



## chapter 1

### Seed of the Jungle

“You cannot cross the Sea, merely by looking at the Water”. Those are the words of **Robindra-Nath Tagore**, a visionary Bengali in modern history.

I was born into a culturally rich family in a jungle surrounded, rural village of West Bengal. The world immediately became my journey's playground for curiosity, adventure and exploration in the quest for understanding life. I could not have chosen a more perfect place and family to embark upon this journey. The wake of each crispy, dewed morning was riddled with the calling of roosters, crows, and rustling mango trees as thieving spider monkeys fled with anything they could grab. My maternal grandfather would nudge me as I lazed in bed fondling my grandmother's

golden hairlocks. The splash of water and clanging of a tube well pump would soon silence and replaced by the resonating Kirtan of my grandfather's distinct chanting. Instantaneously I was magnetized to the small temple room on the chad (roof) to absorb every note which penetrated my soul, delivering an unparalleled spiritual bliss. His vibrational mantras would echo throughout the village before dissipating into the heavens and like clockwork, it would signal the sunrise. After prayers my grandmother's lap was my nidus of attention, as she

ritually worshiped my arrival to all passing villagers, boasting that I was different and her blessing from God. She called me her Pran-Gopal. A Bengali name for the son of Krishna (God).

Throughout my journeys to come, whenever I need strength, I call upon those moments where my time stood still in ecstasy. Growing up as a child, my father always told me that “Morning shows the day”. I don't think he ever understood that was my morning and I would go on to become a **Servant Leader**.





Being different often takes you through periods of time being alone, but it is hardly a lonely journey. I was definitely not the person who would settle for anything, without being told, explained, or understanding [why](#). I was never satisfied with any answer that challenged logic or conceptualization. Today, I am still digging deeper into the well of [“why”](#). In fact I found that the further away I remain from the noise, the clearer I can see the answers as they unfold from the knowledge-well contained within the universe. Much like the clarity that follows a storm.

I shared the above, because every spirit entering this world, comes eager to experience, explore it and appreciate existence through the manifestation of life. The spirits do not discriminate life-form, race, religion or imperfections as for the soul to experience. My journey began in

[Bengal](#), as have those of many visionary leaders and magnanimous sages whose wisdom contributed to the understanding of how to balance a divine life in a material world.

Throughout linear time, the region known as Bengal has harbored the seeds of spiritual evolution for various religions, languages, and races which have saturated the new world. Even though a rapidly evolving technological world has been trying to drown the essential existence of spiritual development, balance has been maintained through the visionary leaders and non-secular sages who continue spreading knowledge into diverse regions of the globe. The necessity for understanding [dual-existence](#) continues to spread globally for mankind. Thus the seeker's pursuit for enlightenment is the journey of solutions to understand our purpose and making appropriate life-

choices by filtering the noises in material existence. Today these selflessly paved roads of truth, knowledge and self-awareness, have been made available for those ready to achieve a blissful balance.

Whether divinity is translated through religious scriptures contained in the Bhagavad Gita, Bible, Koran, Torah or any other holy book, the essence of all divine source contain the same truth. The cycle of karma is like that of the river seeking its ocean. It does not discriminate between those who wander far off shore or remain on course to re-join divine source. [“Like a drop of water falls as rain into the river and begins its journey back to the seas; so does the spirit recycle through new life”](#).

Archeologists have uncovered findings around the world, revealing evidence of the rise and demise of technologically advanced



civilizations in the ancient world. Evidence exists to connect different regions as well as the cyclical migration of people, giving rise to various colorful races, and belief systems of our evolving cultures. This is conveyed through structures such as pyramids and the astronomy influenced architectural remains found in different geographic regions of the world. These findings such as Stonehenge and the Indus Valley contain similar dynamics which science has not been able to conclusively explain.

