

A Beautiful Life Story

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Josef: Hello, Sundari. I have always been a seeker... brought up in Christian boarding schools and had many of the standard epiphanies in my youth. In my late twenties I embraced "flower power," indulged in copious amounts of LSD, etc. and somehow became convinced I could find God/my self. I would go to the country and just sit very still... many *samadhis*.

One day I nearly set the hill alight by accident and this brought me up sharply. I thought I had got it all wrong and my seeking life came crashing down. However, this also brought with it a certain relief. On the way home I experienced what I now know to be a *samadhi* with thought, *savikalpa samadhi*... plus an extra step. From then on, I knew that there is no death and that it is all within me.

From then on, this became my foundation. However, I came to the knowledge without a teaching or being taught. I had no words to make sense of the relationship between *Isvara* and my psychology. This left a doubt that steadily grew.

Life went on... it was very stressful running my father's business, which was failing. I took LSD as a diversion and went against my nature enough to really hurt. Pretty soon I had a huge *kundalini* experience which did not stop for about six months. For three months I didn't notice any sleep... just a constant downloading of energy, like a greater consciousness. I experienced terror when it wouldn't stop and was afraid I would lose my sanity. My foundational knowledge got me through.

Nobody knew what this *kundalini* was, and I had to really get my act together. I've had the carrot and now I had to get the stick! I learned of Eastern religions... even a brief connection to Vedanta (not ripe yet!) and I settled on Zen Buddhism. I became a monk but gave up when I realised the sense of doership could not be resolved.

I left, married my present wife, and as she didn't want children, it suited me perfectly. We went into business, which grew and was successful, and searching went onto the back burner. It was time-consuming and stressful, and I started sitting again. Pretty soon, seeking was full-on again and more epiphanies came. I was desperate to get out of the business, and *Isvara* came through on my request. We had an extraordinary business year and everyone threw money at us.

With my wife in agreement, we shut up shop and left for the Polish mountains. After an extensive search on the internet, I found a beautiful old hunting lodge with spectacular mountain surroundings. We took Maggi's mother with us, who had cancer and needed 24/7 care, and headed for the hills. We were there five years in all. Mother died in our care. In the meantime, we had a wonderful, stress-free life.

Over time, I became so grateful to *Isvara* that I begged for some way to show my gratitude... what task could he give me so I could give a little back? Boy, did he come up trumps... I should have seen it coming. My life came up for full review, complete with the unfinished *kundalini* experience I still feared. I knew I would be taken to the edge, but would make it somehow.

After about three months of being slowly stripped bare... much desperate hand-to-hand

combat... breath by breath sometimes, I came to a point where I would look squarely at the thing that knew me perfectly, yet I could not locate in return. I looked, and the balloon deflated instantly. Nothing spectacular; just like a car struggling up a steep hill and getting to the top.

I realised I was not the doer. It seemed incredible and simple. Why could I never see it?! From that time on, if Josef had a problem, well, he could just send an email in future! I was no longer particularly interested in Josef and his story! However, a silent voice said: "It is not the end yet!"

I had one of those wonderful dream messages from *Isvara*, a review of the past, present and future to come. I couldn't understand many of the symbols then, but I think I do now.

Shortly after that, mother died and we returned to the UK. Poland had served its purpose for us all. We bought and renovated a beautiful old house in beautiful surroundings, and life was rather blissful for eighteen months or so. I got a little bored with the bliss and became interested in the "it is"s, not the end message. It niggled at me.

On the internet, I came across Ramji's writings and the enlightenment test. I did it and found out that I was a great sage! LOL ☺ I was concerned somewhat, as I didn't see myself as a great sage and thought Ram's teachings would be a bit "lite."

I needn't have worried. The teaching ripped like a forest fire through me. I read the *e-satsangs*... difficult at first... and the many wonderful articles and teachings... a couple of the videos too. I got the book shortly after and thought I would read it quite quickly. It turned out to be a three-month project. I followed the wonderful, perfect logic, sometimes contemplating a sentence for an hour at a time. I didn't want to burden Ramji with a question without at least having read the book, fully assimilating as much as I could. I read everything at the website several times over. I was totally possessed for those three months. There was no warning about spontaneous *samadhis*!

It might give some people the wrong idea, I suppose. At the end, the Vedanta virus cleared out all the ignorance infections.

Prarabdha karmas seem to have pretty much run their course, and now it's all so simple. Where did everything go? I have to laugh! It's wonderful, magnificent, inspiring and utterly boring, all in one go!

When I watched Ramji teaching in the videos, I was deeply impressed how he gave so utterly of himself. Giving his life to *Isvara* in unfolding the teaching, never failing to be inspired... wanting to see the faces of the students to see if they got it. How generous he is with the latecomers in the Indian *satsangs*. The interruptions to the flow of the teaching... blessed Ramji must be a tired man by now. I know there is a balance and it is not my place to comment, but in the Zen monastery we learned how to sit still with reverence and respect in front of the teacher. I loved to see Ramji doing the opening chant with what seemed to be his fingers crossed... they seem to subtly come together at the end... the *namaste* position... maybe I'm just projecting it. I would dearly love to see Ramji and yourself enjoying a less exhausting lifestyle together.

So much travelling... let the students do the running. Sorry, shouldn't project too much. I just feel so grateful and full of joy. I can never repay the debt of gratitude I feel to *Isvara*, Ramji and Vedanta. It is a privilege and a genuine pleasure to do what I can to help. I know I wouldn't have finished the job of cracking the code on my own.

I am rich in all respects now. A loving wife, beautiful home in a beautiful area. Not much money

but plenty of time... you can have as much of it as you need. My wife, by the way, is not involved in the house search... that was for our own previous nine houses, so no problem there. As you can see, I seem to have house-searching *vasanas* which obviously *Isvara* knows all about... they're his *vasanas* after all, hence our connection.

Anyway, another result of this house business is that we will try to sell our home. With the proceeds we could buy two or three cheaper houses... one being in Spain. My Maggi is in agreement. I wonder if a ShiningWorld community of Vedantins could grow together. So I even have a vested interest in the search! Really, I have plenty of time and give it gladly.

So in future, rest assured... I'm not stressed with the searching. Thank you for the appreciation and the thanks... not too many needed if I've explained where I'm coming from now.

Sorry to go on for so long, Sundari... I suppose I've been a bit indulgent. I did want you to know more or less who this funny chap Josef is!

Next email is back on the job... plenty of details. Just stopping for lunch! Very much love to you both.

~ Josef

Sundari: Hello, Josef. What a lovely story, Josef, thank you so much for sharing it with us and with ShiningWorld. We are so honoured to have an insight into the lives of the many extraordinary souls who have travelled the path to the pathless... and shared their story with us! As for Ramji crossing his fingers during the chant, I can assure you that that is a projection of yours! ☺ And yes, an intentional Vedanta community is definitely in the cards; a few people have expressed interest in coming to spend time near us when we have our base in Spain. Of course the intention is to hold extended *satsangs* there as well, so we would invite people from all over the world to attend. We are looking for a place that has facilities for people to rent nearby, as you well know.

Thanks again for your invaluable help.

~ Much love to you from both of us, Sundari