this is a satsang as I always longed to be a part of a published book but considered it impossible. Here I am expressing my love for Guruji and sharing it with you all.

With Guruji, sitting amidst us every moment is a divine miracle and life works itself out when we go with the flow rather than fight the current. He is our best navigator so trust His schedule more than our own.

51

Sonakshi's Satsang

We own nothing but we gain everything by giving love.

After lunch, I returned with Versha to her home when I received the dreaded call from Sonakshi on 19 June. She was hysterical as her pet Mojo had passed away literally a few seconds on messaging me. Sonakshi was extremely attached to him and he was indeed her baby whom she had nurtured and loved for over 12 years. The moment was so heartbreaking and that evening Versha held a satsang at her home and my focussed prayer was strength to Sonakshi at her most difficult time. She was inconsolable and I was hurting for her.

Mojo followed her everywhere and their relationship is a true love story that was incredibly unique to me. She connected to him in a way that both intrigued and amazed Anishka and I. The energy between them was pure love and they communicated with one another with the heart. They completely understood each other and he was Sonakshi's priority from the moment he came into our lives in 2006 when we resided in our Panchsheel home.

I guess this was a karmic connect they had and I reached Delhi ten days after he had passed on. It broke my heart to see Sonakshi deeply hurt and grieving. Thankfully, Viviana was staying with us and before I reached India, they had

both gone to Goa to plant a tree in Mojo's honor at my daughters' residence there. This gave Sonakshi tremendous peace, as she would always be able to watch the tree grow on her every visit to Goa.

After I returned to Delhi, I held a small satsang for Mojo at home and for Guruji to render Sonakshi peace and the strength to go on.

Sonakshi's Satsang

'My journey with Guruji began when I was barely 5 years old. Back in those times I would get fascinated by the 'magic tricks' Guruji would perform such as producing parsad from thin air, or an Om symbol appearing on His forehead and even having the ability to read people's minds. However, for each trick I seemed to have a rational explanation. I enjoyed going to His mandir as I not only got to see the 'magic trick' but I had the most delicious chai parsad, halwa and roti parsad ever. I was also able to play hide and seek with people there. [Though I do not know how that happened.]

As time went on I saw a 'magic trick' that I could not explain. My mother was cured of life-threatening skin cancer and asthma. I realized then that Guruji was God as only God Himself has the power to alter someone's destiny. I also realized that He had given me the greatest gift of having a kind, loving and healthy mother whom I get to learn from everyday.

From then on my journey with Guruji was more about gratitude; gratitude for curing my mother, gratitude for keeping me safe and gratitude, most importantly, for not giving me any real problems. As an adult, I love attending satsangs not for His magic tricks but to connect to Him, to say thank you and to enjoy the samosa, chai and halva parsad.

In January 2016, I was heartbroken for having to move from New York to New Delhi as my work visa expired. New York had been my home for 6 years and I loved my life there. I was questioning Guruji's decision a lot in that moment.

In hindsight, I am very grateful to Guruji for having planned my life in this way, as in February 2016 my pet, Mojo, was diagnosed with kidney stones and a hip problem that was slowly deteriorating the movement of his back

legs. I got a chance to spend quality time and to take care of my baby. Throughout this time, I prayed to Guruji to keep him healthy and happy and even though he had this serious health issue, he was an extremely happy dog. In April 2018, his kidney problem escalated to the point it infected his blood and led him into a coma, but I just was not ready to let him go. Over five doctors told me he was not going to make it, but I had Guruji. I prayed to Him to give me just a little more time with Mojo. I played shabds all day long, and on the third day of him being in a coma I placed Guruji's swaroop on Mojo's head and he miraculously woke up. Within a week of Mojo, being out of coma his kidney stones passed and he was infection free. I knew then that Guruji had extended his life and I was eternally grateful.

Unfortunately, he developed a mouth tumor two months later, but this time I accepted Mojo's fate and only prayed that Guruji did not allow him to suffer. The day the tumor visibly grew to the point of discomfort was the day Guruji took mojo. I am grateful to Guruji for not letting my baby suffer and for giving me the chance to prepare emotionally for his end.

In hindsight, moving back to India not only afforded me the opportunity to take care of mojo, but to spend time with family and friends. It also afforded me an opportunity to launch my business in India which allows me to spend ample time in New York, sometimes months, so it all worked out for the best. Everything planned by Guruji has to unfold smoothly. His decision and His timing is always the best for us. In fact reflecting on this really makes me believe that Guruji is taking care of absolutely everything. All we need to do is trust Him and surrender to His plans. His plans are better than ours are. Guruji has been a guiding force in my life and I am forever indebted to Him. By instilling my faith in Guruji, I have instilled faith in myself. I feel confident about every undertaking. I feel safe in every situation and I feel loved every step of the way. Guruji has taught me to view every situation either has a blessing or a lesson. This perception has led me to feel very confident about whatever life presents to me.'

Sonakshi had several pop ups and festivals planned in US to sell her yoga mats and yoga related merchandise so she had much work to do before she left for New York in August.

I formalized the lease contract for my panchsheel home, acquainted myself

with Isha Saini and her husband Gautam Saini. I attended a satsang there once they shifted in and I was so pleased to see Sonakshi's room converted into Guruji's personal bedroom. Anishka's room has been carefully refurbished and occupied by their two daughters. There seems to be a few parallels as she too has two daughters and one of them studies in New York. Isha and Gautam occupy my bedroom and again she has furnished it with a warm glow. It was very peaceful and I was glad that the home Guruji had blessed me with was taken care of. Isha has good taste and she had transformed every room into an aesthetically pleasing one. With regular satsangs, held while I stayed there from 2006 to 2010 and then with Isha being there, the apartment would always remain blessed with His energy. I left towards the end of that month to be with Sonakshi in New York and before flying, I went to Bade mandir to seek Guruji's blessings. I can never travel without being empowered with His langar and shabd combined. This lends me renewed energy and verve to forge ahead with strength and stamina.

Guruji has graced each one of us to live each moment with a positive attitude. Happy people plan actions and not their results. You do your best and let Guruji do the rest.

52

Pune's Seva

Accept what is. Let go of what was and have faith in what will be.

I could see Sonakshi was still hurting from Mojo's passing but Guruji was giving her the strength to move forward with a positive attitude. She was working hard at her pop ups and when I arrived there she was oozing with enthusiasm to fulfill yet another wish of mine.

One of my deepest desires was to visit Washington DC, the capital of the nation. We drove from New York City to Washington, which was a scenic drive. I had been ardently following the Netflix series, 'House of cards' for a while and I was keen to experience each monument from the White house to the Lincoln memorial, to the Washington monument to the Thomas Jefferson memorial to plenty more that was so surreal as we toured throughout on foot. Sonakshi, Viviana along with her mother and I walked for hours in DC and for me it truly was a 'House of cards' moment!

I had it in mind for many years to tick off the Washington box and experience it from close quarters. Guruji made it possible through Sonakshi and I was overjoyed and most appreciative. I really believe that whatever our deepest desires are in our subconscious mind Guruji is acutely aware of them. We may not dwell too hard on them as they're not exactly our topmost priority but nevertheless they are there in the back burner of our mind and

our heart where endless desires reside. On being fulfilled, I am profoundly grateful and when they are denied I am grateful too as it was not meant to be. Harmless, joyful desires that seem unattainable owing to whatever reason always seem to be fulfilled by Guruji. Never give up hope on your deepest desires or aspirations as Guruji never gives up hope on them. He is there to draw a smile on our face and I, for one, was smiling throughout in Washington.

For Guruji, desires are a speck in the larger scheme of things. Like He said, 'Changi cheez manglo baki ta main dina hi hai.' [Ask for something good and the rest I will bestow on you.] He is present in our lives to enable us to traverse the ocean of worldly existence by not floating on the surface but by diving deep to seek and discover the hidden pearl in the oyster of our soul. He facilitates the search only if we are looking in the right direction. Whilst unfolding my every dream and desire, I feel His spirit with me and I am aware that every road I take eventually leads me to His. My profound gratitude resonates in every experience He enables me to have.

We were welcomed most warmly at Viviannas mom's home in Maryland, which had a quiet yet beautiful neighbourhood. We drove through Virginia too where I was later told that Guruji's satsangs are held. Perhaps Guruji simply wanted me to be in the space that I was in with my younger daughter. Every moment was surreal.

Sonakshi and Vivianna had a few pop ups in Maryland and later we drove back to New York. I stayed for three weeks in NYC and attended weekly satsangs held in Manhattan. I went to Long Island to attend Ganga aunty's satsang and spent quality time with her. Guruji bought us close many years ago when I first went to settle Sonakshi into her university NYU. She is a devout Guruji follower and there is much to learn from her devotion and love for Guruji.

Dolly Ahluwalia, from Pune, and I met at Pennsylvania Station to travel together on the train to Long Island for the satsang and it was there she shared her blessed satsangs.

'Million Shukranas Guruji for blessing me with this a new life. I was suffering from chronic asthma for 25 years and was surviving on

steroids and cortisone shots. I had tried every available treatment right from accupunture to swallowing the live fish treatment of Hyderabad. In fact, I did this every year for five years but still had no respite. When He ordains He calls and He blesses. It was in 2005 during my annual visit to Delhi, my sister spoke about Guruji and with ambiguity, I went to Empire estate with my nephew. I sat and enjoyed the Shabad Gurbani, the chai parsad and Langar prasad.

Once done sangat began to leave after bowing before Guruji. I too bowed before Him to take permission to leave but He stopped a few of us and gestured us to sit. Guruji was smiling and looking at us, He closed His eyes, moved His right hand up in the air, and produced a Laddoo Prasad from nowhere. The entire room filled with Guruji's divine Rose fragrance. I was skeptical but all the same I had some when it was distributed to us. Post the miraculous blessing from Guruji my asthma improved and within four months, I was 90 per cent cured.

Thereafter, my journey with Guruji began. He blessed me with health first and then other aspects of my life began falling into place and my most noted blessing was my spiritual progression. The inner purification of mind, body and soul took place and I felt altogether more centred, calm and confident. He had given me a new lease of life where I was literally able to breathe new air. Every breath of mine exuded gratitude and I wanted nothing more than His Pure love.

I was deeply drawn to Him and so I frequented Delhi but it was not enough. There were no satsangs in Pune until April 2011 when I held my first one at my daughter's office with barely 4 to 5 sangat. In the passage of time, it grew into 100's and it has been 8 years since we have been holding satsangs regularly.

I thank Him for blessing me with such a divine purpose in life; to connect and serve His devotees. Always at His lotus feet and service Dolly Ahluwalia Co-ordinator of Pune Sangat

Happiness is not a way of finding it but a way of being it.

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Guruji's Melody

A secret to happiness is freedom and the secret to freedom is courage.

I met Manjul Sharma in the same instance that I met Dolly Ahluwalia aunty in Long island and I heard her sing for the first time in her most melodic voice. Guruji has blessed her immensely with her singing and most importantly, He has given her confidence to believe in her talent and to use it as a means of seva.

'Rehmat Teri aisi hui kya mai bataun mai kya ho gai.'

"This is my devotional song dedicated to my Guruji ... with His blessings my mother was granted a new life ...

This song is a satsang and it is about my mothers ailing condition and her recovery with Guruji's blessings. She was suspected of pancreatic cancer but a miracle occurred as the biopsy report revealed a minor tuberculosis lymph that was curable with 6 months of medication. This happened during my last visit to India in October. We went to chote mandir for darshan, had langar prashad and when we exited our car mirror was broken and my husband's bag in which my passport, driving license and some money had vanished. I tried to retrieve my passport but I could not so I remained in India with my mom. Her stomach got upset, was hospitalized and diagnosed with

pancreatic cancer. I was shattered because she was sick, my son and husband were in New York and I had no passport. She was also suffering with urinary bladder leakage but I managed to take her to bade mandir where that very day she was cured of the bladder issue.

This was the beginning of a succession of blessings; we took her to AIIMS hospital for her surgery. Lymph node on the head of pancreas is sensitive area and to operate on it there is only 10 to 20 % success rate but with Guruji's blessing the procedure went smoothly and the post operation tests revealed it was tuberculosis lymph and no cancer at all.

I offered jaal prashad twice in AIIMS and chanted the mantra jaap morning and evening. My mother is a devout believer of Guruji and connects with Him all the time.

I was so preoccupied with her that I was not able to focus on my pending recording until Sharma aunty called to reassure me that my mother was protected and I needed to focus on my music. I went to Punjab to complete the songs for my album but I could not and then my husband suggested singing Guruji's Bhajan first. We were in Dugri next morning before recording and within just over an hour we wrote a bhajan, composed it and completed it within 2 hrs, which was otherwise impossible.

He blessed my singing career and He has granted us a green card for our entire family to live in America. On baisakhi satsang, we danced most energetically and the next day viewing the circulated pictures I saw a bright heart shape hole on my left arm and I thought my suit tore but on checking it in my wardrobe it was intact. I felt blessed.

While sipping my morning tea I noticed a red and orange color bird sitting next to my kitchen window n chanting Guru ji Guru ji Guru ji. I recorded that amazing sound (currently planning to use it in my songs). After that my life started changing radically. I was a performer singer graduated in music but could not persue my career owing to family issues. On visiting India, I went to Empire State mandir for Shivratri celebrations and a female singer was performing and she described how she started her career after marriage. Immediately I questioned Guruji why I could not launch my career as a singer and within a week, a Punjabi singer approached me to collaborate. I was overjoyed except I had to pause when my mother

fell ill but I resumed once she miraculously recovered. I came out with this bhajan as a shukrana to my love, my Guru my best friend. Rehmat Teri was well received but I did not want a Sufi and bhajan kind of image for myself. All my songs went on pending files. I returned to New York and upset, I asked Guruji why He appeared in my husband's dream advising us to move here where we had no family. I missed having a sibling with whom I could share my issues.

I dreamt that Guru ji was lying down in His chola in a basement flooded with sangat mourning as Guruji was trying to leave His chola. I started crying and then He sat and asked me to sing shabd. I told Him I do not know Guru much but I could sing for Him if He provided me Gurbani in Hindi. He rose and there was a screen kind of gadget that appeared in His hand and on both sides, there was blue colored Omkar. The Hindi was in very small print and my eyes welled up as I apologized to Guruji for not being able to read it hence unable to sing it. Guru ji said 'shabd gai. Tu bhajan bhi ta gandi hai tu bhajan ga ek sindhi Bhairavi vich hai.' He then hummed that bhajan and he lay down again.

On waking from this dream, I cried and that morning an aunty messaged me to perform 'Rehmat Teri' at a satsang in New Jersey at Arti aunty's place. After conveying this message her mobile was unreachable. There was torrential rain that day which meant it would take us at least two hours but I convinced my husband to take me to Arti aunty's place that brimmed with Christmas magic and Guruji's swaroop was smiling.

Arti asked me to share my satsang but instead my husband shared on how Guruji appeared in his dream asking him to shift to USA and then placed a jalebi mala around his neck. Arti asked me where I was from and I shared about my husband having a business of musical instruments. She turned her gaze towards me and asked if I was Prarthna masi's daughter and I responded in the affirmative.

She exclaimed, 'Manjul didi, I'm Arti, your Sheela masi's daughter!'

We both shed tears of joy as Guruji heard my prayer of wanting a family in New York and He orchestrated our union. Meanwhile Seema aunty suggested I do a live shabd performance for New Year celebrations at Guru

ji ka ashram, 'Shabd gao Shabd.' She said it in the same way as Guruji did in my dream.

I shared my dream with her which she interpreted as Guruji's hukkam for me to sing shabd and I learnt that the screen He was showing me in the dream was an indication for me to google the shabd. Thereafter, I dedicatedly prepared a playlist and in doing so my love for Him deepened and nothing mattered more.

I searched on YouTube, googled the lyrics meaning and sang. My family was involved with my husband Sanjay Sharma playing tabla and Rishab Sharma, the sitar.

My voice improved tremendously as I sang the shabds and thereafter I performed in many places and on Shivratri my dream came true of singing in bade mandir, Delhi.

I learnt that dreams of Guruji are in reality His darshans with His messages and that He listens to all our pleas and prayers.