One can debate the reality of recycling civilizations or whether the current technological explosion is good or bad for mankind. Many of us today have personally observed the changing face of the earth. However, readers born in this wireless age can only see the world as it exists today. They cannot imagine the pioneering concept of

telecommunications originating from a rotary phone, let alone life without Google.

## chapter 2 British Bengal

There are some fortunate beneficiaries of time and experience who remain, lucky to carry memories of a life during the British Empire. A time when Rolls Royce made its debut, and global fame arising from the demand of Royal Rajas during the British dynasty and its capital, once known as Calcutta.

For many first generation Bengalis abroad, before they journeyed west, there was a period when communicating to someone in London took up to 14 days one way, via a costly telegraph system. And that at most was one sentence. It is not possible for the child of today, even in the remotest region of the earth

to even imagine such. By the age of two, my children could use a windows or an android phone to play games and call their relatives across the globe. In contrast, it wasn't too long ago that my mother refused to use the remote control to turn on the TV because she was afraid she would break this new technologically complicated investment. Until I turned it on for her, she would fight with the knobs on the obsolete, but not yet discarded TV and bang on its top until the tubes warmed up to a snow filled reception. There wasn't cable and we could view up to as many as four channels on a good day.

“Since we cannot prevent evolution or change, we must prepare for it.” Once upon a time, from Bengal, rose many visionary pioneers who delivered the west an appetite for spirituality and the awareness that knowledge and blissful coexistence can be found



within the self. These wise and magnanimous sages, planted the seeds bearing the fruits of the spiritual integration we need to balance the abundant options of modern lifestyle.

However, for several decades, I sadly observed the general population of Bengalis not living up to their glorious past, and preferring to take a risk-averse, and conservative approach to life. Years ago I once asked an uncle as I watched the only black and white TV channel in Calcutta; why didn't India have an internationally competitive soccer team? He laughed and gave the same belief people are still accepting today. "It's because there are 1.2 billion people in this country, but we Indians do not have the stamina, nor can we find 11 men to place on a field to kick the ball in the same direction", he said. Somehow, that answer wasn't good enough and

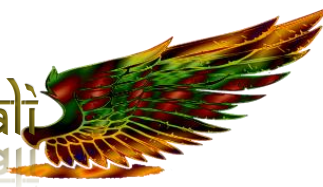
needed my annoying, "why not"? After all, I knew that my paternal grandfather proudly boasted his broken and crooked toe which he treasured for kicking the winning goal, playing barefoot against a German Police league in Bihar. He wasn't the norm, and I guess I carry a chip of his block. A brave and natural adventurer, my grandfather would fascinate me with his tales of the times during which he drove a jeep filled with British dignitaries into the jungle to hunt Sheer Khan (the King Bengal Tiger). During his visit to America, he also challenged my horticultural curiosity by teaching me how to farm tomatoes, cucumbers and oh yes, red hot chili peppers. Since there were no tigers to legally hunt in America, he taught me how to hook everything from a fish to a crab. Most of all he amused me by arguing with the TV when he disagreed with the fouls called by the referees on "Nature Boy-Rick Flair,

the All American (NWA), the National Wrestling Alliance champ. His famous words were "Mar-Shala-ke Mar" (I.D.K). One day my mother bought tickets to see Rick Flair live, which put my grandfather in Hog Heaven.

My paternal grandmother on the other hand, had the most calming effect towards everyone. Once out of imaginative curiosity I pretended to be Geronimo, a famous Apache War-Chief. I made a bow and arrow out of branches and struck a pig in the neighboring farm. Being that my Father disciplined with an iron fist and fear, when the police brought me home that day, she stood between me and bruises. Back in those days, a parent was allowed to whip a kid in front of the police and be complimented. At the end of each day, my grandmother would always comfort me, as she instilled her words, "Shob bhalo jar shesh bhalo". It translates into "all



# the visionary bengali



will be good for he who ends good". You could say I came out of Rudyard Kipling's book, "The Jungle Boy".

