

A True Story

The Moment Nothing Was Ever the Same Again...

When I was eighteen years old, I had a profound experience that rocked my world and changed my life forever. It was the moment I took my first step onto my path with a heart and began living my dharma. I'm sharing this story so you can realize how powerful it can be to step off your path without a heart and embrace your true path. While we all have different stories, the essence is the same: A path with a heart blesses us. A heart without a path is riddled with suffering and curses.

November 1997, Cambridge, England.

I was eighteen years old and had just survived a thirty-day drug and alcohol binge in South Africa with my brother. We went on safari, bungee jumped, camped in the wilderness, and drank ourselves silly. The trip was fun—mostly. But as soon as I arrived home to my sleepy little village, the world started closing in on me from all sides. I felt like I was being crushed alive in an enormous vice. The things I thought were meaningful had become trivial, even depressing. I lost interest in socializing. No matter what I did, what drugs I took, or with whom I spent time, nothing could shake the huge, empty hole that absorbed everything into nothingness. No one else knew I was walking around in a vortex of quiet misery. It was eating me up from the inside out.

Day and night, a gray-blue sadness hovered around my head like a rain cloud. It loomed over my darkened soul and didn't budge, not even for a moment. I went about my days cringing inwardly. I could barely breathe. I felt like I was carrying a

dying old man inside my body, that he was sucking at my lungs for air and gripping my intestines with a frail fist.

My whole life felt surreal. I was not interacting with life—I wondered sometimes if I was there at all. The lights were on but I wasn't "home." I was locked in a dark room inside my mind, being tortured. I began to question the basis of reality itself. On occasion, I wondered if I was going mad. Although my parents were both spiritually minded (my father was a priest, my mother was a yogi, and we lived in a vicarage), I had always been closed to their beliefs and had spent my life rebelling against religion (like many vicars' sons do). But somehow the winds of change were stirring as the clouds of pain pressed down on my heart, making it harder and harder for me to breathe.

Dying Alive

A shift was occurring inside me. Finally, I was open to hearing about a spiritual perspective on life. After all, I'd run out of options. My ego and resistance were on life support. I had nothing to lose.

It was one of those bitter-cold Novembers that prepares you for a long, black winter. The evening sky was darkening, the dreary English drizzle was spitting and spluttering at the windows, draining the color from the world. It cast a shadow over my cold, damp, relentless sadness. I was sitting on the floor of my mum's studio in the vicarage with some of my weed-reeking friends. She was offering a class on meditation and was sharing some of her unusual ideas. Mum was delighted that finally, her son and his cool friends were listening to the wonderful Eastern knowledge that had made such an impact on her life.

Humbled

I'd never said anything to Mum over the years, but I'd noticed that since she'd started meditating four years ago, she'd become a new person. I was impressed. Being a teenager and unwilling to share my experiences, I'd kept it to myself. Having a peace-loving mother practicing detachment made my narcissistic teenage life of self-indulgence easier. I knew she was not meant to get angry or upset, and I used that against her sometimes. Most of the time it worked like a charm. After all, I thought, she was meant to be happy and relaxed, so she should just stop giving me grief and get off my back.

I used to come home at 4:00 a.m. high on all kinds of substances and meet Mum on the stairs as she was going to meditate—and I was going to crash. In a curious, timeless moment, we'd look at each other on that old staircase and think, "Why are you awake at 4:00 a.m.?" Then we'd continue our separate ways—she to connect with some Divine Light, me to collapse in a lump still wearing my shoes.

My friends and I sat there that day in her little room, half intrigued, half wondering when we could leave and go smoke something. We were eighteen and had things on our minds besides the immortality of our souls or the philosophy of karma. I have no memory of what she told us that day, but my whole world changed forever. Most of what she said seemed to make sense, but it wasn't her words that left an impact on me. What struck me hard between the eyes and shook the fabric of my existence was what happened when the talking stopped.

The Beginning of the End

Toward the end of the session, we paused to go inward and meditate. We took a few breaths and connected our awareness with The One, the eternal Divine Light from a place beyond the

3D world, a place of pure peace and bliss. The Ocean of Love. At this point, the pale, sickly gray film of torment that had been sucking the life from my soul forced me to embrace newness. I closed my eyes and imagined being in this light. I let my thoughts go and focused all my energy on this being of light, this point of peace. I had no expectation that anything would happen—part of me thought it was all a bit silly—but I let go and allowed the process to do its thing. I surrendered.

