

# My spiritual experiences

## 1. A Spiritual connection:

During a brief assignment in late 1984, I found myself entrusted with a task that would test not just my physical limits but also my spiritual resolve. As a site engineer for an electrical contractor, I was responsible for delivering a sealed tender to the administrative office of the Sriharikota Space Centre—a feat made daunting by the wrath of an intense cyclone with torrential rains and 150 km/hr winds.

The journey began with obstacles: uprooted trees, blocked roads, and a disrupted train service that delayed my arrival. Despite the chaos of the storm, a deep sense of purpose anchored me, propelling me forward with unwavering determination. Each step of my journey, from a reluctant lorry driver offering me a ride to running the last 8 kilometers against the fury of the elements, felt guided by an unseen force. It was as if the storm, nature's mightiest challenge, was testing not just my endurance but my faith. I was all alone on the road running about 8 km. I ran as if I was possessed by a strange force weathering all the vagaries of the North East monsoon!!

Arriving at the office with mere minutes to spare, soaked and exhausted, I handed over the tender, only to learn that the deadline had been extended by a week. The irony was palpable, but in that moment of realization, I felt an overwhelming connection to something far greater than myself. It was not about the tender or the contract; it was about the journey—one that demanded absolute commitment, perseverance, and surrender to a higher power.

Reflecting on this experience, I felt the presence of the divine in every challenge I overcame. The storm mirrored the turbulence of life, and yet, through sheer intensity of purpose, I had navigated it. The labor of my commitment became a prayer, and the sweat of my effort transformed into a symbol of grace. It wasn't merely about succeeding in the task but about rising in my own eyes—knowing that I had been part of a larger design, connected to the spiritual realm in ways words could scarcely capture.

As Mahatria beautifully says, "If you are committed to a principle so much so that you wouldn't mind risking your life for it, the sheer intensity of your commitment would make life adapt to you rather than you adapting to life." That day, I realized that my spine of commitment was not just holding me upright but was aligning me with the divine, reaffirming that even amidst life's storms, a higher power guides those who dare to persevere.

## 2. A Sacred Ascent – A Journey Beyond Myself

In August 2024, I embarked on a deeply spiritual journey to Sabarimala, a revered temple nestled in the Western Ghats of Kerala. As I reached Pamba, the base of the hill leading to the sanctum sanctorum of Lord Ayyappa, I felt a profound sense of anticipation and reverence. The climb of about 4.5 kilometers awaited me—a path I had traversed before in about an hour and fifteen minutes. But this time, the heavens opened in an unrelenting downpour.

What began as a gentle drizzle soon transformed into a massive deluge, obscuring visibility to less than 10 feet. Armed only with a shoulder bag and an umbrella, I felt both vulnerable and resolute. Each step I took felt like a prayer, an offering of faith to something far greater than myself. The rain was not just a challenge—it became a cleansing force, stripping away distractions and grounding me in the present moment.

With each step, I focused on the 5 feet of path ahead, unable to see further but fully trusting the journey. My faith in Lord Ayyappa and the divine energy of the temple filled me with strength, guiding me upwards despite the challenges. The rhythm of my steps mirrored the rhythm of my prayers, and in those moments, I felt deeply connected to the spiritual realm.

It was as though the rain, the climb, and the sacred destination were all elements of a larger, divine design. The downpour, far from deterring me, felt like a symbol of surrender—a reminder that life's storms can also be pathways to profound connection. By the time I reached the sanctum, drenched yet fulfilled, I realized that the journey was not just about physical endurance but about experiencing the divine within and around me.

Each step was an act of devotion, and the climb became a metaphor for life's spiritual ascent—anchored in faith, guided by unseen forces, and illuminated by the divine presence I sought to experience in Lord Ayyappa's sacred abode.