

THE ADIDAM ADVOCATE

Adidam Northwest

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“I Never Knew Such Love Existed”:
A Story of Becoming
Avatar Adi Da’s Devotee,
by Caroline Lindsay

Caroline Lindsay has been a devotee of Avatar Adi Da for three years. She lives in Bondi, Sydney, and works as a somatic psychotherapist, body worker, and dance therapist. This is her story of being drawn to become Avatar Adi Da’s devotee.

CAROLINE: Ever since my teenage years, I had been consciously seeking a greater depth and meaning to life. I knew that I was deeply unhappy and I experimented with many different things not really knowing what I was looking for, but always with a feeling of dissatisfaction in me and the sense that I could not rest until I found “it”—whatever it was that would end my unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Early in 1994, when I was 24

years old, I was walking down the street in Byron Bay, Australia, and bumped into a good friend who I had lost contact with about two years before. We hugged immediately and wept tears of joy that we had reconnected. Since our last meeting, she had become a devotee of Avatar Adi Da, and over the next few days we spent together she introduced me to His Teachings, though I did not actually read any of His books.

My original response to Adi Da was one of mistrust and almost repulsion—but I was fascinated by Him at the same time. Even then, I was sensitive to how the anti-Guru conditioning from my family and society played a big part in my automatic mistrust. But in any case, I was more interested in personal growth and ego-development than I was in having a Spiritual Master. I continued my journey, exploring various courses and workshops, wanting to gain a greater understanding of my sufferings and limitations—particularly as I felt them in relation to my sexuality and the painful failures of intimate relationships that had left me in terrible doubt of love. I did not know if I could love and I did not know if I could be loved.

In the course of my continuing explorations, I found a six-month personal development workshop that included a retreat weekend. During the retreat a video of Avatar Adi Da was shown. At some level, I intuitively recognized Adi Da as the Divine Incarnation when I saw that video, but I was still convinced that my “answers” lay in working it all out psychologically.

After the course, I was inspired to become a psychotherapist and began training in Sydney. I felt finally I had found what I was looking for in the community of Somatic Psychotherapy. One of my main teachers, with whom I felt an immediate connection, turned out to be a devotee of Adi Da Samraj. I trained with her for seven years and she

became my mentor. He was coming at me from all angles!

But even though these contacts with devotees of Adi Da kept occurring, they failed to impress me—I was still deeply committed to the search to rid myself of suffering through therapeutic means. I recall that I even had a boyfriend at that time who had read some of Adi Da’s books, and, when I next moved house, the woman I lived with had Adi Da’s books and had had contact with devotees in the past. There were many such signs along the way, but first I had to feel the yearning for God truly and deeply enough to move me to accept my need for Divine Grace.

About eighteen months after I started the psychotherapy training I had advertised for a flat-mate and moved house yet again. The woman who responded to my ad was in a relationship with a man who was a devotee of Adi Da. At that point, I thought it was about time I read something of Avatar Adi Da’s! The boyfriend gave me a copy of *The Knee Of Listening*. From the moment I picked up the book, I couldn’t put it down. I was completely absorbed in the mysterious and wonderful feeling of Who Avatar Adi Da Is and what He was saying about the absolute futility of seeking and trying to be fulfilled in the midst of mortal existence. I realized that in all of my seeking for real happiness and a way out of the complete dissatisfaction I felt with my life that I had never felt the heart-yearning for God. I found that there was nothing that Adi Da had written in this book that I disagreed with. It was all obviously true.

In the midst of reading the book I had a dream. Avatar Adi Da came to me and Revealed to me that He alone was the One and Only Source of True Satisfaction. The feeling was of absolute Bliss, overwhelming ecstasy. I was completely transported beyond my body-mind into an intoxicated state. This led me to understand something about the futility of my search to be absolutely fulfilled through an intimate relationship with a man, but—incredible as it may seem—even after this extraordinary Gift, I continued my psychological search and my exploration of other forms of spiritual practice.

A few years later, I had finally started to feel the real limit of the psychotherapy I was doing—that it never amounted to a real and lasting change, that I never became simply happy as a result of it. At last, I accepted that real spiritual practice was the only possibility for me. And I came to the point of realizing that I needed a Guru.

Soon after coming to that understanding, I became very ill—ill to the point that I was bed-ridden with extreme lack of energy. I thought to myself that this is what it must be like to die. I felt there was nothing left of me. All I could do was pray. So I prayed to Avatar Adi Da, and in response to my prayer He Appeared to me in a vision, standing there before me. I felt His unique Presence and His Love. I could feel that He was somehow preventing me from falling irretrievably into the craziness of my suffering and despair. I felt Him Touch my heart, opening me there where I had been closed all my life. I felt that I had never really been “in” my heart prior to this—there was so much I had never allowed myself to feel. I started to feel for the first time and also to feel pain and loss and all the other feelings that had kept me away from that feeling-place all my life. I felt His tangible Spiritual Touch create an opening to love that I never knew before. In fact, I was actually shocked by His Love. I never knew such Love existed, as it had never been my experience, and I was overwhelmed with gratitude to Him for this Gift. I never knew I could be Loved like that. I just never knew.

The illness that I experienced was, I realized later, a crisis of embodiment, of incarnation. I have always been a very “ungrounded” person and never able to be fully present in my body, never really feeling like I had an ordinary sense of self. Avatar Adi Da’s Touch during that illness had somehow allowed me to form a real sense of self that began inside my pelvis, creating a base from which my feeling-heart could grow. I felt this sense of self firm inside me and I knew that I was never going to lose it. This was one of the most profoundly significant experiences of my life. I later came to understand that although the Way of Adidam is about ego-transcendence, the

process of ego-transcendence requires a strong ego—a clear sense of self. And His healing-Gift allowed that to emerge in me.

