



The details of how the mahaguru collected the disciples of his past. A story of patience, coordination, and amalgamation.

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People often ask me how a powerful entity like Gurudev chose his disciples. Strange but true, most of the people he picked, looked unqualified for the job including moi.

There was nothing seemingly spiritual about our appearance, mannerisms, gait or behaviour. We came from all walks of life, with varied educational and social backgrounds, and many like me did not know how to even spell spiritualism. While some were religiously inclined, many of us were not.

When I reflected back on a vision that I had decades ago, the riddle solved itself. I saw Gurudev resting on a platform suspended in the sky with five or six of us in attendance. We were witnesses to hundreds of bald monks dressed in cream-coloured togas, descending to earth on an invisible escalator. I intuitively sensed that they were going to be part of a joint spiritual mission of personal development as well as changing the ethos of millions on this planet.

These entities would take birth wherever they could find a womb and connect at different stages of life with the mahaguru.

But before that, Gurudev had to rise to his pre-ordained stature of the mahaguru, then hunt all these entities down through some coincidence or the other and draw them back into his spiritual fold.

His future disciples would show up at his door by hook or by crook. Some would come knocking looking for cures for themselves or their family members, while others would come seeking help of a different kind.

After reconnecting, Gurudev would inspire them to get involved and entice them towards the subject of spirituality.

Due to their past connections, he could rebuild their faith leading to their acceptance of him as their Guru. Then engage them in practises of self-development and later give them powers and accompanying symbols needed for seva.

If it sounds cumbersome, it certainly was!

Punchoo Sethi, a stellar devotee offers a profound viewpoint. Having known Gurudev since her teenage days, she felt a sense of ownership over him.

Punchoo ji: A guru comes according to the need of the *yug* (era). Like Guru Gobind Singh's time, a warrior guru was needed for the Hindus. So Guru Gobind Singh ji came. Now in these times, when spiritualism is already being talked about in a bad context, Guruji came—he was a normal man, a soil-survey scientist working for the government of India, he was the ultimate householder, his children were happy, his wife was happy, then he did seva and made hundreds of people happy and content.

I'm going to enjoy disagreeing with Punchoo in absentia. I believe his life and times were purely a role-play. And yes, she is right, a Guru comes with an agenda and not just for a walk in the park. His was upliftment of people and completion of his disciples. His life became a lesson that will attract millions over the decades and centuries to come.

Helping people to re-establish a connection with their spiritual selves can be considered his main mission. And now, Ravi Trehan ji, a disciple, has this to add.

Q: What was the purpose then of his coming and getting the Om, doing so much seva, so many disciples- it was just an evolutionary process?

Ravi ji: This Guruji has very clearly shared this very clearly with me very long back that, "Why did I have to take birth? The family that I have reared", I am using his words now, 'This family that I have reared, till the time they are not uplifted spiritually, their Guru cannot be uplifted. That's why I had to be reborn to collect all you people together and take you beyond the stage at which I had left you in your last birth.'

So, the guru takes upon himself the responsibility to uplift some of his disciples—means they become his responsibility. Till the time they are not uplifted, the guru cannot go ahead. He cannot leave them. He cannot desert them on the way and go.

Q: Is it that he had certain number of disciples, because there were so many, hundreds of them, or are you talking about all of them being part of that?

Ravi ji: The disciples weren't in the hundreds. There is a different category of followers. Sevadaar, followers or *shishyas*. Now after *shishyas*, he had explained a number of times that the number of people that had increased manifold, they weren't his disciples, they are the disciples of his disciples-so there is a hierarchy.

Disciples were those who had exhausted the journey of being followers and devotees and were now ready for complete surrender to their Guru. Their loyalty, their gunas, and their obedience went a long way in qualifying them for the post.

What was cute was whoever met Gurudev a few times and developed faith in him, took it for granted that he or she was his shishya. He never disappointed them by pointing out that it was technically inaccurate and that they were his followers and not his disciples.

In fact, it was very common to hear Gurudev say, “*Tu aagaya ha?*” which means “So you’ve arrived!” when he first met many of us. At the time, these sounded like a set of casually spoken words until later, we would discover what they truly meant. Many of Gurudev’s disciples who came into the spiritual fold in ‘Phase II’, got connected to his disciples as their disciples.