We need to live our lives with infallible faith; the kind that moves mountains because in doing so all the unimaginable gifts begin to fall on our lap. The more we get drenched in His love the more we exude it and the more love there is in the world the happier it is.

Love thy world for it is God's creation. Love thy talent for it brings joy to the Soul.

54

Road Trip to Spain

Go to the people and the places that set a sparkle to your soul.

I left NYC around mid September returning to Manchester to Sanjay and kajal.

My dear friend Mina Vadhera celebrated her birthday with a few of us. We celebrated by dancing until 3 am after which we headed to Mina's place to spend the night there. Before sleeping, I prepared chai parsad to relax us.

Following that, it was Versha Sehgal's 40th birthday bash in Edinburgh, Scotland and the three of us, Sanjay and Kajal and I travelled by road. It was a magnificent celebration in a castle, probably forty percent of her guests were Guruji's followers, and so every social engagement has gathered a new meaning for me. Again, I met Kiran Lally, there and the following morning she came with her husband Ripu to take me for breakfast and to share her satsang. They are friends turned family and one of the warmest, affectionate and most respectful couple I know.

Anishka and Sonakshi along with Vivianna and her mom chalked out a road trip to Spain. I met them there from Manchester beginning of October.

We began in Madrid, spent a few nights there before driving to Tolido, a

quaint Spanish town with rustic beauty. We had lunch in Cordoba and stayed the night after watching an incredible horse show there.

The vast number of olive trees we passed on the way to Seville was fascinating.

Marbella is always stunning, the apartment was simply sumptuous, and the unremitting rain one afternoon splashed more joy onto our experience.

We merely drove through Malaga and then headed to Granada, which again was a stunningly quaint place with cobbled streets and its usual quotient of churches, museums that is typical of any European city. However, Granada has the Alhambra, a massive castle that was home to many Arabs.

By the time we reached Alicante I was beyond exhausted. Everyone decided to sight see whilst I chose to remain in the hotel where I enquired about satsangs close by. I craved for chai prasad and perhaps langar to replenish and revive my body and spirit. I was exhausted from the vast travel, my body turned stiff, and my mind totally jaded. I would recover from this acute fatigue if by some miracle, I received my blessings from Guruji via satsang but I guess it was most unlikely in the middle of Alicante.

Valencia was our next stop and I was preparing myself for the ride by keeping my feet up all day and most determinedly looking for sangat. I posted it on one of Guruji's whatsapp chats and immediately I received a message from sangat, Kavita asking me to call her.

She asked me my whereabouts and after confirming Alicante, she asked what my next stopover was and I told her it was Valencia. She confirmed that is precisely where she resided! What are the odds?

After speaking awhile in utter excitement of having connected, she asked us to join her for dinner as soon as we reached Valencia and I confirmed it although a tad disappointed about not attending a satsang.

The evening was beautiful as kavita and her husband were such warm and welcoming hosts. The well-presented food was a feast to the eyes as well as to our stomach. I had the most longed for chai prasad. We were overjoyed

and as we were leaving, she announced that she was holding a satsang the following day at her place! My joy knew no bounds and just hearing the words revived my energy and gusto to carry on with the road trip that was to span over another week.

The satsang was divine with sangat from different parts of Europe. I smiled inwardly as there was a time when I asked Guruji when He would come to Europe and today He must be smiling at me stating 'Here I am and that too everywhere. I met sangat from Stuttgart and I learnt that there were devotees in Berlin, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Paris, Barcelona and Budapest. I relished the chai parsad and langar like never before as I consumed it with the spirit that it would revive me. I loved the Spanish road trip and after the satsang I was completely energized, as I was enthusiastic.

Kavita from Valencia, Spain shares her satsang

The year 2012 started with a stream of health and wealth problems. My brother Muneesh, from Mumbai was visiting me. His wife Shivani, my Bhabhi, a devotee from Guruji's old sangat sent me Guruji's 'Light of Divinity' and a blessed Swaroop. I kept them in my room and then got busy entertaining Muneesh in Spain, forgetting the reason for his visit.

After Muneesh returned to India, I was to get one more medical test. My bhabhi Shivani reminded me of Guruji's book and Swaroop which she had especially sent for me. I carried the Swaroop with me and ever since, every report was clear, making Spanish doctors confused!

This was the beginning of my journey with Guruji Maharaj!

My love and faith in Guruji Maharaj deepened and every obstacle, big or small, every justified desire was fulfilled; be it health, education or wealth. Doctors, lawyers, colleagues, friends and relatives could all see the Divine intervention. My entire being, attitude, perception of life had changed with a new sense of faith and surrender.

Today, I thank my problem of 2012, as it was then that I found my Supreme 'Master'- Guruji Maharaj. My special thanks to Shivani and her mum Meera Aunty for introducing me to Guruji Maharaj and for taking me for blessed

visits to Bade Mandir where I learnt the importance of the divine langar prasad and the instant Blessings you get from it.

As we know, problems in life are constant and painful. Both my parents, who I am deeply bonded with had serious health issues. However, I derived strength, which otherwise would have been impossible, by attending satsangs, eating langar prasad, giving Jal prasad to my dad, chanting the Mantra Jaap and listening to shabads in the intensive care of Breach Candy Hospital. Guruji smoothes out the rough tide by clutching your hand reassuring. I would open 'Light of Divinity' and get the same chapter every time I needed an answer for mum and dad. Unknown sangat would provide relief and remind me of Guruji's concealed Blessings. With His grace both my parents are now healthy and are His devotees.

My husband, a medical doctor, took time to accept the miracles that appeared on Guruji's swaroop initially in our room but today he is the first one doing seva in all satsangs.

Our daughter, Kareena was only 12 years old when she connected to Guruji. She gets her answers directly from Guruji. When applying to universities she had a strong feeling that she would get into her first-choice university in Paris because every time we prayed for her and opened the "Light of Divinity" we would always get the chapter "Meeting Guruji at the Eiffel Tower." With Guruji's Grace, her dream of studying in France came true. She is truly His daughter. Her unflinching faith in Guruji has given her a positive attitude in life, making her more focused and optimistic as she gives her best knowing that Guruji is with her. As a kid, she did not like milk but would gobble it down when given in Guruji's mug. It is extremely overwhelming to see our children so connected to Guruji. Abheer, my nephew does the most brilliant seva, and connects with Guruji enjoying His blessings from an early age.

In these last seven years, I have experienced bliss as I have lived miracles on a regular basis. I have seen friends who get blessed and become sangat and sangat who have now become close friends and family.

I have learnt over the years is that there are no coincidences with Guruji – when you pray for someone or something you get your answer from Him

whether it is from His Swaroop to His fragrance to the eye contact that only you have with His Swaroop to a satsang that reaches you at the most appropriate time. Fear, negative thoughts and energies are replaced with faith, positivity, surrender and acceptance.

Initially, I wondered how sangat could go on and on about Guruji's "Meher", but now I feel exactly the same way. Every greeting is "Jai Guruji" (even to foreigners). Chai Prasad is the best beverage, Shabad the sweetest music and Langar prasad the best meal to satisfy and heal your heart and soul.

There is a huge feeling of joy in you when you handover Guruji's Swaroop to new people in need of His "Meher" as you know that they will heal from His divine blessings. Thank you Guruji Maharaj for allowing all three generations of the family to be in your protection. May the world reap the love and grace that we have as a family. May peace and harmony reign in the world. May the entire humankind experience and know your omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotence.

Thank you Guruji

We may not have it all together but together we have it all.

55

Promise to God

All experience is the condiment that gives life its flavor.

It was November when I returned to India from my travels abroad. I slipped into my routine of visiting Guruji's ashram as I had missed it intensely.

My brother, Sanjeev asked me to decide the venue and the guest list for my birthday dinner two weekends before my actual birthday. I told him anything goes and he asked me again a week before and I gave him the same mundane response. Then one evening on leaving Guruji's ashram after langar he asked me if I wanted to hold a satsang for my birthday. My heart danced in elation as that was precisely how I longed to celebrate but my only apprehension was the space, as I couldn't accommodate more than 50 to 60 sangat at my Vasant Vihar residence. He quickly resolved that by offering his space that could easily accommodate over 200 sangat. I asked Siddharth Mohan if he was available to sing that evening and with Guruji's grace he was. It fell into place and all my sangat friends and more turned up to wish me. It was truly blissful with Guruji's presence very evident.

Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, the daughter of the respected Bollywood actor Rishi Kapoor attended my birthday satsang and in her words said, 'I have been very fortunate to be in the benign presence of Guruji. My first calling was on the auspicious occasion of Gurupurab. My life and my thought process have

changed since then. I have become a more positive person and have found my inner peace. My faith in Guruji is tremendous and I witness my share of marvels every single day. I feel and believe that Guruji is guiding me every moment of my life and I cannot thank Him enough for accepting me in His fold. My deepest love and gratitude to Him. May He always protect my family and I and shower His grace on the world at large.'

In November I visited Anishka in Dubai and we both attended my childhood friend Sonia Lalvani's son's wedding. She too along with her daughter in laws mother, Leeza are Guruji's devotees.

It was a heartwarming trip as we bonded over netflix, dinners and chat. We attended one of the small satsangs held during the week. It was divine and though I was down with a heavy cold I was previlged to be able to share my meher with the sangat.

Sangat used to ask Guruji, 'Why Guruji do you make people stand and speak of your greatness in front of you?'

This was because Guruji knew that He would leave His chola someday and His class needed to be taught which would be repeated and re-said the way it had been said in His presence. Sometimes the devotee was asked to repeat his or her satsang several times much to the irritation of the sangat. All the sangat would think, 'We have heard this before and not once, but many times over!'

Then one day Guruji explained, 'satsang is your medicine and by listening attentively to the same satsang you are getting the required dosage of medicine. Therefore, listen to the satsang patiently as you will benefit from it. This medicine- satsangs are not to be kept within you but to be shared. When you praise your Guru there are many benefits on many different levels. It is much more potent than reciting mantras and prayers. Our bad karmas are cleansed, our speech is purified as is our soul and we elevate to a higher spiritual realm. It is on the higher realm that He reveals our truth bringing us ever closer to Him. He reveals our true purpose while all worldly identities drop. It is advisable to keep the sharing of His meher crisp and concise; much to the point without embellishments and without making it a narrative of 'he said this and she said that while it rained one summer afternoon with my

maid frying pakoras!' Stories faze the listener out and the essence of Guruji's meher is lost in its translation.

Guruji made us realize that life is not merely about eating, drinking, working, partying, sleeping, copy, and paste the following day. It is not all about accumulating material objects either though He gives us that with the wisdom not to get attached or dependent on it.

'Khaana, peen aur sona ta har jooniyan wich karde ha. Manush janam wich dimag dita hai ta ki asi us rab nu pa sakiye. Baccha maa de garbh wich Honda haita cheekta hai ki rab main nu maaf Karin. Mein duniya jaa ke tera naam japanag. Par kadon baccha bahar anda hai, te usnu duniya di hawa lagdi hai oho sab kuch pul janda hai.' [All life forms eat, drink and sleep but the human form is granted with a brain so that he can realize God. When a child is in a mother's womb he cries out to God for forgiveness. After birth he promises Him to take God's name but as soon as he is born, he forgets his promise to God.

It is to remind us of this promise that a true Guru appears.

56

Attitudes Change

It appears that no matter what juncture we are at in life, on meeting Guruji our attitude, priorities and our perceptions alter.

He ensures that our mind becomes a temple and our hearts a shrine. He embellishes our soul with the purest devotion and our body then is prepared to do service for the welfare of others.

Timsy Anand, another devout Guruji follower hosted a gourmet sit down dinner at Maurya Sheraton. I had the privilege of tasting the especially curated menu by the globally renowned Chef Andoni Luis Aduriz and that is where I bonded and befriended Anjali Hooda, the sister of the renowned Bollywood actor Ranveer Hooda.

No surprise she was devoted to Guruji and then shared her satsang. In her words.

‘It’s been a year since I started going to Bade Mandir. On my initial visit I didn’t know what to expect, I went alone, stood in the endlessly long line which was well organized, had the nectar like chai parsad. After an hour, I proceeded to the langar hall where I shared my thali with three different people from different social strata by which I mean very poor people and that was a great leveler for me. Many times after that, I went with a friend

but shared my thali with completely different people.

Once, while I was doing seva at chota mandir a woman fainted and I being a doctor revived her and that was my biggest seva.

After the first time, at night, I dreamt of Guruji asking me to touch His lotus feet. Next time I went, I asked Him for something and He gave it to me, and within days, He took it back. This left me confused and my faith was shattered as I could not believe what had happened and why. I was upset, I did not visit the mandir for a few days, and then one of my patients, a follower of Guruji gave me a book on Guruji to read. I read it and immediately understood why events unfolded in my life the way they did though I remained hurt for a long time. I do grasp the essence that God gives us what we need as opposed to what we want but even so, certain wounds do take time to heal. I resumed visiting bade mandir and I ceased to ask for anything except for Him to heal me. Ocassionally, I ask and it does manifest slowly but surely.

Once I was in the company of Guruji's sangat and smelled roses while talking about Him and His meher. Another time, I wanted to visit His birthplace in Punjab and people who were supposed to take me did not ask me and I felt hurt about it. However, on the same night, I saw His room and then His entire ashram in Dugri and so He gave me darshan without setting foot there. God bless those people I am sure they had their reasons.

My faith was shaky with the ongoing hurt. I regularly lit my diya at my workplace because at home, no one believed in Guruji and I did not want to upset the harmony there. Unbelievably, I now have many patients who are Guruji followers and on meeting them the consultation exceeds ½ hour since we share the miraculous experiences; satsangs. I longed for more although I have certainly progressed in life, my book is being released and my career has advanced too.

Once I misplaced my bracelet given by Sudha aunty and then one evening at a dinner I told someone I needed a new bracelet and immediately a shiny new bracelet lands on my wrist.

Last week I visited the mandir after many days as I needed my regular dose

of medicine but I left without having the chai Prasad. I was running late for a prior engagement and on exiting, I thought I should have waited for my chai Prasad and lo and behold at the gate, chai came to me.

As a devout believer of Guruji, I disallow any obstacle to come between us. I am still seeking some answers that I am sure will unfold when He wills it. In solitude, I am able to connect with Him and He fills my brain with many logical answers. Sometimes I am unable to interpret them. My journey of 1:1 connection continues and like every other devotee our perceptions and interpretations as well as our visions are all our own truth. I believe He had said that even some blessings that He bestows on us is 'gupt' [meaning- not shared]"

The concept of gupt paat, gupt daan and gupt seva make perfect sense as these are not meant to be openly displayed for others to adulate or appreciate us. In the spiritual realm God has a record of our every deed and only He needs to be pleased. It is a soul to soul connect and by displaying our good deeds on social media and rning about them to others they become null and void. Unless we share every morsel of our goodness to others we feel isolated. On the contrary the clearer our communication with Him and the stronger our faith that He listens as He speaks to us, the less we seek outside approval. Our connect has to be gupt –undisplayed. It is our sacred space with our God and He is pleased not with our flamboyance and flaunting of our good deeds but our silent integrity and goodness.

Trust Him, He has brought us so far and will therefore see us through every phase and path.

57

Mall is Blessed

Every phase and path is illuminated with His love.

The journey is sharing satsangs whilst enjoying the various landscapes with its people around the globe.

I returned from Dubai and a day later was Christmas Eve, which I celebrated with my family, Ajay and Selena at their home along with Sanjeev, Amit and all our cousins including Hapu, Meenu and many others who are devout followers of Guruji. One of my cousin Sanjay's daughter lives in Melbourne and is a devout follower of Guruji. Wherever we turn our gaze, He is there.

After a truly festive Christmas celebration, I headed to Goa to spend the best part of winter with Aruna Sharma aunty at her hotel. The idea was to enjoy my time with her and to begin writing this very book!

We celebrated New Year's Eve with a variety show at her hotel and then on the 1st January the Goa sangat held a satsang on the beach, which was most exhilarating and exceptionally blissful.

Ruchika, the Goa sangat and I connected in a way that was magical and Guruji who brought us closer. Meeting like-minded people with similar outlook and goals in life is fundamental to our growth.

I managed to write several chapters in Goa, as the vibe was completely conducive to writing while musing and reflecting on Guruji's infinite grace.