## chapter 3

### Enigma of the West

A second generation Bengali migrant had their life planned for them by their parents. That was Family Law 101. After all, the struggle in achieving a passage to the West was accomplished only by the perseveringly disciplined scholar who had to excel and earn their academic passage to London or New York. A conservative plan for their children would surely be in the best interest for their future in America or England. And so the norm became to instill expectations for their children to become a doctor, engineer or mathematician. Computer Science careers had not yet launched and "Indianized". However that did not take long to catapult

and remove the doctor from being the title holder for the number one slot.

In his early years, my father challenged a complacent destiny of mediocrity by emerging from a middle class family of nine siblings and ventured his way westward. Traditionally in all post World War II cultures, the father's role was established as the breadwinner. My father's "Do or Die", determination propelled him through Calcutta's renowned medical college and like Columbus, he began his lone journey as he sailed his way to first serve in the British Empire. Leaving his family and friends behind, he joined a small, but gradually increasing pilgrimage of Indians as they began to establish their Bengali roots and culture worldwide. He never got around to telling me how he insulated himself in the frigid and drizzly weathers of England while he toiled his way into the elite Fellowship of Royal

Surgeons. To this day, I still don't know if my father knew if he would return when he set out on his journey, which would end up in America.

My mother, (as all good wives were conditioned in those days) knew her role was to become a respectful and faithful wife while raising good children, by preparing them for boarding school. Boarding schools were established in the major cities of India to enable the children from rural and suburban India to receive a British standard education. Parents heavily invested into schools centrally located, employing their best educators only affordable to the prestigious elite upper class. The institutionalized replacement of the boarding school environment for a child, as opposed to a developmentally essential nurturing family structure, had its impact on the children whose families lived too far away to count on regular



visits from their parents. An irreversible choice of sacrifice made by many families around the world. In those days, the priority of an education overshadowed the value of a child's need for the love and reassurance of a family. As a result, for a short period I became my mother's world and her presence lit the spark in my bright eyes.

Somehow, much like the majority of first generation migrants, my parents could not predict or plan for this change, as they had very little exposure of the West at that time. After all, they could not research the town or house they wanted to move into before they departed to London or New York... The British had begun emigrating out of independent India, at the same time its people were taking back rule of a divided, poverty-plagued nation.

To many first generation Bengalis who were brave

enough to set sail before flight was a viable option, they would conservatively adapt a risk-averse role by following the footsteps of those settling earlier and perceived to have established success. Each wave of Bengali immigrants created an epidemic of ego-riddled and exaggerated tales to tempt those left behind. The expectations of opportunity and financial success in the West had begun to lure the people of the most spiritually wealthy nation. A nation where its people had not yet repaired itself, instead found its key scholars and talent leaving to join the globalization race in the most conservative way.

An unforeseen conflict between first generation and second generation Bengalis had begun and would not improve until the nineties as technology began bridging the distance and cultural gap. It was during these years that I observed a dissolving of resources

required to sustain their nation's heritage and spiritual values, which took a back seat to the acquiring of material abundance. Today it is the challenge of the wealthier,, socio-economically and globally informed Bengali migrants, to figuring out how to re-boot a dismantled heritage.

## chapter 4

### Making of legends

This brings me back to the beginning quote by Rabindra-Nath Tagore. "You cannot cross the Sea, merely by looking at the water" I never understood why my father idolized him until I found that many of his quotes were being applied into current everyday Western motivational extracts, such as "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step".

In order to move forward, one must look backward and learn from the past. Before



the heavy embarking of Bengalis moving westward, during the later twentieth century, Bengal's rich heritage had already begun spreading seeds of modern day household practices, terms, and music into western lifestyles by its preceding Visionary heroes. These magnanimous legends arising from the late nineteenth century and through present times have been changing the flavor of how people around the world live today.