That is how the orchard to be started as a solitary tree.

I have witnessed three generations of his disciples take initiation in a most informal manner. We have almost reached 50 years of seva at the time of this recording, and I hope we will last another 50 years or more through these spiritual downlines.

Ravi Trehan ji is back to share interesting anecdotes about his past life connection with Gurudev and some others, including Gurudev’s first disciple, Malhotra ji.

Ravi ji: Once I had insistently asked him, “Guruji, this relationship of a *shishya* and guru cannot be of one birth. We must have spent many births together. And the present birth is a continuation of what has been done in the past. But I want to know what exactly has my relationship with you in the previous births?”

He said, “Son, if I just tell you everything verbally, it won’t be exciting. Do the mahaguru mantra at night while sleeping, then see what spectacle, what scene you will see”. I switched off while doing the paath. I felt I was transported 150 or 160 or 170 years back, where we used to live in our previous lives, and Guruji also used to come stay there for 4 or 5 or 6 months in a year. We had a huge mansion with 23-24 rooms—a huge mansion. Some of our present *guru bhais* also used to visit that place, on and off. So that was one indication he gave me. Then later, when I asked again, “Guruji, you showed me a glimpse of where we were in our previous lives.” And specifically, I drew a sketch of that place and showed it to him the next day. He identified it, and said this place is in Shahjahanpur in UP. It was a building made of small bricks. Such buildings you can still see in places like Haridwar or other old cities—the construction of small bricks. Then I said, “Guruji, this is one glimpse you showed me which indicated our relationship has been continuing. But this *sadhna* that we are doing—this relationship of *Guru-shishya*—you didn’t throw any

light specifically on that”. He said, “Son, you saw that I used to visit that place. I used to stay there for 3,4,5,6 months. I used to make you people do paaths.”

I said I still haven’t got the clarity. Then he said alright, you sit the next day, try to sit for *dhyaan* again –and I was again transported maybe about 200 years back. That was a place somewhere in Himachal, in the mountains. Those *pagdandis* (small tracks in the mountains) on the mountains-a 10 feet high *machan*-there were 2 caves on either side of the *machan*. On the opposite side also, there were 2 caves. I could precisely identify...I mean I could see myself--I was an old man of around 125-126 years old, with a long white beard; I could identify my *mrigshala*, I could identify my blanket; it was so clear—black and white with squares; then those sticks that holy men use for support—I identified that as well; I could identify my *kalmandal*—in which we put our food and ate; and I clearly saw the cave next-door—that was Guruji’s own cave. And the one opposite my cave was Malhotra Papaji’s cave. He showed me how much *tapasya* we had done in our previous lives together. All these things were giving me an indication that it’s a continuation.

Q: And what about this Shahjahanpur house? Did you go and check it out?

Ravi ji: In fact, Malhotra Papaji had gone. He had gone; he had identified—I had given him the sketch which I had discussed with Guruji as well. He was more inquisitive; he went to Shahjahanpur. He said the only difference is what you described as the courtyard was *kaccha* and made of mud, now it’s cemented. Otherwise, it was the same construction that I had indicated—the mansion was made out of small bricks.

One person among many whom Gurudev disclosed his past life to was Puran ji. Gurudev told him that he had been acquainted with him twice in his past lives, once in Ujjain, and around 500 years ago during the time of Guru Nanak.

Do listen on.

Q: So, did he tell you about your past lives or your past acquaintanceship that you might have had with him?

Puran ji: He had told me only twice. Once when I was doing seva in Ujjain that time and the 2nd time in Punjab when I was doing seva during Guru Nanak’s times. And nothing else.

Q: So, he said you had spent two lifetimes with him?

Puran ji: Which I know of, which he told me. Further I don’t know.

Gurudev gave me an indication of my past life which certainly helped me understand the correlation of my past with the present. He told me that I was a saintly man, and even today people still come and bow their heads at my last life's ashram. At the time he told me this, I found it hard to fathom. Today, I can see the merger of life that with life this!