Aruna Aunty spoke to her daughter Neeraj Ghei to share their family satsang.

"Jai Guruji! Every day, 'har pal' with Guruji is a satsang and a blessing. My entire family has been connected with Guruji since 2003 and He has blessed us immensely, including having given my Dad, Late Inder Sharma the Divine Prashad.

My father passed away in September 2017. About 10 years prior to that, my Dad was, in fact, unwell and he continued to visit Guruji. On one such occasion, while sitting quietly in the Darbar, Guruji called him and said, "Bahut weak lag raha hai." My father answered, "Haan Guruji, I've been in and out of ICUs but I suppose I am paying for my sins of not listening to my Doctor wife all these years and suffering for my karma." Guruji, out of nowhere, raised his hand in the air and there came the blessed divine prashad, a large laddoo. It was so hot that my father could not hold it with his two hands and had to use his kurta to receive it. Guruji then said "Inder uncle, ja, aish kar le; Tenu das saal ditte" (Go Enjoy your life.... I have given you 10 years). The Parshad was to be eaten in small portions by my father over the next 10 years and miraculously he got better. Just as unbelievably, he started falling ill again in 2017- almost 10 years later. My mother and I knew that the ten years vardan period was up, and that he had been blessed with those years with us and in Guruji's sewa. We still have some Parshad at our home and it is as fresh as it was the day he received it.

Guruji reads our minds. He knows more about us than we can imagine; additionally He knows the unseen and unsaid aspects of our lives; aspects that are not even known to the family, spouse or children.

My father's family hails from a village in Punjab and my grandfather left it in the 1920s, never to return. The family came from humble roots and yet, one of his uncles, used to run a small dispensary there but had discontinued in the 1930s. My family also owned a small hut like temple, which had moved from Jammu and established the family deity (Kuldevi) and it was my father's desire to have it rebuilt. One evening my father took Aagya from Guruji and said, "Guruji, mein agle hafte nahi aavanga. Mein apne pind ja rya

haan.” Guruji turned around and told him, “Haan, mennu pata hai ke tu pind ja raha hai purkhaan da mandir theek karne.” (I know you are going to your native village to restore your ancestral temple.) My Dad replied, “Yes, I need your blessings for that.” So, Guruji said, “Mandir aur masjid te sab log banaande ne. Tere purkhan di otthe ek dispensary si. Tu onnu revive kar.” (Everyone builds temples & mosques. Your ancestors had a dispensary there. Go and revive that.) My father had not shared this fact with us that our ancestors had run a dispensary years ago. The dispensary had shut down and my father remembered that the family had also sold the land that it was built on, in time of severe need. However, Guruji knew of such an old and forgotten fact when no one other than my Dad. An unspoken, unheard, unsaid part of the history of the family but then, who else but Guruji would know; He is omniscient.

Dad changed his plans and told us “Ok, I am not going to the village. Let me first send someone from the office to identify and buy land to build a dispensary” and he added, “You know; now I want to revive the village dispensary. Guruji has willed it.” He instructed his manager, “Go find land or a building to buy, so I can revive our ancestral dispensary and run a charitable health centre for the village.” The manager landed up in the village and talked to the Panchayat and the village elders. There was nobody from the immediate family left in the village so nothing belonged to us there. Suddenly, as the word spread, an old gentleman from the village came and told “the land on which the dispensary used to be, I had bought it from the Sharma family years ago and here are the papers for the land. That land was never transferred to my name. That land is still in your forefather’s name.” The dispensary building was there unused and dilapidated. The gentleman took the payment and returned the land, which did not have to be re-registered in our name as it still stood in the family name. Currently, we run it as a full-fledged charitable health centre for our ancestral village and the neighbouring villages. We hold regular health camps plus a daily primary care dispensary. We have tied up for subsidized medical care with a large hospital very close to our village. This illustrates that some things that you are not even aware of, Guruji knows. He used to say that ‘When you bow to me I see your past, present and future karmas.’ We cannot conceal anything from Him. Being transparent and simple is the golden rule and the more honest we are in our dealings and demeanor the more He blesses us with a better life.

Another beautiful Satsang that changed our lives was in 2003. The family and our partner bought a plot of land through a Government auction in Delhi, where Select Citywalk mall stands today. After winning the bid, we put together virtually all our funds and as per the terms, made payment of 25% of the Bid amount. It was an industry in which we had no experience, and a key reason we had agreed to invest was that we had a “handshake” gentleman’s agreement with a leading bank in India to collaborate with us on the project. They were to take equity and provide the required debt. Our investment was to be limited to the 25% that we had paid up front. Somehow, matters were not closing with the bank. We even had to take a 3-month extension from the Government to make payment, for if we were unable to pay within the stipulated period, we would forfeit our initial payment of 25% too. During the extension, it dawned on us that the bank was backing out of the agreement. They had virtually led us to the edge of the cliff and we seemed destined to go down.

We had recently connected with Guruji and so my parents used to go to the Mandir often and despite being distressed at the possibility of losing everything that they had earned, never spoke of their problems to Guruji.

On one such visit, Guruji saw my father sitting sadly in a corner and said “Inder uncle, tu bada pareshan lag raha hai.” My father replied, “Guruji dikkat to hai. Kaafi severe hai. Lagda hai ke mainu twadi jootiyan chori karni padengi.” (There is indeed a problem, Guruji; quite a severe crises. Seems I will have to steal your slippers.) Guruji laughed and replied, “Chori kyon karni hain meri jootiyan? Aise hi le jaa.” (Why do you have to steal my slippers? Take them anyway.) We are blessed to have those jooti’s with us.

Then he said, “Tu bada pareshan lag raha hai. Kal tu chhed wale 43 coins lana.” (You look worried. Bring 43 coins with a hole in them tomorrow.) With great difficulty, my father managed to find 43 coins with a hole in them from Old Delhi and took them to Guruji, wondering what this small change would achieve, for the money we required was hefty. Guruji took the coins and blessed them, and told my Dad that each day he should throw one coin in a water body and the last one in running water. My father was amused, not understanding the significance, and thought that Guruji was giving him pennies when he needed so much more.

Meanwhile, on my Dad's instructions, I was feverishly running against time and contacting every bank possible to try to arrange funding. Each door I knocked brought disappointment with comments like, "You people don't have the experience; you have never done a project of this size before; you don't have the security or collateral; do you think it is a joke to give this kind of money for this project." I was disheartened and told Dad, "I don't think this is going to happen. Looks like we have reached the edge of the cliff and only a divine intervention can give us wings to fly."

I later realized there were two stories playing out in parallel; one between me and the banks and the other between Guruji and my father. At that time, I was unaware of the coins. Nevertheless, by His grace, the situation leaned in our favor and two banks finally relented to fund us. I remember sitting in that meeting, with the Chairman of a Bank telling his team, "This lady is here with a very peculiar problem. They have a great concept and finally someone wants to build and run a world-class shopping centre the way it is done globally but they have no money, and only five weeks to pay for it or they will lose everything. If you can assure her that, you can evaluate the project and fund the project in the period available, only then let us take on this deal. Otherwise, let us tell her to go look somewhere else." They heard my presentation again and asked me to wait and after an hour or so, they came back and said, "OK. We will do it". Could this have happened without Guruji's blessings? – No way!

At one end, I was handling the funding and the financial requirements and at the other end, my Dad was immersing these coins. When about seven coins remained, it struck both of us that the 43rd coin was going to be immersed on the last and final day of the payment deadline. One day before the deadline was to expire, we were able to make the payment to the Government and acquire the land. Guruji's blessing saved us from financial ruin.

We are still amazed that Dad had never told Guruji of the amount needed or the payment deadline and yet the 43rd coin coincided with the last date for payment.

Once done, Dad went to do Shukrana to Guruji and before he could say

anything, Guruji mentioned both the last date and the amount and said, “Mil gaye, Inder Uncle, twannu paise? Hun, achchha sa mall banayee, main aavanga dekhan.” (Did you get the money you wanted, Inder Uncle? Now go build a nice mall. I will come to have a look.)

The project ‘Select city Mall’ has set new standards and continues to flourish due to the meher and blessings of Guruji. Guruji’s Sangat tells us that while it was under construction, Guruji would at times take few sangat with him late night to see the progress.

All these years, the satsangs were held at my mother’s home or at the Mall. It had been our wish to do a Satsang at our home. I honestly do not know why it took us so long to have a satsang at our place but I guess it was meant to be at a particular time.

On this occasion, our daughter was in town and it seemed the most opportune time to have the Satsang. Since it was our first, I was anxious for it to go perfectly and it as turned out, Guruji himself decorated the Darbar. I have no words to say, except that it all came together, divinely.

Three weeks prior to the Satsang, I had a colour scheme of pale yellow and white in mind, something light, since it was peak summer. When I searched for the chola, I picked the fabric in yellow and white. I told the florist that I want yellow and white flowers. Two days before the Satsang, I visited Bade Mandir and on paying my obeisance to Guruji I see that His Darbar was in the same colour scheme of pale yellow and white. On exiting the temple I met Gaurav uncle and when I invited him, he gave me a lovely deep mango, almost mustard coloured chola of Guruji, a gorgeous chaadar of Guruji, bright Fuscia Pink and his Juttis. Both were colours that I had not planned in the decor. However, being Guruji’s blessings, I said to myself that after all, Guruji chooses His clothes to come to a satsang so who am I to decide the colours? On the day of the Satsang, when the florist arrived, though I had strictly ordered the colour scheme of pale yellow and white, he brought white and Fuscia pink flowers. I have no idea how the flowers changed to this pink but the Darbar looked stunning.

I will share three incidents that happened with our mothers. Firstly about my mother in law, Kavi’s mom. A couple of years ago, on Shivratri we were

in Bade Mandir and there were thousands of people present. After a while, Kavi and I left with my Dad. Our mothers remained at the temple but immediately on leaving, we received a panic call that Kavi's mother had collapsed and so we went back. She had fainted and her pulse was very low. Fortunately, my mother, who is a doctor, was there. She confirmed that she had all the signs and symptoms of a heart attack so we took her straight to the hospital and admitted her in the ICU. When the doctor checked her, he said there was nothing wrong with her. We said, "But, she was sweating profusely and she fainted. She collapsed and her eyes were rolling and she couldn't breathe." He said there was absolutely nothing wrong with her and he could not see any of these in the medical report and the ECG was clear too." Guruji's grace enabled her to emerge from the situation in a breeze.

I relate a recent incident with my mother.

My husband and I were in Bombay for a wedding. Normally I do not switch off my phone at night, in case of an emergency but that particular night at 3:30 a.m. I had intentionally switched it off, as I did not want to be disturbed. My brother was on a flight that night. My Sister-in-law usually never keeps her phone in her room at bedtime but that night, for no particular reason, she kept it in her room with the ringer on.

Around 4am that night mom's maid noticed Mom undergoing extreme laboured breathing and she was gasping for breath. She tried calling me but thankfully, by Guruji's design, she managed to contact my sister-in-law who immediately took her to the hospital, got medical attention and again the doctors gave her a clean bill of health confirming that no damage was incurred.

Two days before this incident, Mom was at a Satsang in Chhota Mandir and was fully immersed (magan) in listening to the Shiv Tandav. Immediately after it finished, an Aunty came to Mom and said she had just seen Guruji on Mom's head, blessing her. My mother in her mind questioned "Guruji, mennu kyon thwadi load pae gayi?" (Why do I need you, why did you come to bless me.) The answer came to us two days later as Guruji had blessed her for the emergency she was going to face.

I can continue relentlessly with the blessings that my family and I have

received for which our gratitude will never be enough.

About six or seven years ago, my parents were on a cruise in South America. Mobile phones do not work on ships while sailing so we could only speak to them on the ship's number, but only in case of an emergency or while the ship was docked at some Port. My Dad invariably kept his phone off during the voyage.

During this period, one of Guruji's devotees in Delhi, who was not known to us, had a dream of Guruji telling her "Ja ke Aruna Aunty nu bacha." (Go save Aruna Aunty.) In her dream, she was shown a woman on a big ship in the middle of the ocean, which was possibly drowning. All she heard was the name "Aruna Aunty." Not knowing my mother, she went the next morning to Bade Mandir and Chhota Mandir to enquire as to who Aruna Aunty was. Thankfully, the Sangat recognised my mother's name and shared her number and the aunty called my mother but, as she was sailing, the phone was unreachable and my father's number was switched off. Aunty felt it was Guruji's divine desire to find Aruna Aunty and she persistently tried my father's number. Unusually, in the middle of the night, my father switched on his phone to see if there were any messages and miraculously his phone got a signal just when aunty was trying his number. She shared that she had a vision of penguins, ocean and Aruna Aunty getting off from a big boat to a small boat and that mujhe Guruji ka aadesh aaya hai to save Aruna Aunty and that she should not go on the small boat as she would drown. Guruji had shown her that my mother should not go in water. In reality, that day, my parents were booked for an excursion to the Penguin Island on a similar boat.

Before they left for the excursion, there was a massive earthquake in Chile and the the most devastating one that Chile had encountered and there were tsunami waves in the sea. Fortunately, my parents had followed Guruji's warning and were safe. Once you surrender to Guruji, He looks after you and somehow ensures your wellbeing.

I recently had the privilege of arranging a Satsang and langar in Dubai. The dishes in the langar had to be switched just before the langar, as one day earlier, I had a dream and it was almost like Guruji's Aadesh ke "Langar me Aaloo hai ke Nahi" (Is there a potato dish in langar?) and there were actually

no aaloo planned in the langar. The hotel had told me that once finalized, no dishes could be added or subtracted at this late stage.

In my dream, I had questioned “what Aaloo?” (Thought what kind of aaloo dish can I substitute?) I saw a big steel tray with Geela Rase wale aaloo. Next morning I called an aunty who was assisting me and I shared Guruji’s Aadesh that “Aaloo hone chahiye.” I was reminded that the menu is planned in advance, so the caterers at the hotel would refuse. However, the long and short of it is that I requested for aloo as an addition to the menu set and within a couple of minutes the sangat aunty confirmed rase wale aloo were substituting the rajma. It was Guruji’s blessings to the Sangat.

Finally, I share one fun and yet insightful Satsang. My Mom, Dad, Kavi and I were asked by Guruji to accompany him to a wedding in Chandigarh. "Mere naal chalo" he said. We spent the day travelling, stopping en route and particularly relishing the parathas at a dhabba in Murthal. The wedding was taking place on the shores of Sukhna Lake. It was a beautiful setting with many local people and His devotees surrounding Guruji. In a far corner was a bar and my husband was eager to have a whisky but thought to himself, "We have come with Guruji so I had better not go near the Bar" (Of course, he did not share this thought even with me!) Suddenly, someone tapped him on the shoulders and said "Guruji tennu bula rahe hain" Kavi promptly went, and Guruji said, "Chinta na kar. Bhul ja ke main aithay haan. Ja whisky pi le te apne Saure nu wi pila. Onnu wi odi load hai." (Do not worry. Forget about my presence, go, have your whisky, and get one for your father in law. He needs it badly too.) Guruji knew and still knows what is in our mind, howsoever trivial it might be.

Guruji’s blessings are immense. At times, our faith may weaken or our heart may doubt, but He brings us back into the space of absolute love and positive surrender. For all His blessings tangible and otherwise, I am deeply thankful.”

58

He is the True Path

Be thankful for what you have; you will be given more. If you focus on your lack that is what you will attract.

Aruna aunty and I continued our relaxing time in Goa and we met Preeti aunty from Jalandar one afternoon for lunch where she shared a treasure of satsangs. I recall visiting her home with my friend Anisha back in the day as Guruji had asked us to join Him there. Preeti aunty had prepared the most sumptuous soup for Guruji, which we also had. From Jalandar she shifted to Goa and loves the life Guruji has designed for her.

Aruna aunty and I returned to the hotel after lunch and called Deepika Sakhuja. Before I arrived to Goa, she had stayed with aunty to give her company. The following is Deepika's friends's satsang.

“My journey with Guruji Maharaj in this life started on Thursday, April 19th, 2007. I went to Him most reluctantly, as I was a Sai Baba devotee and did not feel the need for another Master. I could not have been more incorrect in my judgment. When my father took me to meet Guruji, He gave me instructions that one was not supposed to talk to Him and the highest form of decorum and discipline was to be maintained as there was a system that had to be followed. Armed with that knowledge we entered Empire Estate, chota mandir.