Today there are many famous and popular Bengalis, however, the intent of my message is to revive the majestic impact achieved by our fearless and altruistic visionary pioneers. Those who defied the norm, or were perhaps different and misunderstood or even condemned for pursuit of truth and happiness over pursuit of material expectations. In doing so, these icons of success made a difference in our world as their teachings and work

continue to bring the colors of Bengali heritage into global acceptance, and fostering the betterment of everyone's lives.

Spiritual globalization's early stages began when Narendra Nath-Datta, better known as [Swami Vivekananda](#) a student of Ramkrishna, planted the seeds of Vedic philosophies and yoga in the spiritually virgin Western world. Congruently, [Sri-Aurobindo Ghosh](#) contributed by translating the Upanishads and developed the commoner's curiosity for Internal Yoga.

Soon after Swami Vivekananda's debut in the West, a sacrifice to renounce his family and wealthy pharmaceutical practice was made by A.C. Bhaktivedanta, better known as [Swami Prabhupada](#), to bring peace in a hippie Nation at war, and on drugs by introducing [Krishna Consciousness](#).

Today, what was once perceived as a sixties anti-Christ cult of following hippies with shaven heads on drugs, was actually an initiative to introduce conscious awareness through meditation and ultimately freedom from an epidemic dependency on marijuana and heroin addiction in America. Congruently, The [Beatles](#) began a worldwide demand for [Kirtan](#) with their revolutionary introduction of Hinduism into Western music in their songs, such as George Harrison's "[My Sweet Lord](#)".

Another renowned visionary Bengali, earning his awareness abroad through spiritual messages contained in his poems, literature and songs was [Robindra-Nath Tagore](#). The first Non-European to win the [Nobel Prize](#) in 1913. He was a popular topic of discussion during my childhood years. I remember seeing the look of tranquility replace my



emotionless father's restless, anxiety-riddled expression when he would escape into one of the songs written by Tagore.

The world of Music forever changed with [Pundit Ravi Shankar](#). Not only did he make the Sitar resonate the sound of India world-wide, he began the genre of fusion music explosion which is here to stay. I once had the honor of meeting this great Pundit of Indian Music in a close and personal family setting.

Ravi was not alone as [Ali Akbar Khan](#) turned Indian Classical music into a household identity with the calming vibrational effect of his melodies.

In the technological arena, many people may not know that the earlier transmission of music to remote locations via transistor radio was due to a visionary Bengali scientist named [Jagadish Chandra Bose](#). Known as the father of radio-science

and wireless telecommunications, the polymath physicist, Bose failed to patent his invention. The world then benefited from its properties and turned its research into various essential commodity equipment and appliances which we now can't live without.

Today, hardly anyone leaves their home or drives their car without enjoying the sound of Bose Audio. With the name and product being alike, the late [Amar Bose](#) was a Sound Engineer and professor at [M.I.T.](#) for over forty years. He went on to become an entrepreneur, thereby founding the [Bose Corporation](#) and earned his listing as one of the billionaires in [Forbes Fortune 500](#). A Bengali businessman?

A pioneer, known as the "father of tubular design", involved in the structural engineering for modern

skyscrapers is [Falzur Rahman Khan](#). A structural engineer and architect, Falzur designed the [John Hancock Tower](#), and what remains to be the tallest building in America today, the [Sears Tower](#).

Today it is more acceptable for Bengalis to launch into the entertainment industry; but in 1995, a decent "skinnocent" Bengali girl did not parade her body in a swimsuit, let alone in front of an audience. But we were a handful of Bengalis crowding over a TV, pouring champagne and wine in the living room of my friend, Professor [Gautam Sen](#) in his Miami home. Needless to say, I could not have found a more confident group of Bengalis bragging about how they knew that Bengali born [Susmita Sen](#), would be the first of several Indian women to walk away with the [Miss Universe title](#). Until then, doubt and criticism would always shadow the results for every



Indian representative in any beauty pageant.