A few months later, I went back up to Byron Bay to visit my friend again and to experience what it is like to be with devotees of Adi Da. The two days I spent with them there were the happiest days of my life. It wasn't that anything in particular occurred, but it was rather the simplicity of that time—an ordinariness of relating and sharing and being together that was so natural and happy and open and easy and free—that moved me so deeply. I knew then without a doubt that Avatar Adi Da was my Guru. That night I had a dream in which He Appeared to me. Standing, He Held out His Hand and He said simply, "Welcome".

From the first, I had felt that becoming a devotee of Avatar Adi Da was not something to be done lightly, that it was a serious matter. And I think that part of what took me so long to come to the understanding that I am His devotee was that I had to feel that I could respond to Him truly—not as a childish gesture of wanting to depend on a parent-like figure in the midst of my helpless suffering, but as a woman, as the autonomous adult that He had so profoundly helped me to become.

Later that year—it was 1999—on His 60th birthday, I took the formal vow to Him to be His devotee.

The Norm of Religious War and the Necessity of Tolerance and Love:

Two Excerpts on the
Universal Problem of the Ego
by Avatar Adi Da Samraj

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Since prehistoric times, religion has carried with it, among all the other forms of its wisdom, a basic communication about tolerance and love. Even so, human beings in general only tolerate and love one another within their own "cult"—their own religion, their own nationality, and so on—and those who are regarded to be outside the cult are not tolerated and loved. They are

suspected. They are felt to be a threat. They are treated as opponents.

When you have something or other that you want to have survive, even if it is only your own body, you tend to treat everything else as an opponent, as a force that threatens you. In that case, you are not so disposed to exhibit the sign of tolerance. Tolerance is not the norm in the world of egos.

As with daily life, so with religion. As with religion, so with politics. And for the most part, in the religious and Spiritual traditions, religion is a part of politics. Religious organizations tend to function politically in that sense. And very little tolerance is exhibited, then, between religious organizations, just as very little tolerance is exhibited between separate political entities and systems. It is all considered to be a circumstance of rivalry. The disposition is: Make nothing of your opponent. Use all the strategies you can to make nothing of your opponent. That is the norm in politics, is it not? Between Communism and Democracy, in the past, for example. Isn't that what occurs everywhere in the present time?

It is the same between religious organizations. Consider Islam and Christianity and Judaism and Hinduism. That is the way it is between the great religions. Likewise between the small religions. It is just as it is between individuals. It is egoity. The common world of religious or political activity is a demonstration of egoity. It is an intention to allow egos, or the egoic principle, represented collectively by nations and religions, to survive in the face of "others". (August 18, 1987)

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: The norm is religious war all over the world, since time began and before it—endless conflicts. People of goodwill are trying to create a circumstance of tolerance, and obviously an atmosphere of tolerance must be created in the domain of religion, just as it must be created in the domain of politics—particularly in this day and age when all of these traditions are unavoidably in communication with one another. People are flying all over the world, writing books, and communicating their traditions to everybody else. There must be tolerance. (August 18, 1987)

August and September Events

We invite you to attend the following events at the Adidam bookstore (unless another venue is noted).

Sunday, August 8

6:30 PM

Potluck Dinner – Join us for good food and good company. Call for venue information and about potluck items.

Friday, August 13

7:30 – 9:00 PM

FREE Film Series – Shadowlands with Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger tells the true story of the doomed love affair between novelist and noted Christian scholar C.S. Lewis and a Jewish-American poet, Joy Gresham.

Thursday, August 19

7:00 – 9:00 PM Seminar \$25

The Incarnation of Love

“Your existence is a heart matter. You are born for heart purposes. Life is nothing without the awakening of the heart. And when you enter the Domain of Divine Being, the Domain of the Heart, you Realize immediately that it is Infinite.” *Adi Da Samraj*

Join us for an interesting discussion about love beyond romance and sentimentality.

Friday, August 20

7:30 – 9:00 PM

FREE Event – Hear Me Heart Deep

Devotees talk about their experiences in the direct company of Adi Da Samraj.

Tuesday, August 24

7:30 – 9:00 PM

FREE Introductory Event – What To

Remember To Be Happy

Explore the Divine Life and Teachings of Adi Da Samraj.

Friday, August 27

7:30 PM

FREE Film Series – The Truth Of Our Existence is Love, a powerful talk by Adi Da Samraj

Friday, September 3

7:30 PM

FREE Film Series – American Experience Documentary: Telegrams from the Dead, traces the beginnings of spiritualism and the sociological reasons for the fascination with the occult in American society.

Thursday, September 16

7:00 – 9:00 PM Seminar \$25

Mindless Embodiment

“Where is thinking arising? Is there really a separate ‘you’? You are all of ‘that’ body-mind—and ‘that’ is constantly dissolving. Thus, you arise like the weather. Is there a weather entity? Is there a mind entity? Is there a toe entity?” *Adi Da Samraj*

Join us for this exploration of Adi Da’s explanation of what “I” is, how it differs from most esoteric Spiritual traditions, the body-mind beyond mortal birth and death, and Adi Da’s Radical Argument of non-separation.

Friday, September 17

7:30 – 9:00 PM

FREE Event – Hear Me Heart Deep

Devotees talk about their experiences in the direct company of Adi Da Samraj.

Tuesday, September 21

7:30 – 9:00 PM

FREE Introductory Event – What To

Remember To Be Happy

Explore the Divine Life and Teachings of Adi Da Samraj.

Friday, October 1 to Sunday, October 3

Hold the date for our next Vashon Island retreat!

Adidam Bookstore

1429 N. 45th Street

Seattle (in Wallingford)

(206) 527-2751

www.adidam.org

Events posted at: www.adidamseattle.org