Guruji Maharaj walked in wearing brown trousers, red shirt and Nike shoes. He sat on the sideboard and He was given a glass, which He sipped while talking to a devotee standing beside Him. The interesting part was that whenever I looked at Him, I caught Him staring at me and in my false ego, telepathically I said, 'there are many people sitting here so why are you only looking at me?'

He rose from where He sat and entered a room and after 15 to 20 minutes emerged. The one thing I witnessed was a flash of light whizzing past me and turning stationary on the Singhasan [His seat] that was located at one end of the room. The only visible part was His charan [Divine feet] and He wore black socks. I immediately realized He is God and not a Mahapurush as I had previously thought. The rest of the evening is a blur in my memory.

On bowing before Guruji Maharaj and taking leave, I rose on my knees and whispered in His ear. 'Guruji aapke bahut sapne mujhe aa rahein hain.' [Guruji I am getting you in my dreams.] He said, 'taan hi teh tuh ithe aaye hain.' [That is the very reason you are here.] I was confused and walked away with the feeling that plenty was left to be said.'

It was not as though I became a devotee overnight. That one visit, however, stayed in my mind and stirred my heart in the most peculiar way. That year I went to the USA for my children's summer vacation.

Guruji Maharaj took Maha Samadhi on May 31st, 2007. That day Guruji gave me darshan in my dream in the US and revealed to me that He was walking up a flight of green stairs, wearing a white chola and emitting a golden light and then disappearing into the clouds. I ran after Him in my dream, and said, 'Guruji, Guruji kithe chaley.' [Guruji where are you going?] He did not stop, He turned His head sideways and stretched His arm out and said, 'Jaa rahein haan, par kithe vee nahin jaa rahya, ithe hi haan.' I woke up to the sound of the phone. It was my father informing me that Guruji Maharaj had taken Maha Samadhi. I consoled him and reassured him that Guruji had not gone anywhere.

At that point, I was not deeply connected as my search was in duality of my love for Baba and the need to make a deeper enquiry about Guruji Maharaj.

I prayed to both to give me direction and many questions haunted my mind. In 2009, I received the bad news of a friend suffering from lymph node cancer in the last stage. That is when I decided to go to Bada Mandir and pray to Guruji Maharaj.

That day in March, I took my sister in law and family along with my children and went to Bada Mandir. Before going, I prayed to Guruji, 'today I am coming to ask you for something materialistic; give me something to indicate your path is mine.' As I entered the Samadhi, I saw a person standing in the middle of it. We did not make eye contact but He walked straight at me through the jyot. I put out my hand and He tapped it on the way out. I walked around the Samadhi and walked out to follow Him to see where He went but He was so fast as if He was flying in the air. We entered the darbar and I saw Him walk straight into the swaroop with the blue background. I was in awe and felt at peace with the Divine intervention. My sister in law asked me, 'who was that and what did He give you.' I replied, 'that was Guruji.'

Subsequently Guruji appeared in my dreams and vanquished my duality. He said Baba and He were the same jyot so I must remove the pictures of other deities in my home shrine and place only His swaroop in all my rooms. He initiated me to get my children onto His path saying we should as a family do arti every evening. I did not understand His words then but gradually He guided my family and I on how to walk down His path.

Very early in my journey He taught me three things -

- 1) Never to discuss my problems with people as they cannot do anything for me.
- 2) To talk to Him 24/7 as a friend and to make Him an integral part of my life.
- 3) Never to scold my children because my role as a mother is only until 10 years of age, rest the Guru is everything.

He went on to say that as a horse wears blinder and looks straight ahead I should leave the reins of my family in His hands, as He will steer the horses in the right direction. He insisted that I never worry but if it did penetrate

my mind I was to make an imaginary ball of it and toss it at His lotus feet.

As my journey progressed Guruji Maharaj cured me of cancer before it spread in my body. He secured my husband's job inspite of a terribly difficult boss. He converted my son's heart issues to sound health and sent him abroad to study. He changed my daughter's blood type from A+ve to AB+ve to give her life.

I cannot for the life of me encapsulate my experiences and my blessings in one chapter but I have attempted to draw its essence. There is much to share and I do believe every moment of our lives is a satsang as our every breath is a gift from Him. I am eternally grateful to Him. I know I am His miracle and I walk with Him knowing that He will take me to my destination.” -Geeta Anthony.

He is the path and He is indeed the destination.

59

Fear Dissipates

I have learned on my path to seek answers only from Him and I patiently wait until He responds. In fact, each time I am in a quandary I feel it is His way of asking me to deepen and strengthen my connect with Him and even if He is silent awhile does not mean that He is ignoring me. His delays are never His denials. He watches over me with His infinite eyes and is working on adjusting my stars. He guides me by arranging situations in a way that synchronizes my steps in that direction and if something is unsuitable for my family and I He creates an unfavourable situation to avert it.

Paying heed to our conscience and the inner voice that is His is important. Disbelieving other's intentions may be wise at times as it may be Guruji warning us against them. He always protects us from unfavourable circumstances but we must be silent to listen. Certain people in our lives may be exploiting us and we may not realise this until one fine day good sense prevails and we weaken the ties with the person.

I have learnt, though it has taken me years, to define my boundaries. I walk tall with the confidence that Guruji walks besides me. I decline to invitations where I may be uncomfortable and in case I want to be alone but a certain individual, pushes the boundaries to enter my space I simply say no most politely. This was a personality defect I had whereby I would impulsively invite others into my space even when it did not suit me. I have learnt to let

go of others opinions and judgements of my choices.

Guruji often said to me, 'tu dusra di negaitivity nah sunya kar thenu asar hunda hai.' [Do not listen to others negativity because it has an adverse effect on you.]

It is true that I do absorb energies as Guruji used to state and while we wish others well, we cannot possibly change their stars. Only Guruji has the power to do that. Conversely, some people struggle to be positive and happy in spite of our efforts towards them hence it is important not to overdo especially at the cost of neglecting our own selves. Our vibe attracts our tribe so surrounding ourselves with people who promote our growth instead of those who stunt it is vital. The law of attraction states that we attract into our lives people and situations that harmonize with our dominant thoughts. Therefore, it is vital to change out thoughts for the better because our thoughts are like electro magnetic energy that radiate out from us and become our reality.

Another fact not to be overlooked is that we have been given free will so whether we act on good or bad is a choice we make and nothing to do with, 'Guruji sab kar rahe hai.'

We harm or help others through free will, we create or resolve issues and if they do not get resolved, it is because we didn't take responsibility to resolve them. As believers in our Guruji, the Supreme power, we cannot complacently sit back and say; 'Guruji karange' as it is important for us to take the first step with the right intent and then Guruji facilitates the journey. We need to fix ourselves and not others, work on our inner life, be better people by being compassionate particualry towards those who are less previlged than ourselves. We must learn to give more than they expect and to express our kindness. We must appreciate, particulary those who serve us in our homes as they bring equilibrium to our domestic front. Not caring for them is a great disservice to them and to ourselves. The more we give the more we receive; what we receive is the grace of Guruji that supercedes monetary rewards. Our soul is nourished and a deep feeling of fulfilment comes and resides in our hearts.

One day as I sat with Him a woman on bowing, Guruji commented, 'Hunne

karo lad ke aye hai. Ki fayida do minute di humility dikhan di.' [She has fought with everyone at home and come to me. What is the point of demonstrating 2 minutes of humility to me?] 'Rab nu bevakuf samaj de ne lokey. [People take God to be a fool.]

Nothing is hidden from Him. When we have decided to genuinely be on Guruji's path; then the good and the bad are noted by Him. Our every word that leads to our action is recorded by Him. Nothing goes unnoticed so choosing our thoughts that serve our words that lead to action is a path that needs to be walked on carefully. Uttering hurting words may be forgiven but never forgotten so pausing when we are angry, drawing a deep breath and refraining from blurting out the most cutting words may serve us long term. Be kind to every kind and do good whenever you can. It is an old motto but a good one- 'If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.'

I believe, we alone cannot change our deepest traits and tendencies. Hence, one of my constant prayers to Him has been to make me worthy of His love by dissolving the harmful tendencies in me. Only He, I believe, can bring out the best in us and He does this through His practical teachings of satsang, seva and simran.

There are 5 mandirs within the reach of every human and they are; Tan mandir [body], Man mandir [heart] Ghar mandir [home] kamra mandir [Room] When these four are nurtured and restored to sound health and harmony then comes bade mandir. Here the vibrations are so high, blessed by divinity Himself, that on entering we are blessed manifold.

Another invaluable observation I have made and experienced personally is on surrendering everything to Guruji; from our flawed nature to our transient worries we do change for the better. We view the world with beauty, empathy, unity and purposeful opportunity. Our inner and outer lives respond differently to situations; everything changes when we change. Guruji takes us from the mundane to the magnificent; the magnificence of existence and the joy of being alive. Celebrating life is the highest and greatest gratitude to Guruji.

By being good, we can effect real change in the world.

60

Guruji Grants the Oscar

My world is Him and it has been even before meeting Him.

From Goa I flew to Mumbai to be with Karan Anand, his mom and Guneet Monga. I had asked Rekha Bhatia to join us there as Karan was holding a contained satsang of thirty to forty devotees. I felt Guruji wanted me to introduce Rekha to Karan and his family.

Guneet dropped in and this pleased me no end as my connection with her is on a very deep level. I love and adore her dedication to Guruji and draw much inspiration from her faith. She shared her latest satsangs with me. There was a phase in her life when every day she held Amrit wella satsangs at her home. I had attended it once but felt giddy headed for the rest of the day. I realized it is not for me but that is not to say it is not for anyone. 1:1 connection with Guruji means precisely that. What suits one life may not be crucial for another. Stereotypes are dangerous as by stating that water is crucial to all life forms is incorrect because for fish, it is but for birds, living underwater is death. No one can dictate another's connectivity and choices. Majority and popularity cannot be allowed to cloud our choices. Guruji never advocated the importance of rising at 3 am and praying to Him but we have learnt that scientifically it makes perfect sense. The earth's vibrations during 3am to 5 am are the highest and therefore it is easier to enter that vibration.

No two people are the same hence their connection is not either. The highest respect is given to those who do rise at 3am to devote their time to God. I cannot and do not as my physical being does not permit me to for whatever reasons. However, I have learnt to respect other sangat's choices and their individual connect. Nothing is right or wrong; it simply is.

Guruji has simplified loving God, 'Jab jago tab sareva.' [Whenever you awake up is morning,] Walking with God does not translate into austerity. It does not mean walking with our heads down and giving up the pleasures of life. The truth is contrary to this; A full and spiritually sound existence lived with purpose and passion is far richer in texture and flavour than one which id run of the mill.

Guruji said to His devotees, 'Ja Ayesh kar.' [Go enjoy]

Enjoy we do and primarily and exclusively with like-minded people who enrich our journey bringing out the best in us.

He said, 'stylish ban ke re.' [dress up stylish] 'Walk kitha kar ek kenta' [walk for an hour] 'Weight nah gain hon de, kat kada kar.' [don't gain weight, eat less.] 'Ek kenta bet ke yaad kar apne Guru nu. Kar bet ke.' [remember your Guru for an hour at home everyday.] 'Khush reya kar; [Be happy] 'Changa insaan bano' [Be a good human]

Being practical is the golden rule. 'Mein practical dikan aya ha ki rab hai.' [I am practically showing you there is God]

'twade vehm aur aehm dur karan aya ha.' [I have come to dissolve your superstitions and arrogance.]

Guneet told me she was travelling to L.A as her latest production, 'Period. End of Sentence' was nominated for the Oscar. She asked me to accompany her but it was not meant to be. I felt deeply loved when she introduced me a to friend of hers as her God Mother. What a privilege.

Little did we know that a month later she would be holding the Oscar in the grip of her hand as a well-awaited and well-deserved gift from Guruji. She had worked painstakingly all her young life and founded the company,

'Sikhya Entertainment' a boutique film production house that has produced notable movies, 'Lunchbox, Masaan, Zubaan and now 'Period.' She attributes the change of destiny to Guruji and her belief is so unfaltering that the most turbulent of storms cannot shake her infallible faith in Guruji. She is steadfast and staunch and loves Guruji with her heart, soul and every fiber of her being. She holds regular satsangs at her residence in Mumbai and even advocates the importance of respecting our environment by minimizing the use of plastic. At her satsangs, only stainless steel is used and glass for chai parsad. She insists that the greatest service we can do today is towards mother earth whilst the greatest disservice is by suffocating her with excess plastic, which is our reality today. Holding Guruji in deep reverence means having the deepest respect for His creation; nature and its creatures, great and small.

Guneet's satsang- 'Guruji has transformed my life. He has uplifted me and given me the greatest gift of self worth. I lost both my parents 11 years ago. I am the only child and I was 24 years old when I lost them. I moved lock stock and barrel to Mumbai to work in films as a producer. The job entails raising money and making films usually only attributed to either people from film family or very wealthy backgrounds. I am neither.

I was introduced to Guruji by my chachi in 2014. I had produced a movie where my investor refused to pay the balance and I had taken loans from the market to finish the film. It was a very stressful time and I experienced my lowest point. In fact, I wanted to walk away from the business and never look back. Around then, Guruji came along but I did not start out believing anything my chachi said about Him and His grace. She took me to Bade mandir but I had no idea that He had left His physical garb. Just as I bowed down to His gaddhi as a cynic, I stood up as a believer. I felt as though someone had placed very soft loving hands on my head and I was overwhelmed. This induced the tears in my eyes. I merely said in my head, 'Meri chachi ke Guruji please yeh loan chukka do, aaj tak bahut shiddat se kaam kiya hai. [My Chachi's Guruji please help me to pay off this loan. Until now, I have worked arduously.]

In one week, the entire loan was paid off and the same investor who refused to pay up for over a year came back. I knew instantly that it was His grace and I could not thank Him enough. At this point my self-confidence had hit

the ground and I still had many movies to release but was asked to leave the company I help built. I was questioning my choice of profession as well as my existence. I had been so busy working since my parents passed away that now the company was shutting down and it hit me all at once like a tonne of bricks. I found myself isolated and broken. I was relieved and grateful that the loan was cleared but the enduring feeling of grief engulfed me. For 18 months, I was in depression but I did not know that. A dark cloud loomed over me and I was unable to be motivated about doing anything. I have always been an enterprising person and an individual brimming with life but 2014 and 2015 were dark, dismal times. I would gather my strength and draw peace only in satsangs and I regularly attended them only to thank Him repeatedly for taking care of my loan!

I was oblivious to whose home I went to; I never asked and only sat, cried and thanked Him. Two years elapsed and then I asked Him to reveal to me the purpose of my life. At this juncture I wanted to delve deeper about Him and that is when Anita aunty came home to stay with me and advised me to talk to Him- Good morning Guruji, Good night Guruji. The idea was essentially, to involve Him in all my activities. Subsequently I asked Him what I should do in terms of my work as I had been blatantly asked to leave a production company and I felt demoralised and unworthy. I genuinely believed I was not good enough and should not produce anymore. That very night I had a dream of a movie and I woke up to a new dawn; I had a purpose and that purpose was to tell stories. It was His sign and His way of saying, 'Don't stop.' In 2016, I was back and it was all His grace.

I am in awe of Guruji that He chose me to be His sangat and allowed me to witness His grace at every nook and corner of my life. He comes to office with me everyday and we are making movies together and going to the Oscars together too.

It is with the benefit of hindsight I join the dots; He only pulled me out of depression and self-doubt. He healed me with the unyielding power of shabds and langar parsad. Everyday is a miracle and I am genuinely grateful every moment experiencing His unconditional love. Thank you Guruji.

I must conclude here that initially to make us believe, He gives us the tangible material object be it winning a legal case, resolving a health condition, a

family feud or a financial crisis. Once these are overcome, then the actual spiritual journey is embarked upon that is solely between Him and the individual and the deeper you go the quicker the 'I' dissolves to become only Him.

Until I arrive at that blissful state, I live in deep gratitude for everything I can see and not see. I apologize too for all the wrong I may have done in the here and now or in my previous incarnations.