Let Go, Let Go, Let Go

All of a sudden, I found myself propelled from my body. A force lifted me up, up, and beyond. The world I knew faded away behind me, like I was in a rocket flying to the stars. I saw what seemed like the final scene at the end of a movie when the screen goes black. The room disappeared. In an instant I was engulfed by a divine vision, and I had a premonition that changed the course of my life forever.

The light. The beautiful, ever radiant light. My whole being was filled with fresh, light-filled air. For the first time in my life, I could breathe. I didn't know where I was or what was happening. The black turned to white. All I could see was white light, like a self-illuminating cloud. Then out of the light, a scene appeared.

The Path

I saw myself walking on a path in the middle of nowhere. It was a simple path on a green hill that stretched far out into the future. The sky was a faint blue with no clouds and seemed to go on forever. There were no other details. I walked along this strangely familiar path and soon, it split into two and I was

standing at a fork—one went straight ahead and the other veered to the left.

Destiny Diverged

For the first time in my life, the old path—my life as I knew it, my history—was no longer the only path I could choose. A brand-new, powerful path had emerged. I felt a wave of excitement, followed instantly by fear and anxiety. Dread of the unknown clamped onto my chest and into my gut. I froze.

My Path with a Heart

Just one step away was a radically new path—a new life. Deep down I knew that if I took that one step, I'd never return to my old path. My life would never be the same. We've all heard Lao Tzu's expression, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step," but at that moment, at the genesis of this new path, I'd never realized how powerful one step can be. One single step can lead to an entirely new reality.

But Was I Ready?

I stood in silence for a long time, somehow knowing that this moment was a lot deeper than I could understand, that it was not something to rush (and anyway, I was suspended outside of time so I could take as long as I needed). It was clear that my only mission at this moment was to choose, deep, deep in my heart of hearts, which path to pursue and which to abandon.

A Divine force that knew more about me than I knew about myself was asking me, without words, to make a choice that would stand for all time. I knew what was going on, why I was here, suspended in this vision. I was clear: Whichever path I chose, I would have to renounce the other. One had to die and be laid to rest. I couldn't have both.

At this point, I'd forgotten all about my life "down below." The room with my friends and my mother didn't even exist. I was here in this timeless reality with one decision to make.

A Choice that Was to Seal My Destiny

Should I continue along the path I was on? This was my world. I'd invested my life and time into it. People expected me to be that. It was all I knew, it was who I was. But that path had led me to a life of inner boredom and depression. I was a pawn in someone else's game, leading a life in which my main priority was to fit in, get high, and look outside of myself for cues about what to do next. This path had led me to feel insecure, confused, and awkward most the time, like I was always playing a game I could never win. It was a path of instant gratification and indulgence: drugs, alcohol, parties, music, having a "good time."

The only problem was, I wasn't having a good time anymore. I was a lost soul with a wounded heart and nowhere to turn. I knew no one with whom I could share my soul's depth. I didn't even know who I was. If I was brutally honest, my heart was bleeding. I was tormented, about to snap. Sure, I had a lot of opportunities and reasons I "should" be happy, but I felt only sadness. I felt as if there were razors in my chest, stopping me from breathing the fresh air of freedom. My life had lost its spark.

The Path Without a Heart Was About to Kill Me

So here I was in a trance of some kind, suspended by a strange force. It took me by surprise. I knew it was the most significant choice of my life—it's a choice you will make too, when the time is right. As I watched myself studying the two paths before me, I knew that nothing else existed—I was alone. I had to make a choice and own it for myself.

Again and again and again, for what seemed an eternity, I opened my heart to the two paths presented in front of me. The old path continued straight ahead for a while and then vanished. In my heart I knew where that old path would lead. It was like a snake; ready to lunge out silently, slam me to the ground, knock me unconscious, and swallow me whole. If I chose that path, I would join the world of the walking dead. If I was honest, I'd already become a decaying corpse inside the mind of the world.

In front of me, the new path scaled upward to the left. I could see the crest of a hill and beyond it, a glimmer of sunshine. This new path felt light, so light that as I leaned into it, I could see an aura of warm white light, purity, and peace. It felt strangely familiar, as if I'd been here before—somehow, I knew this path well. It felt as if I'd come full circle, that I was back where I'd started but it had been so long I was having trouble remembering it.