Currently, a man who has become a household name in stand-up comedy is challenging the stereo-type perception of Indians. This pioneering Bengali daredevil with his mockery of racial idiosyncrasy, can make a Sumo wrestler laugh away pounds at a time, now hosts his own show for newcomers on Comedy Central. Canadian raised Russell Peters is proof that being Bengali doesn't have to be boring and Stand-Up comedy isn't limited to Americans, Blacks or Latinos anymore. In 2008, I was proud to invite a table of fan fanatics to a sell-out crowd at the Improv and meet this new age Visionary comedian adding spice to the recipe of laughter. The amazing fact was I saw Blacks, Whites and Hispanic laugh addicts come from miles away to be up close and personal with the

Bengali Joker, making fun of his "Indianism".

Going back to self-sustained stereo-typing of Indians, let's recall my comical uncle, Pinak-Pani who once told me that Indians didn't have the beef or stamina to play international class soccer. I don't think Manotosh Roy would have accepted that for an answer when he rose out of poverty and challenged the Anglo-dominated sport of bodybuilding during the black and white years captured on Kodak. As a young adult in 1951, he traveled to London to compete and became the first Asian to win Mr. Universe in the Amateur division. Later in 1958 he went on to establish both the Indian and Asian Bodybuilding Federation. Imagine with his perseverance what he may have achieved if the competition was equal for Manotosh and he benefited a beef eating diet, steroids

and lifted ergonomically designed iron weights, instead of sand bags and coal.

## chapter 3

### Fearless

"If you view failure as an opportunity to learn from, then it becomes a lesson." At the same time you must know that; "Nothing ever goes away, until it has taught us what we need to know".

I truly thank you for thinking about the possibilities one can achieve in the absence of "fear", regardless of who you are or where you come from. I gave you the example of several admirable visionary Bengali leaders who have made an impact in the world and the lives of many people. In closing, I hope that these people may inspire you and bring confidence to awaken dormant talents within every Bengali. I hope that you do not settle in life for anything other than being the best you can be in doing what is



your passion. This life opportunity is yours, and you have only one chance to get it right. You will make many mistakes, but those are part of learning as long as you do actually learn from them. Repeating a mistake becomes habit and has no value but destructive consequence. The world is changing and evolving and so you must prepare for the future by understanding the past. No one is perfect, therefore "don't give life to fear" and allow the birth of failure. "Do not fear anything for fear in itself is the failure." But face your fears and challenges head on. The world needs every type of human being and profession to make it complete. It cannot be full of Doctors, Lawyers and Engineers, for if it was, then who would take out our trash and what would we watch on TV? It is OK to be different, as long as in being different, you do not cause or bring harm to anyone or yourself. In fact, being

different gives birth to many pioneers and leaders. Evolution is a result of those who pave uncharted roads. It would be a boring world if everyone was the same. Simply by doing your best in what you enjoy doing the most, your path will unfold in the right moments. "Take time to listen to the silence as God's answers to your questions, can only be heard in the absence of noise." This is the reception of meditation. Do not spend time worrying about money or fear its absence. My paternal grandfather once told me, "Dadu.... Enjoy what you do and the money will come". He has not been wrong yet.

Begin your life plan today by seeing what you want to accomplish and how you want people to remember you when you leave this life. Then lay out timelines for each phase of your life as you work towards that goal. The ego will propel the facilitation of your early

developmental learning and its success. But as you get closer to your goal, begin renouncing the ego and by accepting only the truth, you will evolve into a philanthropic existence and achieve building a benevolent character which causes no harm to others. You will then achieve a degree of divine humanity by which you can never go wrong.

Sometimes you may find yourself traveling alone, that too is an opportunity for you to learn from it. Always know that if you are traveling in the right direction, regardless of the crowd, then "God plus one is a majority".

There are many great Bengalis in this world but in the end we are all human and equal in the design of God. Life is the journey of spirit as it learns to be a better human through you. Don't waste this life, even if you have just one day left. Don't spend the present regretting



the past; but accept it, learn from it and correct it going forward. For you have more life ahead of you than behind you.