Giri Lalwani voices a common sentiment.

Giri ji: We all had gone to Bangalore to attend Dr Shankar Narayan's daughter's marriage. So, from there he said let's go to Mysore and then Ooty. On the way we came across a place called *Bandipore*. In *Bandipore*, there is a forest and Guruji said let's halt here. Next day morning, he was walking by a pond. So, I went to meet him. Then he said, "Son, our relationship is not limited to this lifetime alone but extends over many lifetimes. And not just you but all my disciples have been with me over lifetimes, be it Malhotra ji, Arjun ji, Rajpal ji, Sharma ji. We are all connected over lifetimes. Whenever I incarnate as a guru, they come as my disciples.

Technically speaking, he was referring to a previous birth when he had met some of us the last time around. A being like him must've been around from the *Satyuga* or the *yug* that came after that at most.

500 years ago, he took birth as an established *siddh* Guru with the purpose of taking his disciples further north. He met others a couple of hundred years ago, and that story follows later. But before that, we need to hear from Puran ji who lived and performed seva at Gurudev's home-cum-sthan for more than a decade.

Q: According to you, are most of his disciples who came to meet him in this life are they all connected to him from the past? Is that your opinion?

Puran ji: Yes

Q: Tell us anything you might be able to add to that?

Puran ji: Guruji would say that it took him 500 years to collect you all in this birth. There was a past connection. That is why he collected us.

And collect he did, from different corners of the world, by manipulating circumstances under the cloak of coincidence.

The man named Santlal came to life in the second half of his existence in this life. The first half though was much ado about nothing.

He was a government servant with power, connections and arrogance.

Did he qualify to be a disciple? Certainly not.

Did he become an exemplary one? He certainly did.

Santlal ji: In Punjab, there is a place called Gangowal. Someone told me that there was a very powerful and knowledgeable sadhu who lived there and so I went to meet him. When I finally reached him, he told me to come the next day. I felt very disappointed since I had waited all day.

I asked him to instruct his sevadaars to allow me to come before the others would, the next day. He said he would do so. I felt I was being made a fool of but it was important to obey him as well.

The next day when I reached, nobody helped me to meet him without waiting my turn in a queue. Once again, when I reached him, he told me to come back the next day. Again, when I went on the fourth day too, he asked me to come the next day.

I was living in a nearby *dharmashala*. It wasn't the norm to live in hotels, those days. When I went to meet him on the fifth day, he told me that he tried his best to accept me, but I was linked to someone else. So, he was not permitted to accept me. I asked him whom I was linked to and he said that the person I was linked to was also present there at that time!

Q: Oh wow.

Santlal ji: I requested him to help me meet him, but he told me that now was not the right time for us to meet. You will meet him when it is the right time.

It took a decade and a half for Santlal ji to finally meet his Guru. He went to Gurgaon with some of his acquaintances who took him to meet Gurudev. What he saw was not a great optic. He saw a very simple, good-looking man, dressed in a lungi sitting on the floor.

His acquaintances did a *daandvat pranam* and Santlal ji was left standing. His story continues.

Santlal ji: I remember we met Guru ji at around 12 pm – very simple, wearing dhoti, sitting on the floor, near the gate. I thought “What kind of guru is he?” Really, that is what I thought. They did a lot of *Daandvat Pranaam*. I simply said greeted him with a *Namaste*. That's when I told him that I wished to speak to him in private. I had trouble believing a man so simple could be Guruji. I asked him if he visited Gangowal, Punjab, in 1960 and he stated that he did. I asked whom he had met and he perfectly described the sadhu I had met.

Q: About that *sadhu*?

Santlal ji: Yes, because he was who told me that the person, I was linked to was present at the place. That's when Guruji told me that disciples do not find their Guru but instead, it is the Guru who finds his disciples. I had asked Guruji simply and he told me that I was with him for the last 9 lives.

Most celebrities remain popular for a few decades. Kings and queens are known for a few thousand years at most. But Narender ji, his wife Saroj, and his brother, Virender ji, have been written about tens of thousands of years ago in the *Brighu Samhita*. Their claim to fame definitely is thousands and thousands of years in antiquity.