Everyday, inadvertently we may hurt another so I feel it is important to apologize, stay humble and work hard to achieve great things that inspire others to do the same. Nothing is impossible in the realm of faith and His overflowing grace.

When we cease to be a part of the race.
Our lives begin to overflow with His grace.
When the truth becomes our mission
We cultivate a new comprehension
Work becomes our purpose and passion
Substance and faith becomes the new fashion.

'If a heart is filled with Faith, it will guide you to the truth.'

61

Goa's Satsang

Speak from your soul and every heart will understand.

On the day of Karan's satsang Ruchika Vaishnava from Goa also arrived and she shared the room with me. In the evening, we went to Mumbai mandir for darshan.

Here she shares her satsang-

'Om Namoh Shivay, Shivji sada sahay Om Namoh Shivay, Guruji sada sahay.'

'My journey started with Guruji three years ago and as I've been a devout follower of Shivji [Bhoolenath] Guruji's energy resonated with it. I used to talk to Him as if He is with me all the time and visit His temple every morning to pray to Shivling. I never considered starting my day without Bholenath and on Mondays, I fasted.

My paternal family believes in Guruji and conducts satsangs at their home on a regular basis. When I had not connected with Guruji per se but I still attended their satsangs because of my connect with Shivji. I related to Gurbani/ shabad as I am Punjabi and derive my Sikh roots from my maternal family. Going to Gurudwara for langar and Jutti Seva was a regular affair during my childhood. My maternal grandmother would teach us jaapji sahib

path and narrate stories from Guru Granth Sahib. These childhood memories evoked an interest to attend Guruji's satsangs where I listened to the mellifluous Gurbani.

When sangat recited the mantra jaap, I never repeated it thinking I do not believe in any Guru and this continued for a year or so. My family encouraged me to visit Bade Mandir but I always cooked up one excuse or another for not going there.

Then one night I had a dream, which today I cannot completely recall but my eyes were wet and I asked my chachi to translate the dream to me. She said, 'Beta Guruji is calling you. It's better you go to Bade Mandir.'

Guruji's darshan in my dream was; He was sitting on a sofa talking to someone at the door of my home. I went close and said, 'Oh its Guruji.' The moment Guruji saw me, He began talking about me to the other person saying that she is a good girl; she is very brave and intelligent. Guruji said, always remember that, 'mann niva the maat uchi.'

This dream changed my entire life and I started going to Bade Mandir regularly. Initially I cried profusely without caring about others watching me. I think from that dream my spiritual journey started.

Everyday there was a new lesson to be learnt from our beloved Guruji. I believed I could not live without Bade Mandir so every Thursday I went there to cleanse my soul. My courage quotient also increased sufficiently to handle the negativity around me through the positive blessings of Guruji. Bade mandir became my school which prepared me to deal with the world. I felt a radical shift when I went to Australia as happiness emanated from my heart. I realized that when we are happy and at peace, Guruji resides in it. Three weeks in Australia were amazing and I felt Guruji's presence throughout.

Guruji began guiding me to go within and the deeper my spiritual path became the more cleansing happened. My surroundings began changing, as did my inner landscapes of perceptions, opinions and judgments. It was all about the inside out and not outside in!

Guruji taught me to stay positive no matter what, and that has actually turned me into an optimistic individual. I do not talk negative about others. Instead, I step into their shoes and empathize with their pain and suffering. They are already in misery so why be a part of it by thinking and talking about them. Energy flows where our thinking goes so we drain ourselves by thinking and speaking negative. The Gurbani also teaches us the impact 'nindo nindo' has on our karmic accounts.

Bringing peace in our hearts is the highest goal as that projects into other aspects of our lives. Even if someone abuses you or conversely adulates you, you maintain your equilibrium. Only the opinion of your God matters and the rest is transient.

Living in the moment, being present is the most invaluable lesson. By changing our thought process, our past issues are resolved and we generate new belief systems. The Gurbani has the power to raise our vibration to a level where we think and act differently.

If we continue to think as we always have then we will so as we always have hence the result will be the same. Nothing changes until we bring a radical shift in our actions and attitudes that then alter our aptitude. Tomorrow is the destiny you created today and by being positive it becomes easier for Guruji to work with and within us as then there are no barriers between us and Him. Wanting to change for the better is a prerequisite to becoming better.

When we sit and resent other's Kismet and state how blessed that other person is and we may not be; we need to look into our lives and see what it is that we are lacking. Kismet equals our past karmas. In this incarnation the more we live by Guruji's word and walk on His path of seva, satsang and simran the easier it is to change our kismet. Guruji, on seeing our efforts towards goodness, changes our kismet. People who were not destined to have children are blessed with them and people who were destined to be failures become successful. There are many examples of Guruji and Gurbani changing the mindset of a thief into a Sadhu. The principles and core values are changed on connecting to Guruji and on loving Him as our saviour. In Kalyug, Guruji has descended the earth to rescue us from the dark forces. He shields us from imminent dangers and teaches us to emerge strong, positive

and courageous by walking onto the path of truth.

There are many miles to go, much wisdom to take and much to give. Satsang-Seva-simran is my new lifestyle choice and my favourite life quote is, 'I used to think that heaven is a far place beyond the sky until I gave God a place in my heart.'

If we want to fly, we must let go of the baggage that weighs us down.

62

Bollywood is Blessed

The sun was going down and Vivanna who stayed with me throughout at Karan's, soaked in the sunset with me. Every moment experienced with the heart induces the emotion of gratitude.

"I am an actor and I started my career with ads and I did some with the biggest stars. Thumbs up as I did with Akshaye kumar, Veet commercial with Katrina Kaif, shared an equal screen space, Enami cooking oil with Amitabh Bhachan and I got much more great work in the ad world.

I was launched in a Bollywood film called, 'Jimmy' [2008] opposite Mithun Chakraborty's son Mimoh. Then I did Punjabi film as lead. For some reason my film career did not take flight and I switched to tv shows. My first serial was Mahabharat on starplus 2013/2014 where I played Goddess Ganga and now I know why I got that part. Post that, I acted in 'Jee le Jara' 'Ajeeb Dastan Hai yeah.' 'CID' 'Kumkum bhaiya' and many web series.

When Guruji connects us to Him we become positive in every situation. We could be hitting rock bottom but we know in our hearts that Guruji will lift us from the deep dark pit.

I became acquainted with Him in 2014. My cousin spoke about Bade mandir and Guruji and asked me to read up on Him on google. I came across His

swaroop and several days later, I stumbled on the pdf version of, 'Surcharged with Divine love.'

I was awe struck on reading the book and wished deeply that I had been as blessed as the writer who had met Him regularly. It was then that I inhaled a strong lingering fragrance of His presence in my new home. My friend who was staying with me asked if I had sprayed anything. I was convinced that Guruji had considered me worthy of His darshan.

In August of 2015, I had severe pain in my right knee and I had signed up for a television show, 'Police factory.' I started shooting for it and took painkillers, ice packs and anything to relieve the pain but nothing helped. Subsequently I was told I had a major knee injury [Meniscus tear from the same place horizontal and vertical] due to which my knee could get locked anytime[locked means that I couldn't bend the knee] the doctor confirmed that my knee would never be as strong as it was before the injury. I would not be able to run, dance or engage in any high intensity exercises and this disheartened me to another level. One of the prequels to being an actor in the film industry is fitness.

I tried taking leave from work for three months to undergo surgery and to recover but it was declined. I went regularly to Gurujis mandir in Mumbai and have langar that is true amrit and prayed in earnest for Him to show mercy. I was prepared with all my heart to undergo surgery with its difficult prospects but I needed strength and support from my Lord.

It was New Years Eve, 2015 and I performed in Gurujis mandir the Shiv parvati act. The dance was His way of healing me as after that, I did not undergo surgery and neither did I encounter any pain in my right knee. It is as strong as it was and my faith became even stronger and mightier. I speak to Him in silence and take guidance from Him. He is my best friend, philosopher, guide, anchor and the one and only.

I was struck with hypothyroidism in Septmber 2018 and I opted for homeopathy instead of allopathy. I prayed to Guruji to bless my medicine in addition to consuming the divine langar. I had my tests done in January 2019 and the reports revealed that I was thyroid free for life. Homopathy usually takes years to eradicate any condition but with His grace and divine Langer,

I was once again performing a dance in the mandir.

I deeply believe that we must never waste our blessed langar and to respect it in the highest order because it is infused with His power. I never consume it as mere food; I know it is my medicine and I have it in complete silence with the intent that is healing me on many levels. I also recite the mantra jaap as often as possible as that too is infused with His boundless powers.

I have learned to surrender to Him. He has given me tremendous strength to stay positive no matter how dense the cloud appears above me. He spreads His grace like a protective umbrella. The 'I' disappears once He appears in our heart. I constantly thank Him no matter what state I am in, as I know that even the rain will pass.

I am more patient, loving and caring with His grace and show kindness and empathy to those in a less privileged position. He has polished me bringing out the best in me. I cook for myself which I previously did not and I also clean my home which I wasn't accustomed to doing earlier. He has made me self-reliant and confident to live and survive alone although He lives with me. I live with the spirit that my life is also His and for the blessings He showers on me, I am encouraged to be a better person. I do not consider any chore too big or too small for me and I with humility clean my own bathroom. The home I live in is His home and not mine hence it needs to be immaculately clean.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness.

63

Guruji Blesses Bhopal

Godliness is an energy that is within us and encompasses us.

It was a blessed trip with Rekha, Ruchika, Karan, his family and friends who are all T.V stars. Karan in his mischievous moment drove us to Kandala after a satsang. It was fun as we all bonded over street food while celebrating the song, 'Ati hai kya kandala' the famous Bollywood song!

I returned to Delhi for literally 3 days before leaving for Bhopal. It was my first time there and how I connected Priya Nagrath, Bhopal Sangat is almost surreal. In hindsight, we both know it was Guruji who connected us.

Ordinarily, I am reserved and seldom strike up a conversation with a stranger. I was at Delhi airport in the Jet airways queue and was running late for my flight to Dehradun when I asked the lady behind me if there had been an announcement and she confirmed that she too was flying to Dehradun but hadn't heard anything. We both jumped the queue, rushed to the check in counter only to learn that they had already made the final announcement a while back. With my heart racing, I checked in hastily and walked towards the security to wait for that lady! Why I waited, I did not know then. We spoke about Guruji throughout our flight to Dehradun and I mentioned the satsang I was attending there and asked her to attend it if she could! That is how she [Priya Nagrath] and I met for the first time.

His timing, His ways- over a year later Priya was in touch with me asking me to come to Bhopal to attend a satang at her brother and sister in law Nidhi's place. I asked my cousin Hapu to accompany me and we went. Sapna Singhdeo and her family met us there and asked us to attend a satsang at their place and for the next two nights, we were hosted king size by the most loving family. Guruji pampered us no end through them and on meeting Ashwariya, Sapna's daughter and Trishala her daughter in law I felt truly at home. I also connected deeply with Robin and Pinky who hosted the most scrumpous organic meal on earth. I kept in touch with all of them and for me it was the beginning of another chapter as their vibe resonated with my own. They are salt of the earth families with the right blend of love, hospitality and family values.

Below is Trishala's satsang

"I am Trishala Singhdeo, from Bhopal and I am connected to Guruji for the last years. My Mother in Law, Sapna, knew about Guru Ji from her friend in Bhopal and shared this with my sister in law, Aishwarya and I. We went to Delhi to visit Bade Mandir and instantly my Mother in law took to Guru Ji. I was impressed with the structure and teachings imparted there but did not dwell much on it afterwards. On returning home, I visited my parent's house in Guna and there I learnt that my family had fallen on troubled times. My mom had organised a Sunderkand at home and during the Pooja, I could only think about Guru Ji and when it was over, I read about Him and heard the shabads. I then introduced my Dadi and Mother to Guruji and the shabads.

The next morning I left for Bhopal and during the five-hour journey I only listened to Guru Ji Shabads and satsangs. I reached Bhopal and while talking to my mother in law I had this strong desire to go to Bade Mandir and I believe that was my calling. There I was blessed with Jal Prasad, Chai Prasad and Samosa Prasad. I sat there crying and asked Guru Ji to fix everything back home in Guna. Although, my mind clouded with doubts, clarity was emerging through the shabads and satsangs.

I returned to Bhopal and that night I had a dream of Guru Ji where He wore a white Chola and radiated light and He smiled serenely. I stood before Him crying and then I saw my mother by His feet and Guru Ji's hand over her

head. On waking up, though I had not captured the essence of the dream, by the evening the issues that my family were facing had resolved. It was as if someone had swirled a magic wand. My Mother and Dadi's faith in Guru Ji strengthened. They had satsangs almost every day and soon my mother began engaging herself in Seva at bade mandir.

Today, my faith in Guru Ji is unwavering, I believe in the path that Guru Ji has destined for us to walk on. I, without a shadow of doubt, know that He is looking out for me and whatever hardship befalls it is for a reason and for my own good.

As my journey with Gurujji continued, I experienced my second miracle. My husband, Aadi and I were in Spain having lunch and a sudden thought for a friend of his, Gaurav, flashed through my mind. Gaurav's mother was suffering from fourth stage Cancer and was undergoing extensive chemo. I turned to Aadi and said, 'Aadi as soon as we go back, we must take Gaurav's mom to bade mandir.' I believed that this was her calling from Gurujji.

On landing in Delhi, we visited aunty and I spoke about Gurujji to her and convinced her to come with me to Bade Mandir. The following day we went and she sat for an hour and then had langar Prasad. We carried Gurujji's lotta, had it blessed and took jal Prasad and on leaving bade mandir she received Gurujji's Swaroop.

Post the Darshan months passed with no communication with her. One sudden day, Aadi received a phone call from Gaurav. He told him how aunty's recent reports showed no signs of cancer and the doctors were startled. I spoke to aunty and she was certain that this was Gurujji's blessings upon her. Bahot bahot Shukarana Gurujji!

The last but not the least my expereince goes back to the beginning of 2019. My mother in law was organising a big satsang in Bhopal and had invited Anita Aunty to share her Gurujji's journey. It so happened that the date for which the satsang was planned, a work trip to Bangkok was scheduled for my husband. I was in a complete dilemma whether to accompany my husband, Aadi, to Bangkok or stay back for the Satsang. I was tempted to travel with Aadi but Gurujji had other plans for me. As we approached our travel and satsang dates, a sudden pain rose in the right side of my lower

abdomen. Mistaking it initially for general stomach pain I took it lightly but by the next day it turned aggressive. The severity of the situation was such that my doctor suggested an immediate ultrasound, reports of which suggested a big sized stone in my kidney. The doctors gave me medication; liquid diet and bed rest with immediate effect. This meant that I could not travel with Aadi but it also meant that Guruji wanted me to attend the two satsangs instead. Next day Anita aunty arrived to be with us for the next two days.

Despite the medication and the rest, there was no real relief. I knew that I wanted to be with Guruji so with the hot water bottle in my hand I attended both the satsangs, out of which one was hosted at home. I had langar Prasad despite being on a restricted diet.

The satsang organised at home became the setting to my third miracle. While the Shabads played that evening, in a sudden flash of a moment I felt a sensation in my stomach; as though something had broken down inside me. In retrospect, medically it meant something had dissolved and after the satsang I told my sister in law, Aishu and Anita aunty about my experience and they insisted I had my ultrasound again. I insisted on not meeting any doctor and undergoing tests until I visited bade mandir and had langar Prasad.

I went to Bade mandir, sat on a chair due to my discomfort, had langar and prayed hard to Guruji that on stepping out there is no pain. Post the darshan the night passed in lesser discomfort than before and as the morning dawned my check up in medanta hospital, Gurgaon began with Guruji's photo in my hand. To my surprise, my ultra sound was clear and the doctor confirmed there was no sign of a stone in my kidney. Guruji had done His trick because medically it was next to impossible for a big stone to dissolve in a span of 5 days. It reminded me of what Guruji said, 'jahan doctoraon ki doctori khatam hoti hai, vahan meri shuru hoti hai.' Although I have only been connected to Guruji for three years in this incarnation, He has become an integral part of my existence. Every morning I wake up feeling blessed and know that He is with me to guide me, protect me and give me a renewed passion for living the best life ever. Be with me always Guruji because I am nothing without you.