Visions of the Future

Some strange grace gave me the foresight to perceive my future self in the years to come while walking on either path. I could see into the future! My perception expanded out exactly two years ahead of me in both directions.

The old path felt dead. I could feel the slow, painful suicide—a gradual numbing that over time would reduce me to a puppet in a machine, devoid of free thought and emotion. A pasty white corpse propped up with artificial stimulants, decaying in the belly of a snake.

The light on the new path drew me in again and again. As I bathed in its newfound yet ancient peace, there came a moment

where I knew, without a shadow of a doubt: *This is the path for me.*

The Moment Everything Changed Forever

Finally, I'd found a path with a heart. My heart woke up. For what seemed like the first time in my life, I smiled. A golden, sun-kissed smile graced my soul. I felt a warm glow in my chest, as if I'd discovered a golden pot of never ending joy that bubbled away forever. Limitless light began to shine from within me. I was at the door of miracles and grace. I took the first step of courage and began my journey to living in magic and wonder.

Finally, I'd found the secret I'd been searching for in drugs, parties, art, music, books, and travel. The universe breathed into me a newfound hope that expanded into an ecstasy beyond measure and released shards of glass and pain from my lungs. My breath was deep and steady. My mind was clear, my perception vast. It seemed like the universe was breathing through me now, like I was an instrument for a Divine Will beyond my own.

All parts of me embraced the Unknown. Explosions of celebration echoed through my being as my body, mind, heart, and consciousness united. There was only a slight thought of sadness and separation, a mourning for the death of the old. But the dreamer had awoken from a nightmare to embrace a magnificent dawn and brave new world.

The Return

When I came back into the awareness of the meditation room, everything had changed. From the moment I opened my eyes, my new journey had begun. No one in the room knew what had happened to me. To them, no time had passed, nothing special

had occurred. But when I left that room on that strange November night, I was not the same person who had entered it. From that moment forward, I lived in a new world. Since then, nothing has ever been the same. Over the next few months, every detail of my life morphed and transformed. My old path crumbled and crashed into a void, never to be seen again.

My Friends Thought I'd Gone Crazy

My desire to smoke, drink, and party faded away as if it had never existed. I spent the next eight months meditating and studying spiritual books with new spiritual friends, absorbing myself in worlds I'd never realized existed, full of bliss and peace and grace.

I remember one Friday night ... it was about 8:00 p.m. ... and normally I'd have been heading out for a toxic night on the town. Instead of knocking back ten pints of beer, I lay in bed, alone, meditating peacefully, giving thanks to the One, deep, deep in my soul, with my heart glowing and tears in my eyes. It was the happiest moment of my life.

I Had Nothing, Yet I Had Everything

This was the beginning of many new adventures and wonders that have taken me all over the world and to the world beyond. I've visited magical lands and studied with some powerful teachers, traveled realms that exist beyond the normal waking state. Eleven years after that fateful November evening in England, I've made my home on the shores of a beautiful island sanctuary in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, a tropical land of white sandy beaches, singing birds, and majestic mountains that soar high into the crystal skies—the only place I've ever

been where when the plane lands, the flight attendants say, “Welcome to Paradise.”

And This Was Just the Beginning

Since I began my path with a heart, I’ve been blessed beyond belief on every level. I’ve attracted things to me that I never knew even existed. I’ve been graced with deep inner peace and bliss, profound beauty and a dream lifestyle, money and abundance, companies and projects I love—and a soulmate to enjoy it all with.

It All Started with the First Step

I believe that all paths are unique and all lead to different places in this vast unfolding drama of the universe. We are all on a path to discover who we are and what is inside of us. Our path is the unfolding of our soul’s potential, and it falls from us in each moment, creating the space beneath our feet. We are inseparable from our path and unable to escape our bond with it, our bond with the universe.

You

By aligning fully with your unique path, you will be able to serve others from your heart and soul, continuing a positive spiral through the world that will touch and help awaken every heart on the planet. I’m so happy you are choosing to open yourself to the next phase, to step into a new reality. You deserve it. You are amazing! All that’s needed now is to wake up and see through the veils of illusion into your new reality.



CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE PATH

What's your story so far?

What has led you up to this point in your life?

What has life prepared you for?

Are you ready to take the first step onto your new path?