

A Unique Experience of Being with One

“Being with One” in jail

The inspiration

Our sweet Baba has given us a special project this year for all the centres throughout the world. The guidelines, design templates and inspirations came from the responsible group in the month of May. The theme ‘Being with One’ is the special project that we will all implement from the 14-21st of September 2014. The 21st of September, is declared as the International Day of Peace by the United Nations, and it holds special significance for us in Nairobi because it will be the first anniversary of the terrorist attack at the Westgate Mall where many innocent lives were lost in 2013.

The Bhatti

The Nairobi family decided to experiment with this theme of “Being with One” from the 1st of June because the family really liked the theme, so we created a special bhatti. We prepared a special meditation room in the centre, with trans-light pictures of Baba, Mama and other yagya history pictures. This special space was setup to create an atmosphere of being in the subtle regions, with white carpets etc. The aim was that we would have continuous meditation there, from 7:00 am until 7:00 pm (12 hours), an invitation and opportunity for everyone to “Be with One”.

We made a chart, and for each day one soul would be the angel for the day and would maintain silence and remain in that room for as much time as possible. Others were invited to spend time in that special meditation room to whatever extent they could. I had volunteered to be the first angel and had the opportunity to spend 2 days in this special room in complete silence. The experience was of being lost in love, being with One (my Beloved Bapdada). Even after the 15 days were over, whenever we have time we have continued with this bhatti and experience.

Rakshabhandhan celebrations

On the 9th of August we had our Raksha Bhandan celebration bhatti with this theme of Being with One to deepen this experiment and experience. It was an extremely powerful experience for everyone.

On the 10th of August the actual day of Raksha Bhandan I was busy the whole day with rakhi celebrations with friends and contacts and in the evening I left for South Africa because my entry visa stipulated that I enter the country on or before the 10th August.

Arriving in South Africa

Baba and Drama brought the plane before 23:45 on the 10th but I only reached the immigration counter 2 minutes past midnight. When I gave my passport to the immigration officer she denied me entry, since on the computer its registered as the 11th. I was told that I was to be sent back to Nairobi on the next flight but as drama would have it, that flight was full. I remained calm and said to the officer its ok. I was told that I will have to remain in detention at the airport. At that moment, I just surrendered to that scene and internally was experiencing being with One with the awareness that victory is my birthright. From midnight until two in the morning I was moved literally like a parcel from one office to another, sent with different officers and to different departments. Although I requested for a wheelchair, the person with the wheelchair is off duty from midnight and so I had to walk.

Being in the holding cell

After all the procedures were completed they took away all my personal belongings including my mobile and passport. All I could have with me were my medicines. Although everything was taken away from me, yet internally I maintained my joy of being with One (My sweet Shiv Baba). It was a very real experience that there are no other supports, just One Baba.

I was placed in the holding cell, which was like being in a prison. The atmosphere was cold. The room was barren apart from 5 bunk beds and the essential facilities of a toilet. No chairs were available to sit on, so one either sat crouched on the bunk bed or slept. The blankets were dirty and with a stale smell. Not even water was available. I had to ask for water and it was given a glass at a time through the bars of the cell door. There was no ventilation and I was sharing this room with 3 other women who were also detained for various reasons. One felt very disorientated, it was a completely enclosed room with no windows, not even a clock in the room. I was not informed when I would be placed on the next flight to Kenya or where I would be taken next.

The sisters from South Africa were waiting for my arrival and so before my things were taken away I managed to call them and inform them that I was being detained and that they should return to the centre. It was already past 2:00 a.m.. I was not sure what was to happen next, I just stayed in the awareness of Being with One (My One strength and Support Bapdada) .

Being released

At 8:30 in the morning on the 11th we were taken to have breakfast in a dining hall. However all the food was non-vegetarian. I approached an officer and informed him that in my form I had stipulated that I would only eat fruit, could I have a banana at least. As I was about to have some tea I was told that an immigration officer was calling me. When I reached the immigration office they said that they received a message from the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs to allow me to come into South Africa. I was wondering how this happened.

The miracle

From early morning at 5:00 a.m. sisters Pratiba and Dipty of South Africa, called on a few friends and contacts for assistance, to make every effort to release me from immigration and bring me into the country. Through various contacts they managed to contact a person in the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs office to intervene on their behalf. The Deputy Minister personally called on a senior officer at the Johannesburg airport instructing him to release me. It is only after this intervention that the procedure to release me started. It took from 9:00 am until 11:00 am to be released. The physical experience was horrible but I was determined that no one and nothing will take away my happiness and I maintained the faith, victory is my birthright. I had remained in the awareness of being with One (My Sweet Baba).

The service

This scene in drama gave me the opportunity to serve many from midnight to the time that I was released. Every person I had to interact with, I used it as an opportunity to share some special message. At the end it felt like, even this scene was just an excuse to be with the One and to serve the One. My first rakhee in South Africa was tied to the head immigration officer who was sent by the Deputy Minister to respond to my being detained.

I deeply appreciate this project, it prepared me and gave me the experience of Being with none but One in a unique scene of drama. Thank you Baba, thank you to the divine family and thank you to the organisers of the project of Being with One. Thank you to Sr Dipty and Pratiba from South Africa.

This scene also showed what souls go through when they are placed in detention. I now understand their pain and sorrow and of how they are ill-treated and denied of their human dignity during such times.

In Baba's sweet remembrance

Vedantibhen

Reflections from Sr Dipty and Sr Pratiba of South Africa

On receiving Sr Vedanti's call, the Initial feeling was that there is a small misunderstanding and that if we spoke to someone higher up it would all get cleared. However, because of the hour of this flight, the airport was empty, all offices were closed and there was no one we could reach. The only staff were the Kenyan Airways staff and we were told to come in the morning. At 5:00 am we called a BK sister who works at the airport in customs to assist us, she called one of the head of departments who met us at about 7:30 a.m. He took us to the immigration office. We appealed and requested to speak to someone senior, the response we received was an officer who was rude, unhelpful and arrogant. However, there were staff members in that office who were more compassionate and helpful. But they were not in any key position. Finally we managed to contact a soul who works in Cape Town for the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs. This soul had been to BK functions and also had attended a retreat. He immediately informed the Minister who personally intervened. The officer who eventually assisted was a very compassionate and humane person and was completely embarrassed by what had happened and apologised profusely. He accompanied us until Vedantibhen was released and managed to get her luggage and left with us.

From the beginning the feeling was of determination that we must get Bhen released and that by staying calm and in remembrance of Baba we were touched as to who to contact and ask for help. At the end it felt like a miracle because it all happened as if by magic and it certainly did tremendous service because the immigration officers etc, were very impressed by Vedantibhen's stability and positivity. In fact the officer who helped said, I deeply appreciate your purity and spirituality. It was service done from within the prison to the outside world... a very unique experience indeed.