



Arvind's Calling at the Orphanage

Arvind's story of smelling the flowers!

In the summer of 2005, I spent many a day in Regent's Park, the largest and best kept royal park in central London. It was here amongst the luscious and fragrant roses that I wrote my second book "Get the Life you Love and Live it".

During those hallowed steamy summer days I truly and literally learnt to stop and smell the roses.

My journey from a hyperactive, stressed out, self centered guy suffering all sorts of stress related ailments to a chilled out, laid back world wise man was almost complete.

That journey to also being a self published author, performance coach and speaker began several years before summer 2005, when I visited an orphanage in South India. I was going through a number of major life changes back home in the UK and this trip to India was to prove to be a major life changing event.

I spent a month at Nirvana School (www.nirvanaschool.org) simply being amongst the local people and the school children. It proved to be a most fulfilling time and ultimately paved the way for a new career in life coaching.

A friend back in London donated money to feed orphans and so we ended up in this orphanage in Pondicherry within a Catholic run hospital. We took large Indian sweets called laddoo and we were taken to visit six orphan kids who were watching TV on what seemed like a massive sofa before we arrived. They instantly jumped up and gave their rapt attention. The sister who accompanied us simply handed over the laddoo whilst in my western naivety I searched around for bowls and spoons!

I felt almost foolish as the kids looked at us with grateful eyes. I was convinced that they were mocking me and my

western garb. I was wearing far too many clothes for the steamy weather and I probably looked quite strange to them in my western trainers and sunhat.

Within laddoos were gone and the sister explained how two of the kids were brother and sister, and how they had been found abandoned outside the hospital main entrance a couple of years before. Instinctively, I picked up the little girl and placed her on a chair and began playing with her. She gurgled and her mischievous eyes seemed to twinkle with delight.

At that moment time seemed to come to a standstill. Nothing else mattered except this little girl and I was lost in her presence. After what seemed like an eternity but was probably only a few seconds, I looked up. And there, right in front of me was the catholic sister, looking back at me with sheer joy and love on her face. Our eyes locked and melted together into an ocean of compassion. The look in the sister's all knowing eyes reassured me that it was okay to feel what I was feeling, and also that it was safe and perfectly okay to be openly loving and kind.

In those few moments, I learnt what it meant to be human. I learnt what it felt like to show compassion and love and kindness.

That was probably my first ever experience of unconditional love towards a total stranger. That little, innocent, helpless, orphan girl had captured my heart just like that. As tears streamed from my eyes, I knew then that I had found my calling and my path. My journey of contribution and service began in those few amazing moments of bliss, love and joy.

Life was never the same for me again after that. Looking back to that magical day in April 2000, everything else pales into insignificance as I returned back to London and underwent major life changes all within a very short time.



Arvind Devalia

Two years later I came across the concept of life coaching and realised that it was just what I had been searching for as a vehicle for helping others. Two self help books followed, with the second one being written in the summer of 2005 amongst the roses of Regent's Park.

My second book "Get the Life you Love and Live it" became a real labour of love as I poured my heart and soul into my writing during those blissful days amongst the roses. I realised that through my coaching I could only reach so many people. But through my writing I could change many lives.

To me, the book is almost like a life manual about living a life with purpose, commitment and making a difference to yourself and others in whatever way works for you.

Every New Year I look forward to another year of contribution, celebration and connection. And of course smelling the roses in Regent's Park.

Are you smelling your flowers?

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