Let's talk to Saroj ji and her husband, next.

Saroj ji: When I fell sick in the year 1983 or 84, we came to meet Guruji for the first time. He gave me a clove in a dry grape and black pepper. The next morning, I was absolutely fine. I couldn't believe how I was cured. Later, there were so many incidences. The next time my husband was not well so I went to Guruji and started crying. He asked me, "What happened, child?" I said "Guruji, my husband is not well", He replied, "He is fine". When I reached home, I saw that he was doing well.

Narender ji: I would like to say something. When we met Guruji for the first time in 1983, 16th August, he said nothing but "Come child". By hearing this we thought we might have met Guruji from so many years whereas we were meeting him for the first time. There was so much attraction in his personality that we kept thinking that we've known him for several years.

Many of his disciples weren't too keen on meeting him initially. It hurt our intelligence to think that a man who people claimed was a guru could change our destinies, alter our lives, cure us or our kith and kin!

Most times, we had to be cajoled into going to meet him. Once we did, we were enveloped by his influence.

I remember a famous doha,

Lalli mere lal ki, jith dekhu tith laal.

Lalli dekhan main gayi, te main bhi ho gayi laal

The poet Kabir says that when he saw the greatness of the master, he was coloured by the greatness that made him great as well.

Lal Saab's entry to the sthan was different to most. He had no problems to solve. In fact, he was amused by the concept of 'Guruji' and paid the price with patience.

Lal Saab: I was an average Canadian living there since 1973. I was into partying and drinking beers and all that. Once in a while, I used to also visit temples. There I met a person who said, “My Guruji is coming”. I said ok, give me a phone number and your address and when he is coming. I had to see off some relative at the airport, his house was on the way and I found out that he was visiting Toronto and he is already here. So, I knocked the door, nobody home. So, I phoned them. They said we are not here come back the next day. I went there next day. There were a lot of people, being in Toronto lot of people there. So, I waited. People came and gone. In the evening I was told to come back the next day and I agreed to it. So, I called my work and said I am sick. The next day I went there again and the same thing. Morning and evening, I am still there and they asked me to come back the next day. It was the 3rd day. So, morning, evening. If I tell you something, I laughed, you will also laugh. At 6 p.m. in the evening someone came to me and said “Guruji has sent this tea for you.” I looked at the cup and saw that he had sent half a cup of tea to me. It was half a cup of tea. Half a cup of tea! Someone drank the tea and sent the remaining tea to me. Anyhow, I don’t know what made me do it but I drank it. At 7.30 in the evening, he calls me in and I am the last person to go up. He asked, “Son, what do you want?” I said, “Nothing”. So, he said, “Come son, start doing seva.” I had no idea what a seva was, but I still I agreed to it. I said I will do seva.

What Gurudev had sent for Lal Saab was half a cup of tea-- that he had sipped. And through the tea, shared with Lal Saab a set of qualities, his gunas and spiritual power.

Lal Saab: I came to New Delhi in the late 1980’s. I went to Gurgaon. Same thing repeated. In the morning, 9 o clock there, 9 o clock at night, I am still there, people going in, and they told me to come back tomorrow. I said ok. No problem, I will come back tomorrow. The same thing – 9 a.m. in the morning, 9 p.m. in night, people going in. I am still waiting. The third day, same thing, then at 9 pm at night he called me and said, “Son, you’ve come?” Like he didn’t know that I was waiting outside. I said, “Yes, I have.” I met him only for 5 seconds and in that he said to me, “Son come back on 1st January. Your mother will light a jyot at 6.15 am in the morning”. So, I went to *Vaishno Devi* and made sure I get to Gurgaon at quarter after 6 a.m. in the morning so I got here and came for 3 weeks first time and I stayed for 5 months.

Lal Saab does not know that before Gurudev left for Toronto, he told me, “Beta, I want to go to Toronto and give seva to someone there. What do you think?” Naturally, I said “Gurudev what a wonderful idea.”

