

## Preface

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for taking time out of life to read and absorb these words. Physically this last year has been one of the most challenging of my life. I have been in an amazing amount of pain since I injured my hip and then re-aggravated it twice. After the second time, I decided to get a wheelchair. Some people thought I was “babying” myself, but honestly I did not care because I was in so much pain that a wheelchair gave me some solace and rest.

Twenty years ago when I was in college, I went through a similar healing crisis. It was even worse in fact. I literally felt as though I was being tortured. Part of that torture was self-imposed, but another part of it was due to the isolation I received from others for being different. My mind was a mess. I was restless, confused and self-destructive. I did not want to live and did not see any light at the end of the tunnel. On top of the mental and emotional turmoil, I also fractured my tailbone by fifteen degrees. The pain was excruciating, but somehow I kept going.

As soon as I got out of school, I took an interest in spirituality, not simply for self-improvement but mainly for survival. My spirit was dying, and I knew it. In short I ended up living in spiritual communities for over eleven years and around the L.A. spiritual scene for an additional five years. All of those experiences contributed to my knowledge base and helped heal a lot of deep scars I had.

It seemed my life was getting better and better until my hip gave out and put me in a fragile condition yet again. Walking down the road, I would have to stop at least two times for every short block I walked. Finding myself in a debilitated condition has limited my ability to function normally as I have done in the past.

This pain nevertheless is an opportunity for me to investigate deep layers of suffering that I have not addressed yet. I write all this

not to bore you with my sob story. But instead inspire you, wherever you are at, to tackle the challenges at hand rather than running away from them.

The following book is a manual of sorts on mind training to help encourage you on your path to greater self-understanding and wholeness.

Yours in peace,  
Kalidas

## Part I: Back in L.A.

### First Comes Suffering

“To get to heaven, you have to go through hell.”

The L.A. Sadhu

I will not go into detail, but I was cursing God as I felt the pain slowly creep down my leg. The pain starts as a gradual ache, then after a few seconds, it turns into pain. After a few more seconds, it becomes unbearable, and you have to wonder what the limit of God is. I have to sit down because it is already too much. More than I can handle, more than I want. This is not the first time this has happened. It is the third, and I cannot seem to figure out what to do.

When Francis and I are driving down the street in his car, I say to him half-joking yet half-serious, “God is the biggest asshole.”

He laughs, but I don't. All those years I tried so hard to be so good, to live in line with the Dharma, the truth, and to watch all my dreams, so close, slip away from me. It was hard to take, but I could not cry for some reason.

“The only thing is I'm glad I'm not too attracted to women, in terms of being truly in love. For me I may fall in love once a year at the most. The last girl from New Mexico destroyed me.”

Feeling crushed, I did not know where my destiny was taking me. In fact, I did not even know if I wanted to go on or what I was going on for.

I loved her more than anything in the world, more than my life. I was ready to give her my life. What hurt more than the loss was that she never really gave me a chance, so I cry with words rather than with tears. I cry to you because I do not know what else to do. It is my catharsis, it is my unburdening, it is all I have. It does not fix the pain, but it does somehow help. Even slightly is good. This is my blood, my life, my deepest heart.

One time we were together. I said goodbye. In the parking lot, she dropped a glass jar and picked up the broken fragments to

bring inside. It was to be placed in the recycle, but she wanted the lid. I tried to pull it off. She was concerned I might cut myself. I did not care. Anything for my angel. I managed to get the top off and hand it to her. My hand had some cuts on them the next day. Nothing major and I did not mind at all. I was under her spell. It did not matter if I cut myself.

But here I was back in L.A. Man, what am I doing here? I started using crutches to avoid the pain, and since I was not paying attention, the left crutch scraped my skin and opened a quarter size gash on my left wrist.

Francis said he had been eyeing the women in L.A. all day as we drove around town. A lot of beautiful women here, but it did not seem to matter. My mind was still on her. She was my angel, and I could not let go.

I knew that the possibility of winning her love was minimal to none now, but even more important (at this stage) for me was the question of whether or not I had the ultimate devotion to give to her. Could I actually give my life or was it mere talk, talk to pass the time, like all these people who sing songs but they mean nothing really. Unless you can give someone everything, it means nothing really.

In L.A. for a brief moment before I bail for good. I swore to myself if I could not make it in L.A. this time, I would never come back to live. Sure, I would visit, but if L.A. did not value me, I could move on. L.A. is like a beautiful girl you can love to death and be so good to, but she will not even give you the time of day. Maybe I needed a little more attention before, but this time that girl held no appeal for me. It was a simple challenge that I was ambivalent about to a large degree. I see these billboards for the Expendables, the tough guys on stage, but nothing is tougher than true loving. Physical pain is physical pain and is certainly not pleasant but is nothing compared to loving with all you heart and being crushed.

So this is my catharsis, my bleeding for you to understand a little about me. You may not like it, but I am not hiding anything. There are no secrets that I want to keep locked away in a chest.

Secrets are for governments that are ashamed of what they have done, not for people with open hearts.