

Nice house, nice Job but not Happy Satish Sethi

Part 1 – How did I become Spiritual

The title of this story could be “How do you transform a highly successful corporate business man into a new age guy in 6 simple steps” This person is both well recognised and financially successful and despite being a workaholic pictures himself as practical and well grounded. A person who believes that in the world everything is black or white with no shades of grey, (never mind colour). A person who always wears a grey or blue suit and tie to work (colourful ties being his most creative outlet). How do you turn this person into a caring sharing feely type who earns next to nothing?

Well, this happened to me. I was an IT professional earning big money working for major corporations and now I am free from the corporate world for good. I used to earn more money in three months than our present business does in a whole year. The people I used to work with wouldn't recognise me. The only thing alternative about me then was that I had been a vegetarian most of my life. Oh, by the way something else has changed – I AM HAPPY NOW.

They say money can't buy you happiness but I had always disagreed with this. Money seemed to give me a lot. I enjoy having a nice house, a flash car and all the modern “gizmos”. I bought a DVD player when it cost a \$1000 – I think they give them away with a packet of cornflakes nowadays. We used to go away on expensive overseas trips and think nothing of it. I still like having the toys that money can buy.

So, how did this change happen?

The story started in July 1998 when we went on a holiday to Byron Bay. During that week away, we met two Vedic Astrologers and a crystal healer. On the Sunday there was an alternative exhibition on at the local surf club and we met our first astrologer there. He was a Vedic astrologer, which is also known as Jyotish or Hindu astrology. Although I

was born in India, I had never come across this before. My parents had left India in the late 1950's and took me to live in England when I was eight years old. In India the priests practice Vedic astrology, as do many Ayurvedic practitioners. The Vedic astrologer gave an interesting lecture that got us fired up, my wife (Yildiz) and I were fascinated and we met with him after the lecture. He told us that he taught Vedic astrology as well as practicing it. He also gave me some software to run on my latest "toy". I had just bought a laptop and the latest digital camera (remember this is 1998 when laptops and digital cameras weren't common place). My wife was even more enthralled than I was with Vedic astrology. The next day we met another Vedic astrologer who was giving readings in the local alternative bookshop. He was booked out, but we managed to get a slot with him. He told us a lot of things but the thing that interested me most was that he told me that I had had a lot of trouble with my eyes back in 1996. I had to do a lot of screen work (while I was IT contracting at a major Bank) and this had ruined my eyes to such an extent that I had to change to multifocal lenses in 1996. This level of accuracy amazed me. We're all familiar with the usual stuff that crystal ball gypsies tell you – "you will meet a tall, dark, attractive and mysterious lady....." This was completely different – fancy being able to tell about everyday things like eyes from an astrological chart? This got me wondering. In my twenties I did become interested in Western astrology for a few years, but had not done any more about it since. I also got involved in Yoga at that time too and practiced some palmistry. I think I had forgotten about this side of me over the past twenty-five years.

Anyway, we were sufficiently hooked to sign up for a Vedic astrology course from one of the astrologers. We returned to Sydney and I bought some commercial Vedic software from America. My wife started buying books and looking for a local Vedic astrologer to help her learn Vedic astrology. This was the turning point for her and she started spending all her spare time reading about Vedic astrology and playing with the Vedic software. THIS WAS THE START OF THE END OF MY IT CAREER. I went along with her interest as I respect my wife and her ideals. We have been married since we were very young and we had grown up together with similar views. She always read the horoscope charts in the papers and the women's magazines. I was more cynical – how

can a horoscope effect one twelfth of the population all the same way? How can all people born on a particular day or month be the same sign and have the same things happened to them?

My wife eventually decided that she wanted to be an astrologer and give up her job as a high school science teacher and started studying counselling and Vedic Astrology. She decided to do a course in counselling to help her communicate with astrology clients. For example, how do you break difficult news to people who are asking for advice? Yildiz was astrologically speaking going through a huge change in 1999. She had come to a fork in her journey through life. She didn't earn much money but seemed much happier. She also started to move away from me mentally. I was in the corporate world and believed that money was everything whereas she was changing into this "feeley" person. My daughters were caught up in this fever too, one of my daughters did a yearlong course in Aurvedic medicine and the other did a course in Traditional Chinese Medicine. I was the odd one out at home but hey - I had my DVD player and Dolby amplifier with five speakers and I could play my television sound through my hi-fi system!

Yildiz quickly got proficient in astrology and we joined the Australian Council of Vedic Astrologers, which was run by Keven Barrett. Keven taught us lots about astrology and he came up with this idea of going to India to visit the Vedic astrology universities and shrines. Yildiz told me that she was going whether I liked it or not (I wasn't too keen). Anyway, I decided to go with her and we had a great time going to Darasalam, Rishikesh, Delhi, Taj Mahal, Rajistan, etc. We learnt a lot more about Vedic astrology during the long drives across India with Keven. She bought 20 or so books and started delving into them when we got back in late 2000. She also started doing professional readings at this time. Yildiz had qualified as a counsellor and was doing 50% astrology and 50% counselling. She started going to some weird meetings like the Sufis group, went to Reiki sessions, and did a course on Pranic Healing etc. We were slowly drifting apart. I was still interested in Vedic astrology and I remember trying to work out how I could use it to predict prices on the stock exchange. Once a month we used to go to the Vedic group in Sydney and we would discuss interesting aspects about astrology from time to time.

During this time my daughters had left home, as they couldn't stand the restrictions of a restrictive and conservative father who was having a hard time accepting they're growing up. Yildiz and I were having problems too, we seemed to have huge flare-ups and then make up afterwards. I still felt a bit left out. I felt that I was **definitely** not on the same path as her. Around 2002, I had a tremendous bustup with my daughters and didn't speak to them for months.

Just to add more fuel to the fire, about eighteen months ago, I started going through a crisis at work. I stopped enjoying what I had been doing for years, although I still liked earning the money. We noticed that I was coming to a big change in my life astrologically, but we couldn't exactly predict how things were going to change. I thought I might retire, but knowing myself as a workaholic, I knew I would get bored with that eventually. From Vedic astrology, in November 2003 we worked out that there would be a big change happening in March 2004. As it happened, in March 2004 I received a redundancy cheque and handed back my company car. I was at home for about 5 weeks and was offered a contract. During that contract I finally realised that I didn't like doing my IT job anymore, but what else could I do?

Meanwhile Yildiz got the itch to go travelling again in India. I was totally against this, but I reluctantly agreed again! I don't know who called women the gentler sex – 'cos they is wrong! The plan was to hop on a plane to Mumbai in January 2005 and travel south to Goa and to Karella.

I ended my last job in November 2004 and stayed at home for a few months having a great time – except for an uneasy feeling that kept coming up. I had this permanent queasy feeling in my stomach and felt tight on my chest. I still had issues with my daughters and my parents. I had left home when I was 17 and hadn't had much contact with my parents or the rest of my family since. Also, I couldn't work out why Yildiz was always so busy and tired, when she could take it easy. Her business had grown. She now taught her own Vedic Astrology courses. She was also teaching at the Australian Counselling and Psychology College and wrote articles for various magazines. She was

still dividing her time between Astrology and Counselling and her skill set had now expanded to include NLP. She was happy and enjoying her work, but I was not feeling too content. I also felt that we should be travelling overseas for months at a time now that I was no longer working. Anyway, I decided to enjoy my time off, go to India and worry about what I was going to do when I came back. At the back of my mind, I thought I would go back to IT contracting on my return from India.