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Love Thy Neighbour

On returning to Delhi after my most memoarable trip in Bhopal I decided to hold a satsang except not in my place but my neighbours!

As I mentioned earlier that my neighbours too are connected to Guruji so I invited them to seep in the divine energy from the satsang.

Versha, my neighbor's satsang in her words-

"It was the third time that Anita had invited me to Guruji's satsang. We stay in the same building and I was somewhat embarrassed because I had not attended the earlier two occasions. 'This time I must go!' I said to myself.

I went up the elevator telling myself not to worry. As I stepped out of the elevator, a sweet fragrance of flowers welcomed me. A group of devotees were sitting immersed in the melodious bhajans (devotional songs) playing on the music system. I seated myself and looked around. There was a large 'swaroop' (likeness) of Guruji, with His aasan (chair) and his charan (shoes) on one side. The room was decorated with fresh flowers and candles. I could not take my eyes off His swaroop; my gaze stayed fixated for a long time.

After a while, I was offered chai-prashad, which I took hesitantly and ate the way others were doing. The next bhajan that played was one I knew

intimately. My mother was very fond of bhajans, and they played all day in my home. I had lost my mother five years earlier, and that was the last time I had heard bhajans.

Something inexplicably magical happened as the bhajan played. It was as though my mom had come alive and was sitting there. I simply closed my eyes and enjoyed that moment of togetherness with her. I stayed till the end of the satsang for the aarti (prayer), the langar prashad and listening to the experiences shared by the sangat (devotees) of how, with Guruji's blessings, they had overcome their health issues, financial challenges and relationship disputes.

I am a spiritually inclined person but my channel to connect with the supreme power was different. That evening I returned home feeling elevated like a child feels after having met its parents after a long time.

I visited Anita upstairs and asked her to share more about Guruji and she shared her satsang. On learning about how he had cured her of cancer, asthma and many other ailments and had given her a fresh lease on life, I was speechless. Thereafter, I regularly went for satsangs primarily in our vicinity, visited Bade Mandir and Chote Mandir. Devotees spoke about the sweet fragrance they sensed there: it was an indication of His presence.

I used to wonder about it, and one day while visiting Bade Mandir, I inhaled the fragrance myself. It startled me, as there was nothing around to emit that particular scent. I sensed the same fragrance each time I went for a satsang, and realised that this was Guruji's presence.

His calling out to us is His grace and on seeking Him with our heart, He emerges. He is that parent who immerses us in His unconditional love and what He wants from us is positive surrender at His lotus feet. In our day-to-day life, He wants us to be humane, caring, kind and to respect human dignity. Humility and gratitude are what will deepen our connect to Him as these attributes cleanse the vessel of our body and soul. Being the person, He wants us to be is the greatest gift we can give Him in return for the unmeasured grace He soaks us in.

On February 14th of this year, my parents' anniversary, I held a satsang at my

own home. It overflowed with His love and I was filled with the deepest gratitude that emanates from the soul. Many of my friends and family members have come into Gurujis fold, which warms my heart. May He bless the entire universe and may He convert all the ugliness of the world into beauty and grace. May He bless every individual's intellect so there is a radical shift in the consciousness of the earth. May God's name resonate in every home and may He become a priority and not a mere option.

'Hope is wanting something will happen. Faith is believing something will happen.'

65

HIS HUKUM

I happened to return to Bhopal end of March where Siddharth Mohan sang in his blessed voice at Sapna Singdeo's satsang.

It was a divine stay and on returning, I had an enquiry to teach calligraphy. It was from my neighbourhood and it turned out to be a sangat I had made a brief acquaintance with during a car ride. Subsequently I attended satsangs at her home in the same phase I taught her calligraphy.

She shared her satsang about protection. At times when life does not work out, we grow impatient and fall into dejection. In hindsight, we are thankful for the things that did not work out as we learn that Guruji was not denying us but protecting us from perhaps a pitfall or worse, an impending calamity. The anxiety of wanting something to transpire at any cost abates once we are in His fold. The wisdom emerges that what works out is His will and what does not is His will. When the latter happens it may lead to disappointment momentarily but then our indiscriminate faith makes us adopt the big picture perspective.

Aditi Sachdev's satsang in her words

'Jai Guruji. Thank you Guruji for bestowing your love and blessings on all of us. You are the divine power and the creator of this universe. You give us

satsangs to validate your presence in our lives though we need nothing more than your love and mercy on us.

My recent satsang: I visited Srilanka in May 2018 with three friends for a vacation and was so mesmerized with its beauty, cleanliness, progress and the attitude of the people of every city I set foot on. It was 6 nights and 7 days trip and every moment spent there was alluring. I made some pleasing memories that I will cherish forever. On returning, I recommended the destination to anyone who needed a vacation nearby. It was a perfect place for a short and a budgeted trip. In March 2019 one of my closest and oldest friend took my suggestions for planning her trip with the itinerary. She booked it with my sister Aastha for 18th-23rd April. Two days later, on our way to Empire Estate Mandir with Anita aunty and my Mother in law Bharti aunty I began telling them about my visit to Srilanka and Anita aunty found it so appealing that she wanted to visit it after returning from her summer stay in Manchester. I advised her to be in touch with my sister to plan her trip. On returning home my mother in law asked my father in law to plan a trip to Srilanka for their yearly trip in April with their closest couple friend, Ramesh uncle and Anjali aunty for a one-week trip. A day later, my cousin brother Mayank also planned a trip with his entire family to Sri Lanka.

After a few days my in laws changed their plan from Srilanka to Thailand as it was a better deal and their dates were 22nd -29th April. My friend Nishta was leaving on the 18th with her husband and mom. I bid bye to Anita aunty for Manchester and told her that as soon as she is back I will help her plan her trip to Srilanka.

On the 18th April, I called and wished my friend a safe journey. On 21st morning, I woke to the news of gruesome bomb blast in Srilanka and I was devastated. Nine suicide bombers had attacked 3 churches and 3 premium luxury hotels of Colombo taking innocent lives.

It was heart breaking to learn 290 people died and 500 injured, primarily Srilankan citizens but many foreigners too. It is tough to accept that humans can be so ruthless to carry out terror attacks and that too on churches on the auspicious Easter Sunday. I do not understand the root cause of Terrorism but I do know that every life is fruitful and is born for a cause and there can be no bigger cause than peace. May Gurujī render strength to the families

who lost their dear ones and wisdom to the terrorists as no problem is solved by taking lives of innocent people. I spent the day before the TV in a mournful state. I reminisced my time in Colombo as I had visited all these three hotels. I suddenly realized that my friend Nishtha was there and called her but her phone was unreachable. After many attempts and messages, she replied that she was fine and safe in a beach almost two hours away from Colombo city.

Initially she was meant to be in Colombo on the day of the attacks, but she changed her plan and fine-tuned it to her stay in Bentota instead. Owing to the curfew post attacks she extended her stay at the resort and headed straight for the airport on the 24th. Although her trip had been disrupted she reached home safe and sound.

After seeing the news, we realized Guruji changed my in laws holiday destination from Srilanka to Thailand. I then spoke to my brother who was also planning a trip to Srilanka with his family around those dates but due to some urgent work, he could not make the trip.

I was relieved to learn that those planning to travel to Srilanka at the same time were all safe. Man proposes but God disposes. Guruji has His own beautiful way to guide and shield His sangat from the worse happenings around the world. I would tell my husband Saurabh that we must plan a trip to Srilanka together and on the day of blast, he told me how fortunate I was to have visited it when I did because now holidaymakers will hesitate owing to the terror in their minds.

I thank Guruji maharaj for being with us in our good and bad times. He is our Divine light who illuminates our path with positivity. I thank my stars for bringing me to You, Guruji and I thank my mother in law, Bharti for taking me to Bade mandir. Thank you Guruji for rendering me unremitting peace and inner harmony. Keep showering your infinite love and blessings on all of us.

Pal Pal Har Pal Bahut Bahut Shukrana Guruji.

When faith is a hammer, all problems appear to be nails.

66

Germany Gets Blessed

In April I went to Manchester, attended my brother Sanjay's unforgettable 50th birthday celebration in London. After a few weeks, we as a family celebrated in Florence where Anishka joined in with the celebrations. Subsequently she flew to the US to be with Sonakshi and I returned to Manchester.

On July 5th, I landed in Stuttgart, Germany where the following day I attended Guruji's birthday eve satsang. Sangat from Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Netherlands and many more places in Europe had flown over for Guruji's divine satsang. I stayed with Madhu aunty and her husband who is German; kind and very spiritual. Madhu aunty and he welcomed me at the airport and on reaching home, he discussed the itinerary for the satsang to be held the following day. He was deeply involved as He is a staunch believer and the day of the satsang he wore a kurta and did the maximum seva for our beloved Guruji. Guruji proves that His teachings and His way of life is universal in nature and crosses the boundaries of religion.

I met another sangat who was staying with them in Stuttgart and she was from my neighbourhood in Panchsheel. The world has become so small on being in His fold and everywhere we turn, we find a connection that leads us to Him.

On the day of the satsang I met a young couple who had driven in from Frankfurt. Guruji used to state that the greatest seva is when the husband takes care of his wife and the wife takes care of her husband. Love between them strengthens and there is harmony in their home. Where there is harmony Guruji is bound to come and reside there so be it a physical home or the heart of a home let there be so much calmness and contentment that Guruji's residence there becomes a pleasurable one and He never leaves.

Satsang by Pooja Garg in Stuttgart, Germany

'When its Guruji's calling there can be no resistance. In May 2018, one of our friends invited us to attend a satsang with family in Stuttgart, Germany. I was suffering from severe back pain and had a physiotherapy session and so I declined my attendance to the satsang.

On the day of the satsang, I woke up and felt fine so my husband and I decided to go but we had no idea who Guruji was.

On entering their home, we saw a huge swaroop [picture] of Guruji. We both got the impression that He might be their Kul Guru. We sat through the satsang and did everything as instructed from taking the jal, chai and langar parsad. One aunty shared her satsang with me and stated that Guruji visits every satsang. My husband was not aware of this conversation. After langar Prasad as we were leaving my husband started clicking pictures of Guruji's Darbar.

While returning in the train I shared the conversation I had with that aunty to my husband that, 'Guruji visits every satsang.' It struck me that my husband had taken pictures so I asked him to show me. The moment he opened the file we saw Guruji's reflection on the right side of His large Swaroop. We were astonished to see this and immediately forwarded the picture to that same aunty. She circled the same reflection and sent us the picture back with the message, 'you are blessed.'

After this incident, we were curious to know more about Guruji and because my husband and I worship Sai Baba, it was hard to believe or connect with Guruji instantly. We attended every satsang in Stuttgart and listened to the various satsangs which then built a firm connect with Guruji. Every day, every moment is now a satsang with Guruji's blessing. He has awakened in us love and the joy of simply being in His fold and that I feel is the biggest

miracle yet experienced. Keep us always in divine love and care Guruji.'

Shukarana to Guruji for everything.

Satsang by Ashish Garg Frankfurt, Germany

'In Dec 2018, I invited a broker to my house to draw out a private health insurance policy. In two meetings the broker became quite friendly and convinced me about a particular policy being good for my family though it was quite expensive. He reassured me that I could cancel or postpone the start of the policy anytime. The policy was due to start in Feb 2019.

In Feb 2019, I switched my job and took public health insurance policy as offered by my employer so I contacted the broker to cancel the policy I took from him because as per legal rules two policy cannot run parallel. The broker suddenly stopped responding to my emails and calls. After following up for almost 2 weeks I decided to contact the company directly to seek their help in cancellation. The company also refused to help me and said that lock in period for the policy is expired and because of the type of contract this broker had made, they will not be able to help me in cancellation. My family and I were distressed and prayed to Guruji for guidance. In Germany once you start the private insurance you need to continue for lifetime and it was very expensive and so I realized the broker had duped me.

Subsequently I contacted one of Guruji's sangat who resides in Germany for the last 30 years. I explained my case to him and he fixed an appointment with a lawyer who was not sure if this could be resolved without a court case. Hearing this my family was mortified and all of us prayed to Guruji to pull me out of this messy situation.

That uncle's daughter got in touch with me and after understanding the case she called the insurance company directly on my behalf and reproached them (in local German language). She insisted they resolve this mess with immediate effect. The following day, I called the company requesting cancellation again and they told me that it was possible. I was surprised to hear that and by the end of the day, they sent me an email regarding cancellation of the policy. We were overjoyed and expressed our Shukrana to Guru ji.'

When 'thank you' becomes our deepest prayer in a consistent flow then

miraculously, the deepest creases iron out. Gratitude is intrinsic to human nature but then so is complaining and looking at the dark side. However, coming into Gururji's fold awakens us to our true nature and being in a state of joy allows gratitude to become intrinsic to who we are.

Protection and guidance is assured by Him once we surrender; on tying our boat to the peer. Indiscriminate focus on Gururji, indiscriminate belief and indiscriminate love is what leads us to our own truth.

67

New Zealand

While I was in Manchester Guneet Monga called and asked if I wanted to accompany her to the Melbourne film festival and my first prevailing thought was to tie the trip with satsangs. Guneet, being a staunch devotee consented to the plan of maximizing our time in sharing our satsangs spreading over Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The rest of the time would be filled with sight seeing and the Melbourne film festival.

I contacted Dimple aunty in Sydney and Vikram uncle in Melbourne to arrange the satsangs. I knew I would not make it to New Zealand but I had met Chanda in Delhi a while back and here she shares her satsang.

'My journey with Guruji started back in 2012, just a few days before my wedding. I have been a staunch devotee of Lord Shiva and visited Shiva temple every Monday. About a week before my wedding, on a Monday, I was having supper with my would-be in-laws and their friends. I was in a rush to visit the temple since it was a Monday and that is when the family friend asked me if I was a Shiva devotee and after I responded in the affirmative he responded, 'if that is so, you must visit Guruji's Temple in Bhatti Mines. I am sure you have never seen such a heavenly place. Guruji is no more in His physical garb but He has infused His blessings into the temple and He is there in the astral. His blessings are such that many who visit Him for the first time also are showered with His grace at His one glance. His powers are

immeasurable and His grace is unfathomable.'

I shared this with my husband to be and expressed my interest in visiting the temple. Although, I come from an Arya Samaj background wherein my family doesn't believe in Idol Worship, let alone following any Gurus and Babas my husband and I visited Bada Mandir after our wedding and a day prior to our flight to New Zealand. It was Wednesday afternoon and the colossal gates of the temple and the overwhelming grand granite Linga overawed me. The mandir was closed as it was Wednesday but at our insistence, the security guard went into the office to get permission for us to enter. We took a round of the mandir but since the darbaar and samadhi were closed, we did not capture the emotion in its entirety. Gaurav uncle (Guruji's Nephew) invited us into his office and I bombarded him with unending questions about Guruji and requested him to show me Guruji's photo. We were given Chai Prashad and a copy of 'Light of Divinity' to read. My husband and I both had a marvellous experience. We returned to New Zealand and I started reading 'Light Of Divinity.' Each satsang in the book was unbelievable and I was not too sure if I should trust what is written in it. I started stalking people on facebook, who had written their satsangs in the book, and to my surprise, each one of them existed and slowly steadily, Guruji took me in His lotus feet. Each day, excitedly, I would tell my husband what I read but he hardly paid any attention. Three months thereafter, I travelled to India and drew an opportunity to visit Bada Mandir on a Thursday. I went with my younger brother and both of us had no words to express how we felt on being in such a divine place. However, I did not apprehend the significance of Langar Prashad and I told my brother that we shall leave after partaking Chai prashad and will have Langar Prashad another time. During that period, my brother had dietary restrictions but he insisted on having it as a curative meal as it was 'langar prashad.' I did not listen and rushed out of the temple. On arriving at the shoe stand to take our shoes, an uncle asked, 'Have you had Langar? Make sure you don't leave without Langar.' My brother and I went back in and had Langar Prashad. This was our first experience wherein Guruji showed us that we should leave our 'ifs and but's,' our 'ego' and our intelligence outside the temple before entering into His realm.

I visited Bada Mandir after six months and I received a Big Swaroop of Guruji from there, which I took to New Zealand. Ever since Guruji's Swaroop entered our house, His wonders began unfolding.