**"Be a Hero. Always say  
I Have No Fear!"**

*Brabhu Devananda*



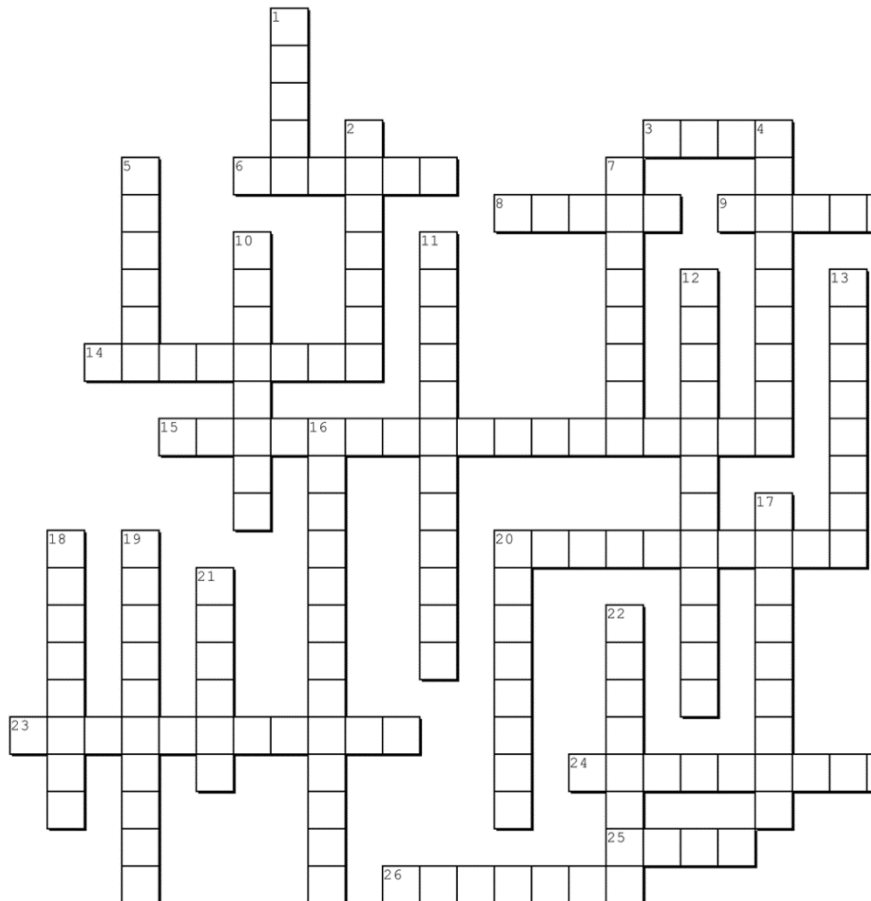
## বিন্দু বিশ্ব

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### VISION MAGICIAN

Complete the crossword below



#### Across

3. Bengali listed in Forbes Fortune 500
6. Robindra-Nath
8. Ravi Shankar resonated the sound of India worldwide with
9. Son of Krishna
14. God plus one equals
15. To be able to visually interpret in ones mind
20. Clearing all noise to hear God is called
23. This wise Sage first brought Eastern Philosophy to America
24. An obsolete method of telecommunications
25. One proceeding from Divine, wise and good intentions
26. Fear leads to

#### Down

1. The cyclical results of all actions
2. Non-Secular
4. You cannot prevent this from happening
5. The focused repetition of God name is called
7. Indian Capital of the British Empire
10. These Bengali people moved to America
11. Manotosh Roy was know for his fame for what sport
12. Performing all duties with non-materialistic expectations
13. Russel Peters is a World Famous Bengali
16. The acquiring of Divine knowledge and Wisdom
17. One who has foresight
18. These type of schools were established for villagers
19. You must perform all actions this way
20. You must learn from your
21. Joyful repetition of devotional verses
22. Place where God and Heaven is associated with