

On the road to freedom

BY SHOBIT ARYA

Am I really a seeker? Seek I do, very many things – from good books to publish to good advice that I can heed to. But can one seek true success and happiness? They might be amongst the most sought-after objectives in today's world of cut-throat competition, but we can't possibly seek and get them. At best we can make ourselves receptive to them, and attract them with our state of mind. For that we need to become a sadhak.

Sadhana, in our cultural context, has usually been associated with long durations of meditation, fasting and silence. But choosing not to lie for a day is also a sadhana; choosing not to be angry for a week is sadhana too. In fact, anything that takes us closer to ourselves, for however few moments it may be, would really be a sadhana and anyone on this path could be termed a sadhak.

I started young. I was not even 18 when I chose to plunge into the world of business, and being a first-generation entrepreneur made it all the more interesting. Each day has been a learning experience – learning the ways the world tries to operate, and understanding the ways the Universe makes it do. The former makes you sceptical, while the latter reassures you and keeps you going.

The most obvious change I underwent is that I began to consider all lives equal – be it an animal, an ant, a plant or a human. I learnt to respect



the life within all life forms. Turning a vegetarian was a natural culmination. There is a feeling within to now shun milk and vegetables that are roots – which when plucked make the whole plant die. I am not forcing myself into it, and will not stop it either when it hap-

pens on its own.

Being able to see the other person's perspective and empathise even when

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he or she has been somewhat nasty to me is not always easy but more often than not, it happens naturally now. It might happen instantaneously or may take its own time to ripen, but usually the feeling of empathy mushrooms, and helps me erase any ill-will that may have crept in. The sense of ease after letting go of the baggage is indeed gratifying. It has helped me mend strained relationships and strengthen existing ones.

It has also aided me in creating

good business propositions. When you empathise with your client or supplier, you are able to create a win-win situation for all. And then one realises the more large-hearted you are, the more you share, the more the Universe shares with you. Everything is in abundance out there; we just need to be sure of what our share is.

I try to imbibe the beautiful thought – love people and use things rather than love things and use people. I look at my mobile phone as a tool to communicate, and my car as a comfortable mode of transport, rather than possessions to be proud of. Developing a no-frills attitude towards life helps one to remain grounded, and avoid unnecessary heartburns caused by damage to or loss of the so-called objects of luxury.

Now comes the most crucial aspect of striking a balance between work and home. Though like most of the people we see around us, I too spend far more time at work than at home, I try to make up for the lack of quantity by quality. My journey has taught me about the emptiness of most of our preoccupations, and made me understand that the moments I spend with myself and my family are the most precious.

I may be a better human being now than I was at the start of the journey, but I also realise that I am no way near my destination. The seed is already sown; we just need to make ourselves fertile enough for the self to bloom in all its glory. ☺

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