My husband had Haemorrhoids for years and he had to have a course of antibiotics for the flare up to subside. One Saturday evening, my husband returned home very sick after playing cricket. He had a flare up of Haemorrhoid and he was in distress. Our doctor was not available and we could only get the prescription of anti-biotics on Monday. It was troublesome for him to walk, sit, stand or lie down.

I told my husband that we sit with Guruji, soak in the shabad gurbani and have the blessed chai prashad and maybe he feels better thereafter. Thereafter, the pain alleviated, He took a painkiller and we both went off to sleep. Next morning, our joy knew no bounds, when my husband told me that Haemorrhoid had completely disappeared. For a second, I did not believe him, as this issue had been a long-term hereditary problem and it was baffling that it disappeared without medication. We joined the dots only days later realizing the power of Guruji's shabad Gurbani and the chai parsad that cured him and now he has been clear of it since the past six years. Guruji's meher converted my husband into a devout believer.

On my following visit to India, I attended Guruji's satsang for the first time and my experience was sublime. While stepping out of the venue, I said to myself 'Guruji, I am really going to miss this experience in New Zealand and within two months of returning home, Guruji blessed us with initiating satsangs there. With merely five of us in 2013 the Sangat has stretched to more than 200 and we hold Satsangs every weekend in New Zealand. Thank you Guruji for being with us and blessing us each nano second.'

Whatever we do and whatever we say makes an impact so let it be so positive and joyful that we touch each heart and inspire it to do the same. By being kind, caring and loving we show the universe that we trust it. We demonstrate to Guruji that we believe in Him, love Him and we trust His ways implicitly because He formulates our lives with mathematical precision.

So trust, when in our perspective things go wrong, they are actually leading us to something better. Learn to trust and love each other too as we are all part of the same circle of life that is connected. Each life is touching the other in some capacity and it's never insignificant. On being in His fold the 'me'

becomes 'we' and 'mine' becomes 'ours' so let's protect and guide each other to harmonize 'our' universe for us and 'our' future generation.

We are blessed that in our good and bad times we have the strongest anchor, a beacon that guides us from darkness to light; a light that never fades. On the contrary the light that Guruji illuminates within us only becomes brighter and stronger as we deepen our connect to Him.

68

What is Happiness?

“As people spin faster and faster in the pursuit of merely personal happiness, they become exhausted in the futile effort of chasing themselves.”

In the passage of time, I have met sangat world over who have common issues. One of them stated they had financial restraints. Money can and does largely evaporate our miseries as Marx Gucho stated, ‘Money gives you the freedom from doing the things you don’t like.’

Money is a means to happiness but not happiness itself. Having said that whatever karma we are experiencing, it is imperative to remember that it is our health that we need to focus on as once lost cannot be regained in the same buoyancy but good fortune in the form of wealth can pour in better and greater than we can imagine when we have Guruji’s grace with us. He never has or will leave us in scarcity.

Happiness to some means retail therapy, for some its cosmetic enhancements that is increasingly important to some in an ageist society. The highs of these therapies fall swiftly leaving you once again in the original depleted state.

We know that happiness cannot come solely from external sources and when it does, it is normally transient. Equally, when happiness is about

doing, getting, seeking and achieving it is kind of fleeting and elusive.

My own connection with Guruji redefined happiness and now it is not a mere pleasurable feeling that is dependant on anything in particular. It is not a fleeting emotion or mood but an optimal state of being. It is a way of interpreting the world as it is for many of us is walking on Guruji's path. While we cannot change the world Guruji has made it possible for us to change the way we view it. Vitally important is; He changed us.

Our happiness quotient rises when we are in a space of gratitude and initially we need to consciously be grateful for everything we are blessed with. Acknowledging our blessings is instrumental to our being in a happy state.

Real happiness is an experience of the heart- to love and to be loved and it emanates from our innate love for the divine in the form of Guruji and in our awareness of His love for us. Only God's love can satisfy the hunger of the heart and while that is being satiated we are genuinely in a happy state. I have witnessed it on the glowing faces of the sangat.

So, whether we feel happy or not ultimately depends on us because Happiness is when what you think, say and do are in harmony. After I changed my inner state, my entire world transformed and for this I took complete support of my beloved Guruji. As He stated 'aya karo. Hazare lagao.' [Keep coming.] Hazare Lagao is also translated into wanting to be a better person. Thus, adapting a healthy way of thinking and being becomes the objective.

As we continue coming to Him to bade/chota mandi, attending satsangs and contemplating on the shabad Gurbani that is His teachings, our karmas that drive our life begin to change. Kaam, Kraodh, lobh, Moh and Aankar- lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego begin to dissolve.

Guruji stressed upon the importance of listening and internalizing the Gurbani shabad and what I did not understand then, He is making me grasp now. There is a right time for everything and it is never too late to fall in love with Divinity and to live by His word, His grace.

After months of travel, on entering bade mandir, I feel an immense sense of

lightness in my body and spirit. I feel at home that brings me into the present moment where my mind quietens and my body releases the heaviness of frequent travel. The energy I draw prepares me for another day of work; be it writing, designing or sharing my satsangs. He unleashes my creativity as He takes over as there is no way on earth that I'm capable of the work that shines with his grace. When people compliment me on my writing or my designs on the yoga mats I wear a surprised expression that enquires, 'I really did that!' He is the doer and all we need to do is to connect with Him and His vibration. By being consistent with a deep sense of commitment towards Him He keeps us in His fold and gives us the best.

It is important to watch our intent on coming and connecting to satsangs; is it to network or is connect to the divine. There are no mediators between Guruji and us and to make our direct connection with Him is the only route to grow and evolve.

Initially, some of us test the waters and Guruji is aware of our intent as He would say, 'Let us try aah gaye.' When He bestows His grace on us He reshapes our lives in a way we can never imagine. He literally re writes our life's script and redirects us in a direction filled with new possibilities and opportunities. By leaving it all to Him He never leaves us.

Trust me, when we are with Guruji for the right reasons and not merely for a few seasons, He ensures giving us the best. He has unleashed my creativity, taught me to smile at the raging Delhi traffic before returning home to envelope my family in a cosy blanket of love, caring and understanding as well as acceptance of the other's journey without judgment.

He has taught me to discover a reservoir of joy within and when He stated stay positive, the deeper meaning is to become mindful of toxic emotions such as anger, hatred and jealousy that can erode our sense of well-being. Only the heart that has entered the room of forgiveness is exempted from toxic thoughts or else we lay ourselves down every night on a bed of resentment that transforms into a disease. I know it because I have done it too!

Holding onto the 'why me' victim state didn't serve me so on trying the dish of 'forgiveness' and sending the healing light to people who have hurt me

while cutting the cord has enabled me to step into a new room full of compassion, humility and empathy. Above all, forgiveness lightens us up and renders us a space of happiness that I have finally arrived at now.

Stereotypes are not always healthy and our connection to God is very individual. No one can dictate how to connect to Guruji, what to let go of and what to embrace as we all have our individual journey. Freezing dos and donts into our belief system is not healthy. With Guruji all we need to freeze in our minds is a positive attitude.

Guruji, our divine sculptor chips away the inessential parts of His object and though painful, on completion the object is refined and redefined. When Guruji chips off the aspects of our lives that He understands to be dispensable or even harmful to us, He gently removes them from our lives. He always advised, 'changi sangat vich beta karo [be in good company] and changa kaam karo. [Do good] 'jaise sangat vasie rangat.'

Guruji prunes away the weeds of doubt, sadness and insecurities from our lives. Inadvertantly, however, we again sow seeds that do not serve in the larger scheme of our lives. Guruji again weeds them out and eventually we learn not to repeat mistakes. We learn and relearn as a child is taught the alphabets through repetition we adults, too, learn the lessons of life through trial and error that progressively leads to triumph.

Guruji awakens the victor in us that shines with optimum radiance. Do not be afraid to play your best role. There are no superior or inferior individuals. We are all enacting our roles on this grand stage called life. Emulate the positive attributes in others and adapt the good but never lose yourself in what is perceived as a prototype of model behavior. Be your authentic self and let Guruji polish your inner and outer vessel.

As His children, He ensures we become the best version of ourselves. Faith makes us positive and resilient and no matter how high and insurmountable the mountain appears, He gives us the right attitude.

Fortune favors the bold.

69

Australia is Blessed

Be bold in what you stand for and careful what you fall for.

In Melbourne, on our last evening there, Guneet and I shared our satsangs and Vikram, his family and Dhruv at the hotel. Over coffee, he shared his ground shaking satsang with us that left us both numb. Factually, Guruji turns the impossible into possible and He slams the brakes on a situation that is accelerating leading to a head on collision.

Dhruv Suren Melbourne sangat

“Jai Guruji. Guruji has blessed me with three lives so far.

1. One evening, my brother accompanied me on a return journey from Melbourne to Adelaide. He was behind the wheel and the moon and the stars shone bright over the clear sky. We were cruising through country driving at 110km/hr, savouring the music as anyone would. Over a bend, an oncoming B-Double (26 meters long truck) started overtaking another truck using opposite vehicle lane. We were at the bend with limited visibility, high speed, oblivious to the moments waiting to unfold. With nowhere to go, no emergency stopping lane, instead a long wide trench with trees to the edge of highway, we faced the overtaking truck at a gap 50-75 meters head on. They felt like the final moments of life with eyes wide open. Guru Maharaj

held our hands. All we remember is that I turned the wheel to the left and he froze. The car never touched a tree; ditch turned into a smooth patch of road and the trucks disappeared. With no other recollection, we looked at each other in silence and knew "Us nirakar ne is gaddi u bachaya hai"

2. Since Jan 2017, I was bombarded with a number of court cases within a short span, for intense allegations. The consequences would have turned me into a walking dead person. With multiple arrests, police use to neglect my questions, rather complained against me to the prosecutor, than assisting me with the right to information. The only thing that kept me out of prison at the time was surrendering myself to police warrants. Guruji walked beside me throughout. He kept my faith in humanity by a series of events inconceivable to my mind. I connect the dots in hindsight, but at the time, I was unaware that strangers who passed by giving me key notes were Guruji's angels, without whom nothing would have existed. Guruji knew I was innocent but relatives judged me from their own perception, friends disappeared and associates turned. Allegations were portrayed, scenarios and witnesses were tampered against me. My soul was eaten alive by worms' day in day out. A pain so intense, I can feel it while sharing this satsang. The dialogue from - 3 Idiots - "Engineers ne dimaag ka dard measure karne ki machine nahi banayi" A domino effect knocked over my life, from insomnia, depression, loneliness, business loss and so on. I began drinking consciously only to ease the ache of my soul. I was hiding from one place to another, residing at different venues during that course. I drank heavily and kept my predicament from my family too. I was verbally destructive even to my own. I would drink enough to make myself numb and then listen to satsangs and Gurbani at high volumes while talking to Guruji sitting alone. I lost the case against me. Court hearing was harsh; my statements though strong were dismissed. I was convicted, sentenced and opposition had me for all they wanted and humiliated me. Guruji Maharaj had other plans. I walked out of court with a very odd attitude and ignored my barrister's advice, lodged an appeal against and challenged the magistrates order. Adverse consequence of which could multiply the sentence and fine by many folds. Haunted by my own decision, I kept reciting Guruji's name and began consulting and short-listing Supreme & High court barristers. The months before the final hearing were intense. Riding solo, I engaged myself in amritvela satsangs and gurbani lessons to keep myself centered. Court hearing day - I requested Guruji for his mercy and begged him to ignore my balance sheet, from

karmas of past incarnations that have led to the situation. Hearing began, the prosecution went on for nearly 2 hours, the case seemed to have taken the same course as before, slipping off hands. My patience to listen further to false statements broke its barriers and I stood up shouting loudly "NO." My barrister immediately turned towards me and screamed, "Shut Up and Sit Down". Raising hands half way I kept repeating, "I am sorry" to the Judge. Brows rose, giving me a cornered look; Judge politely pointed me to sit down. The turning point Prosecutor continued and now the Judge cross-questioned him on facts - A never before event, that even took my barrister by surprise. Guruji had entered into the Judge present at time. Failing to answer questions put up by The Judge, the prosecutor asked to adjourn the hearing for a month. Refusing his request the Judge said - "I will allow you only 30 min to contact your office and present me a valid submission on the requested." He adjourned the hearing for 30 minutes. For the better half of that hour, my heart kept pounding out of my chest. Prosecutor returned with no further submissions. The Judge very politely asked me to stand where I was sitting and explained to me what he had just ruled. It was not the Judge but Guruji himself, returning my lost self-respect, honoring and loving me as a child and asked me, "Do you understand this, and do you wish to add something." I replied "no" to further action and happily accepted the said. Can anyone tell me, if a Judge has ever asked someone in the above manner in the past? Who was this? Proudly Our Guruji Maharaj Himself. The case ruled in my favor and conviction with sentence was completely over ruled and dismissed. The Best of all, this case has been set as precedent for future cases to come. I remembered the quote from Guruji where the almighty said to a sangat from defence "Guruan nu 11 de 4, te 4 de 11 karne aunde ne" Guruji, did kalyaan for so many future sangat by making me the source for this case, to be set as precedent. Mere astitva ke rayshay rayshay se aapko shukrana Guruji "Je tu na farda sadi banh, asan rul jana si, Sanu Kithe na mildi than, asan mar jana si..."

3. Winning the case, I had promised to visit Shirdi at Sai Baba's mandir, along with Dugri mandir and Bade Mandir. April 29th 2019, we were on board SpiceJet flight from New Delhi to Shirdi. Flight was delayed from the day before, following a few cancellations. In spite of the aggressive crowd, we had a good flight with satsangs being shared with co-passengers but during landing the plane hovered extra distance with ground visible quite close. Followed by a sudden landing and harsh breaks, everyone knew the

associated danger. Over the next five seconds I said to Guruji Maharaj "thank you for a beautiful life, ab ye sab aapka" The aircraft overshot the runway, coming to a sudden halt. Covered with cloud of dust and smoke with foul smell from burnt rubber we were unable to see out. Thoughts were pursuing towards a burning engine, as they were still running loud enough to be heard in the cabin. Dust cleared and everything was ok. For all invalid reasons, the pilot tried twice to push the plane out from the dead position by accelerating the engines even higher. Finally, they gave up and shut the rotors off. What we witnessed after evacuation - The engines were less than a feet above gravel ground. The front wheel had submerged into gravel due to impact and weight, bringing the aircraft to a sudden stop. A running engine of an aircraft is powerful enough to suck any heavy object or even a human within itself while exhaling nothing but dust. Only Guru Maharaj Knows, how that plane came to a dead stop on loose gravel less than a feet above crushed rock and did not blast into flames. "Jisda sahib dada hoye, usnu mar na sake koi..." When people ask - How did I meet the almighty or what made me believe in Guruji Maharaj ... All I have to say is "Bas ek hawa si chali, aur unse pyaar ho gaya" Jai Guru."

70

Lockdown Satsangs

Guruji fulfilled another deep desire in me to visit the African Continent as I had not yet stepped on it. In December 2019, I flew with Sanjeev and Amit to Cape Town, South Africa where Sonakshi, Vivianna, Sanjay and his family joined in. It was divine and very vaguely we began to hear about the covid19 emanating from Wuhan, China.

On arriving back to Delhi, I flew to Goa with my friend from Manchester, Meena to stay with Aruna aunty at her hotel, I continued writing this book there and Ruchika also joined us.

We were in January 2020 by now and we still did not pay much heed to the covid19. I returned to Delhi, celebrated Sonakshi's birthday on the 24th January with family and friends and flew to stay with Guneet Monga in Mumbai third week of February. Sonakshi had flown to Bali and Anishka returned to Dubai.

Ruchika joined me in Mumbai and whilst we were staying with Guneet on the eve of her satsang we both fell sick with fever and cold. We were baffled as to why we both felt exactly the same way. We sat throughout Guneet's satsang and went to Karan Anand's place to chill with him as he still had Guruji's darbar from the day before.

We had double langar and by this time the news of covid19 was circulating quite aggressively but I carried on with my plans and flew to Dubai from Mumbai on the 4th March. I was meant to be here for two weeks with Anishka before flying to Bali to be with Sonakshi.

Man proposes but our dear God, Guruji, disposes. Sonakshi most reluctantly flew to Dubai as there had been a few cases there of the virus and we all decided to reside in the same place together. On her arrival, a day or so later the world announced a lockdown.