So, Gurudev had already selected the man before he even reached Toronto and before that man even met him. What happened thereafter was a test of faith. And if Lal Saab

had not waited or if Lal Saab had not been patient, he wouldn't have got this opportunity to become the saint that he now is.

Like Lal Saab, Gurudev's disciples landed up under one excuse or another as destiny had programmed them coming together. Sometimes, their family members or friends came earlier and helped them connect to the mahaguru.

Sometimes these collections happened in groups.

Gurudev's office was where he found his first set of disciples - over half a dozen co-workers who joined him in the mission of uplifting humanity.

These included people like RC Malhotra ji, FC Sharma ji, RP Sharma ji, Bade Jain Saab, Dr Shakamarayan as well Dutta ji who broke ground in Calcutta.

One of the most significant members of Gurudev's spiritual pyramid was his primary disciple, Shri. R.C. Malhotra ji, who happened to be his colleague at work. Gurudev's experiments on how to become a perfect guru started with him.

Malhotra ji recalls how difficult it was for him to accept his friend as his Guru.

Malhotra ji: Gurudev was my dear friend. It's easy to make a guru but very hard to accept you friend as your guru.

Q: Very difficult

Malhotra ji was a man with a naughty streak but a golden heart. He enjoyed being four-lettered by Gurudev. His sincerity had no equal. He dedicated his life to his guru first, and thereafter to the followers and devotees who loved him dearly. He remained a bachelor till the end of his life, 60% of which was spent on seva and the administration of the sthan.

He established the sthan at Najafgarh which was attached to Gurudev's *samadhi* where thousands of people came to seek grace.

Gurudev's daughter Renu recalls humorously the story of Malhotra ji's beginnings shared by Malhotra ji himself. A precursor to how a man who was scared of ghosts became a spiritual powerhouse whom every ghost was scared of.

Renu ji: He said he really feared ghosts. He would often avoid going on tours because sometimes, he would have to go into forests where locating guest houses was almost impossible and living in such deserted places was not something, he was comfortable with since he feared ghosts showing up. Once Guruji called him and for doing his paath, he sat down and put a blanket on himself. Malhotra ji said, "Brother, seeing how you are seated, I am getting scared". Guruji gave Malhotra ji a paath but I don't remember which

one because we were only hearing this for fun. He said he gave me the paath and I got trapped. The fear of ghosts vanished but was replaced by a new fear, that is the fear of the guru.

The fear of ghosts gets converted into the fear of the Guru. That's a good one if I've ever heard one.

At one of these camps, Gurudev took Malhotra ji into a forest to give him a demonstration of the power of the *Chamunda* mantra.

Malhotra ji saw a few figures in white approaching. He turned frantically in Gurudev's direction only to find that Gurudev was nowhere to be seen.

So, where had Gurudev gone?

Gurudev had hidden behind a tree leaving Malhotra ji feeling all alone.

Then, Malhotra ji started chanting the *Chamunda* mantra, and as he did, the figures retreated. When Gurudev appeared, he made Malhotra ji realise how the power of the mantra had worked and acted as a protection or a *kavach*.

Unbelievable but true, Malhotra ji had almost no conscious recollection of his past lives where he had already reached sainthood. Receiving power from Gurudev initially was like receiving a new gizmo and he played with those powers like any other kid would.

On one occasion, Malhotra ji inquired about the price of fruit from a vendor. The vendor was rude and asked why he wanted to know the price since he never bought any fruit. Angered by this, Malhotra ji willed a bull standing close by to attack the fruit cart and overturn it. He succeeded with the bull's horns but failed in Gurudev's eyes.

On more than one occasion, he experimented and succeeded in delaying the train he used to commute by because he was late. Let's not forget his leg pulling of Santosh ji from *Nadaun* – the simple Simon met a pieman remember? He made Santosh ji believe that the mantra he was doing was most effective when reciting it sitting on a bull facing its tail.

His sense of naughty humour inspired many by making them digest spiritualism easier. His initiation was the most unique. Here is an account of it by Ravi Trehan.