Guruji had planned our being together in one place; as safe as we possibly could be. Had I been in Delhi alone, without my daughters, I would have been terribly lost and low.

It is May 2020, as I write this and the world is still partially locked but there has been so much beauty in this. I have never connected on such a deep and profound level with Guruji as I had during this lockdown. The lessons I needed to learn in life I am learning in the confines of my home connecting to Him like never before. The outward adversity has induced an inner opportunity.

Below is Aatika Kapoor's lockdown satsang

'Being a practical individual I would argue with my parents that Guruji is everywhere hence there is no need for me to visit bade mandir. It had been more than six months since I had visited it. On 17th December, I finally went and sat inside at the extreme corner of the main hall.

It was a Monday afternoon brimming with sangat. I could have easily gone unnoticed as I sat in one corner and kept crying within, uttering only two words, 'Sorry and thank you.' I kept repeating these to Guruji thanking Him for everything He had bestowed on me and apologizing for all the wrong I had done.

As sangat is aware, we are asked to proceed for the chai parsad in rotation. However, I hid myself so I was not asked to move for two more rounds. Finally, a sevaddar uncle, standing next to Guruji's gaddhi pointed at me and I thought he was asking me to leave the hall. I gestured to him that I would

like to sit for two more minutes. He motioned me repeatedly to come to him and when I did he simply said, 'Guruji is like your father. Do not worry fathers like it when you come to meet them. They don't need your 'sorry and thank you.' As he said this, I shook from within as I could not believe the telepathy could be so precise and so prompt. I love Guruji and I always have but this was unbelievable. He then went ahead and said, 'you come to Him every week and see how He starts living with you.'

He then made me sit next to His gaddi for one hour on a Monday afternoon. After an hour I rose to leave and the same uncle said in Punjabi, 'Ki hoya? Ali ta 70% teek hoye hai, 30% aur baaki hai. Jaa jaake wapas baith ja and then I sat for a total of two and half hours which was truly a blessing. Subsequently, I did get into a routine of going every week and I felt so much love within me.

My second satsang- Before the lockdown I could not go to the mandir as it shut and thereafter it closed owing to the national lockdown. I was so restless at work one day that I told my mom that we would go to bade mandir and bow at the gate and return home. In my mental dialogue, I told Guruji how much I missed Him and now that I had a routine of visiting Him at bade mandir I did not want to break the thread. About an hour later, my retail head called and asked me to come out as she had something for me. She is not a follower of Guruji but she gave me the most beautiful framed swaroop of His. She was given it and thought she must pass it onto me. The swaroop is in my room since that day and I have a battery-operated candle before Him that is still lit and has been for the past 30 days. I know He is with me and my connect has deepened still during the lockdown. This lockdown is a blessing in disguise, a time to realize one self and to embark on a spiritual journey.

I am focussing my energies on getting closer to Guruji and I hold a satsang at home every evening with my parents. A family that prays together stays together. I even do the amritvella satsang anytime between 3am to 5 am. It has made me calm and centred and has lit a candle of hope and joy in my heart. I am also in touch with the unseen reality.

I have become appreciative of my blessings being in a state of gratitude at all times. There are people out there suffering with no or little food and I wake up everyday in the comfort of my home with my family to love. We are

healthy and together. The world is closed but something within has opened. Guruji has given me a positive attitude and I want to maximize my time with him under the lockdown.

We were on the treadmill of life; running in the rat race. I feel those who needed downtime and wanted to evolve were not getting an opportunity to do so. Nature has made it possible and now there are no excuses. My love and faith in Guruji is growing exponentially. I do sit in the uncertainty of what will happen to us financially once the lockdown is lifted but I do know that mentally, emotionally and spiritually, I will be stronger than ever and Guruji will find a way for us to reboot our lives. Going forward, I will not get entangled in the rat race as in these priceless moments of the lockdown, I have unlocked my truth.

Just as nature is recreating itself, Guruji has given us the opportunity to recreate our spiritual stance. We are connecting to the higher powers and once we taste the divine nectar, it is not possible to let go of it no matter how luring the world will be.

I do pray in earnest for all of us to be better people and to respect nature once we are out in the open again. I pray for all of us to be evolved. This situation has been such an equalizer as we are all on the same platform and no one is superior or inferior. We have in a sense been given a second chance to love our God the way He intended us to love Him. I am more comfortable spending time with myself, sitting with my thoughts. I feel Guruji has given me the strength and the courage to go within deeply so that I see and perceive the new world from a higher perspective.

We realize today that it is not about flamboyance or excess. It is all about loving our families, togetherness and simplicity in our life choices. From this experience, my wants are redefined, and my needs will certainly be met by Guruji.

Thank you Guruji for this of lockdown. I pray for those who are not connected to also connect so they may taste the divine nectar too.”

Anonymous Corona virus Satsang

“I moved to Melbourne in 2017 when I was 20 years old. My massi lives in Melbourne and when I was in school my mother would tell me how much she wanted me to move to Melbourne and once I settled she and my brother would also join me for good.

Since my parents had separated, arranging funds was a challenge but my mother applied with a private bank and our loan was sanctioned in no time. My visa arrived on the 18th and I left for Melbourne on the 19th July. My massi received me at the airport and we headed to her home. I felt like the fourth sibling to my cousins and I was much healthier and happier living with them. I felt a deep sense of gratitude towards my massi for keeping me so lovingly.

In October 2018, after 1.5 years, I was looking forward to my trip to India but most unexpectedly, I developed a skin problem. I began with a burning sensation on my chin that rapidly spread to my entire face. I became intolerant of all products and heat of any sort. I consulted a doctor who dismissed it as a reaction to hay fever.

I convinced myself that the doctor was right but very soon the sensation turned unbearable and my complexion changed and certain patches turned darker. I lost my sleep, cried and developed anxiety. I ceased to see my reflection or take hot showers.

On visiting India in December, I immediately consulted skin specialists; one prescribed multiple medicines and the other steroids. The treatment given to me was a preventative to further damage and not a cure. I was inconsolable, as I needed to get back to Melbourne even though the harsh UV rays would aggravate it. My anxiety heightened, as I was not sure if I would survive the heat with my skin condition.

The long and short of it is that I completed my trimester once I did go back, got a job in hospitality that I lost because the heat was affecting my skin. I had no luck finding another suitable job and my savings were running out. I sat home, overthinking my life- my face, my career, my future.

I began to detest the city I initially fell in love with and I realised I may be going through depression at this point.

One day while sitting in my room, my massi walked in asking me to accompany her to a satsang. Neither of us had ever been to a satsang so I agreed. I was hopeless and sad particularly on the actual day of attending but once I was there it was a new experience altogether. My massi had asked me to consult a homeopathic doctor in India and she diagnosed me with photosensitivity- a condition of oversensitivity to any sort of heat.

At the satsang I sobbed profusely for the first 15 minutes. I felt lighter by the end of it and I felt connected to a higher energy. We started attending them regularly and I realised at one point that Guruji had lightened my heart and had ignited a candle of hope in it. I received His swaroop in my second satsang itself and this left me in tears.

Guruji became a huge support system and my true friend whom I talked to in what I describe as the most difficult phase of my life. All I asked for at this point was for Him to send me back to India as I had lost my sense of belonging in Melbourne. I continued looking for jobs, however, as I still had the education loan to pay off. It was altogether a heartbreaking situation, as I did love Melbourne but it was just not working out anymore and I did not understand that something that started so well morphed into a drag.

I got Guruji's darshan in my dream and these signs kept me afloat. Without a job, I could no longer sustain it in Melbourne and I finally mustered the courage to speak to my mom and massi about it. Although initially they were sceptical, they agreed to it as Guruji's decision. I completed my degree and returned to India with a blur vision of my future. Within a month, I got a decent paying job in a good company in Gurgaon. I did question Guruji on why my skin flared up and why I could not continue living in Melbourne.

Recently corona virus inflicted the entire world with international students losing their jobs and returning to their countries. My massi shared the grim situation with my mom and reasoned that Guruji had sent me back a year before the pandemic hit the world to protect me. He works towards the best for all of us and the first blessing above all else, He grants us His protection.

I am undergoing treatment for my skin for over a year now and I have almost recovered from it with Guruji's eternal love, compassion and grace.

understand now Guruji's plans and had I not got the skin condition I would have undoubtedly stayed in Melbourne only to face difficult consequences later owing to the Corona Virus."

Ek Onkar- God is One

Satnam- His name is true

Karta Purakh- He is the creator

Nirbhau- Without Fear

Nirvair-He is not inimical to anyone

Akaal Murat- He is without form- Immortal

Ajouni Saibhang- He is beyond birth and death- Self illuminated

Guru Parsad-He is blessed with Guru's grace

Jap- Meditate on His name

Aad Sach-True from the beginning

Jugaad Sach- True throughout the ages

Hai Bhi Sach-True even now

Nanak ho si Bhi Sach- Says Nanak-Truth will always be here.

Jai Guruji

Epilogue

'No matter how far you have travelled in the wrong direction, faith will bring you back.'

Faith cannot be intellectualized therefore it is essential that the reasoning mind is closed and the heart is open to allow the Light to pour in. It is by truly loving the creator that we receive His love and in doing so we experience an enduring sense of calm and happiness in our lives. The pursuit of every being *is* happiness but, in our ignorance, we pursue fleeting joys that eventually lead to a void. On loving Him our perceptions change, our heart softens towards others and altogether we become aware of our own conduct and aspire to be the best version of ourselves in word, thought, action and spirit. Our worldly pleasures and pursuits are redefined and we are filled with so much gratitude that every experience, every expedition and every encounter with an individual exudes His grace.

There will always be questions that lead to frustrations and anxieties if the needle does not move and sorrow turns stagnant. However, like He said, 'Surrender.' It is an intimidating word with profound meaning but translated very simply it means to go with the flow and to relinquish control because factually we do not control everything in our lives. Some events pass through us most unexpectedly to shake the very foundation of our homes, and the tremor then leaves us in a state of depression or disillusionment. On handing the wheels of our lives to Him with the gearstick of trust, He sees us through the twists, turns and the turbulence. He steers us through the rough into the smooth and inhibits us from trespassing the 'no entry' or 'danger zones' of life. He does and will continue to give us 'signposts' to fulfill our lives' highest purpose. He micromanages our lives only if you allow Him to. Arrogance that is the sister of ignorance eliminates on surrendering to Him and then with humility we live.

On coming to Him for the first time I feel it is out of our free will and choice to accept or reject Him but once we bow to His lotus feet in acceptance then He holds the reigns of our lives and we are forever His. No matter where we stand in terms of our karmic account, it is where we choose to go once, we connect, that matters. Karma is our free will and when we act on situations

that present, we need to take the right course that is conducive to our growth. He guides only when we are prepared to listen and on doing so we understand we discover the true nature of our reality and that no boundaries exist for us.

The deeper our love and devotion to Him the more He seems to take over our past karmas and rectifies our current ones.

The difficult times we are destined to for He condenses in a crunching short period to terminate the karma though not entirely. We are here to learn so the prick of the needle is essential for us to feel instead of the blade of a sword.

At times it seems He has kept the receiver off the hook but it is not Him but us whose connectivity has weakened. He is constantly in the listening mode but it is we who turn impatient and hang up!

One fact I learned is that the universe never punishes us but simply responds to the vibrations of our attitude and actions derived from our thoughts. Hence it is imperative at all costs to stay positive as Guruji used to state time and again. The power of positive thinking cannot be undermined. 'Positive ra karo.' [Stay positive] stated Guruji.

Our body hears the chatter in our minds so if it is full of negative clutter then the garbage is bound to travel to our body in the form of sickness. We usually attract that which we are and not always that which we want.

If you do not feel close to God, you get one guess to know who moved.

For every step we take towards Him He moves a thousand towards us and then all things become possible with God so believe it and you're halfway there.

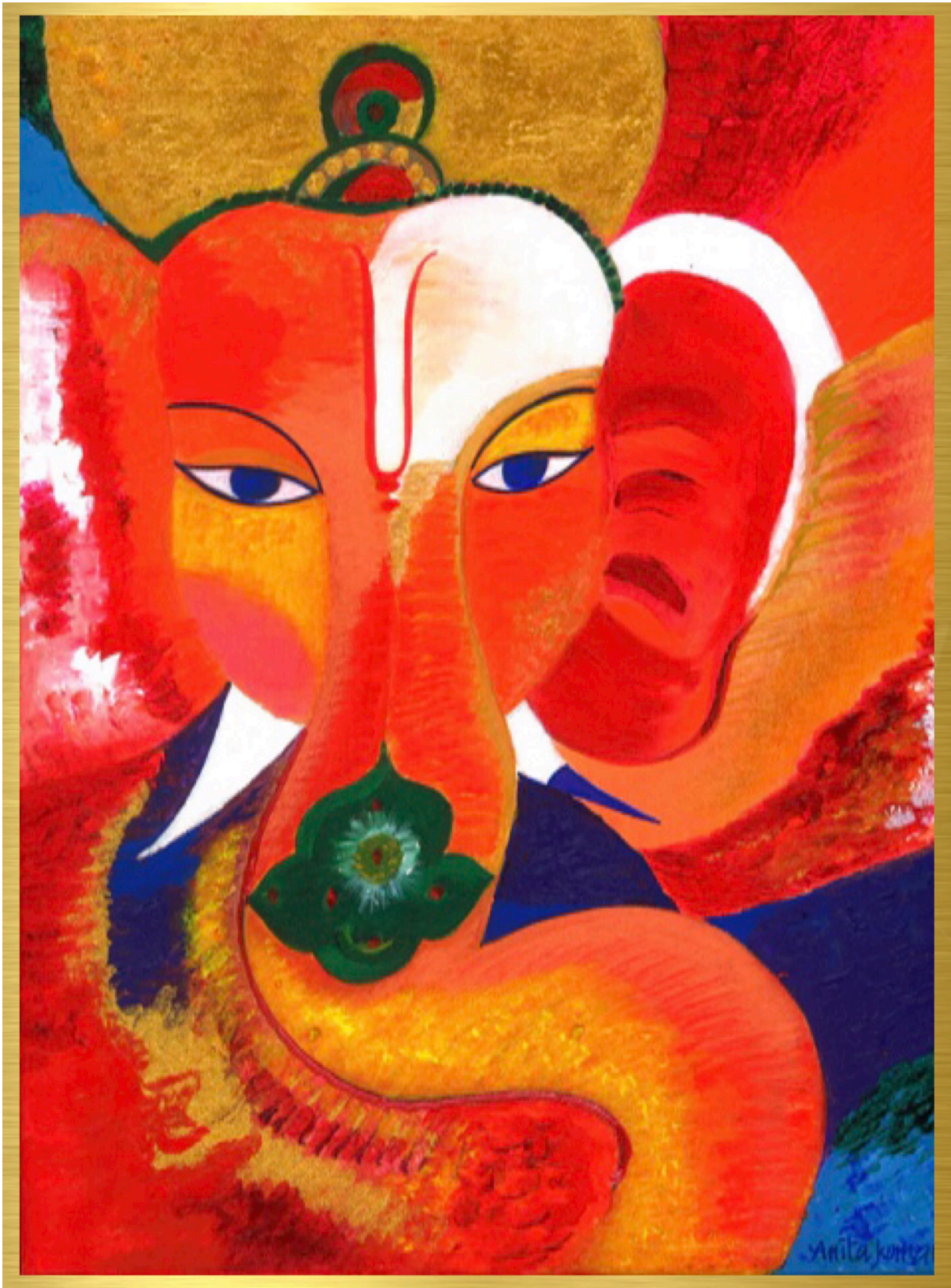
The most powerful affirmation I have been introduced in my journey with Guruji is that 'all things are possible with God.'

As an individual who has turned inward and my life has transformed from the mundane to the celestial I have become a joyful witness to a complete

change in my life's landscape. May yours be filled with the colors you draw on it.

Just know and internalize the fact that no matter what your endeavor, your intent has to be pure and Guruji will be there to support you. We restrict ourselves, He does not. He is not retributive but reformative and restorative. He is absolute love, forgiveness, unbounded compassion, and endless patience and promised protection.

Go within and seek the light until you become the light.



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