Ravi ji: Talking about Gurudev's spiritual powers and his control over nature, I recall a very interesting incident. Shri RC Malhotra ji who was his first & the prime *shishya*, they worked in the same office & they were more like friends but then having been in the

company of a spiritual master, Malhotra ji said whom he had so far regarded as an intimate friend, he was slowly drawn into the spiritual way of life.

Sometime in 1971 standing in the waters of holy Ganga at Haridwar, he was initiated & formally became Gurudev's shishya. He said during his initiation ceremony he had an awe-inspiring experience, revered Guruji was standing in the water of holy Ganga & there was a strong current. Guruji asked him to lie down horizontally in the water in a posture that his head touched Guruji's feet, it was a *daandvat pranam*.

Malhotra ji said he hesitated because the water current was too strong and he did not know how to swim. At that point of time Guruji commanded to follow his instructions & he said to his utter surprise the gushing waters of Ganga became still and he obeyed his command and the initiation ceremony was performed. Overawed by this happening, Malhotra ji ventured to ask Guruji how come the gushing waters of Ganga came to stand still for a while. Very calmly he replied that these objects of nature were under his control.

[I thought it would be nice for you to hear this from the horse's mouth. I was lucky enough to find one of Malhotra ji's old recordings in an old phone.](#)

[I have taken an excerpt from it and placed it right in the middle of Ravi Trehan ji's interview because it refers to the same incident of Gurudev appointing him his disciple in the holy waters of Ganga and how the river became still for a few minutes.](#)

Malhotra ji: When he made me his disciple, he made me his disciple in Haridwar.

Q: Under the Ganga?

Malhotra ji: Yes, under the Ganga

Q: The water was stilled?

Malhotra ji: Yes. And he instructed me to keep the water in my mouth and the time he says to drink the water, he would spit in the water and then I should drink it. And there should be no awkwardness or disgust on my part. So as and when he asked me to, I drank the water. And then he hugged me and removed his kada and put it on my hand.

[The Guru gives his disciple *charna amrit* under the waters and then takes out his own kada given to him by Buddhe Baba and puts it on Malhotra ji's hand making him his first disciple.](#)

[Back to Ravi Trehan.](#)

Ravi ji: Soon after that he had the proud privilege of having darshan of almost all symbols that appeared one after the other in Gurudev's hands and on his body. He had *Om, Jyoti, Shivling, Trishul, Crescent Moon, Padam, Ganapati, Nandi* and three pindis of

Maa Vaishno Devi. And Malhotra ji says he was completely overawed. Later on, quite a few *shishyas* & many persons from the public also had the proud privilege of having *darshan* of some of these divine symbols from time to time.

In the later years, after Malhotra ji had run the gauntlet of fire and improved his attitudes and *guna mix*, he learnt to deal with the powers bestowed upon him. He eventually assisted Gurudev in the mentorship of the newer entrants in Gurudev's saint-manufacturing factory.

Malhotra ji who was fondly called Pappa ji, later came to be known as chote Guruji. He justified this title till his dying day. After Gurudev and his wife, Mataji's demise, Malhotra ji led the institution and held the fort.

Khar Gymkhana in Mumbai became another sourcing-space for future saints, where many of us, his devotees and disciples, became friends while playing table tennis. When Gurudev visited the city, we went to meet him and most of us were drawn into his fold. After that, table tennis took a break.

One of the table tennis players was Pradeep Sethi. His uncle Yash was the reason why Gurudev had first come to Mumbai. His cure at Gurudev's hands had sent shockwaves through the medical community as they had predicted that there was no chance of survival.

Pradeep sheds more light.

Q: Pradeep, you had an uncle, who was very sick. Suddenly one bright morning, I discovered that from almost being dead he was almost fine. Tell me the story.

Pradeep ji: This started when my uncle was gradually diagnosed that he was suffering from a disease known as dermatomyositis which is a weakening of the muscles.

But my father was always very shaken, very shaken. In due course, he used to sit for hours in morning and evening at the small house temple which was made and pray. One day, a very phenomenal thing happened when we reached the hospital in the evening. There was a message, "Please come and meet the doctor at his chamber". Dr Singhal said that whatever was possible in science, he had tried all the possibilities, but in spite of that his condition is deteriorating and his maximum span of life left is a couple of months. It would be better we took him back home.

Eventually, the next day we took him back, and in the coming few months, my house was regularly visited by various saints but still his condition was deteriorating. One of my uncles who was staying in Nagpur, one day he called up my father saying there was a gentleman who had come there and was wearing a pant and shirt, staying in a tent and

worked with the Government of India. Lot of people were going to him, he gives them jal. Should I go? My father said why not, try it out. So, next day in the morning he went and our Guruji, Gurudev, refused to meet him and made him wait for a couple of hours. Next day, he called him again. When he called him, he said, "I know the purpose of your visit. You have come for your brother who is seriously ill in Bombay. But at this stage I don't want to, I can't do anything." He bowed down and started crying. So, they decided that he finally agreed to come to Bombay. But the fact is, very important, the fact is, he'd already told his colleagues a week earlier to get ready, they had to go to Bombay. Maybe he was testing my uncle.

We went to receive him at the airport. This was the first vision of my guru. I liked him at the first instance, but I never believed he had extraordinary powers at that juncture. He came to our house, stayed there for a week. He gave a commitment and an assurance that our uncle will be all right. He started seva for the first time in Bombay, and gradually gave seva to my father also. And in this process of 6 months, we started seeing changes in my uncle. From a stage where he could not move any of his limbs, any part of his body and his neck stooped down, gradually changes were visible. In the process, this was as weekly sevas were at our house; a lot of people used to come and get cured.

Q: How did he treat your uncle? With what type of cure?

Pradeep ji: He used to give him Jal, he gave him a lot of mantras which he told him to keep reciting endlessly and that was his basic curing method and in spiritual healing it was by putting his hand on of his forehead and putting his hands on the body parts which were affected.

I had seen Yash in his worst condition when I visited the Sethi household years before when they had called some Baba or the other to cure him. It did not work. I accidentally met Sandeep, one of the brothers, who invited me to get help from the person who was treating Yash. I went over hoping to get a cure for my arthritis but found no cure.

A year later, when I met Sandeep once again at the airport, he told me that his brother was much better. I was shocked and I went to visit them. It was Yash, a person who had almost died, who opened the door and led me up the stairs to the first floor. All that remained of his acute condition from a year earlier was a limp.

For Gurudev, finding monks in cream-coloured togas was like a treasure hunt. The search button probably consumed a large part of his spiritual bandwidth. The Himachali's were the easiest to unfold, as were those from Punjab and other parts of North India.

The hardest to tame were those who came from Mumbai. Most of us were agnostic and did not find the subject of spiritualism interesting or even digestible.

Thank God he did not charge a fee for mentorship; otherwise, most of us *Mumbaikars* would have had to pay a huge premium.

Even though Gurudev cured me of an incurable disease in less than one minute, I did not acquire faith. But five years later, events far stranger than fiction, helped me bite the bullet.

Even though my cure at Gurudev's hands was corroborated by a healer who treated me using jewel therapy under the guidance of his late Guru whom he could communicate with through a planchet, my intellect refused to accept what had happened to me. I kept trying to find reasons to believe that it was a case of hypnosis. I even did a course in hypnotherapy to try and validate my suspicions but no success.

Five years later, I was in Africa, and every time I wanted to participate in some disallowable adventures, an invisible hand would block my path. This happened over half a dozen times. And every time I was stopped from going immoral, the *kada* or bracelet that Gurudev had made me wear years earlier, would flash in my inner eye.

Even though I knew this was bizarre, the coincidences were far too frequent for me to dismiss. I realised it was Gurudev's handiwork and that he had psychologically brow beaten me into faith!

So, some came easy, some came tough, some just slid into the fray. The Mahaguru's collection centre was a success story where most of his past disciples and devotees got accommodated. Not only that but some of his magic rubbed off on the downlines and today we are a team that is eternally grateful to him and in reflected glory of ourselves.

And we even know how to say this in Urdu Poetry.

*maiñ akelā hī chalā thā jānib-e-manzil magar
maiñ akelā hī chalā thā jānib-e-manzil magar
log saath aate gaye aur kārvāñ bantā gayā*