

Excerpt from

Passport to Travel

by David F Livingstone

Excerpt from Himalayas`'s Chapter

While trekking in the Himalayas I was confronted with an unexpected challenge and If I accepted this challenge the possibility of falling to my death was a very real one. The path I was on came to a rock face and to continue I would have to cross over the rock face that had only one 5 inch wide by 7 inch long ledge to put my left foot on and with my right foot on the ground off I would have to propel myself up and over that rock face to solid ground on the other side. I looked down below and it was several hundred feet straight down. My heart was pounding, my mind was racing, should I do this, should I take such a risk, should I turn back? All these questions raced through my mind. I had seen a man go before me and he made it but that did not make the choice for me any easier. I was also reminded that a woman had fell to her death just two days previous. I felt pressure also as two others were waiting to go and insisted I go first. An added complication was it was wet and slippery. I knew that once I made the commitment to go that I should not hesitate, or look down. In a few minutes I decided to go for it and since I am writing this book you know the outcome. I was so relieved and now exhilarated completing the jump to the other side. I was very happy to be on my way and several hours later of trekking I would stop at an outpost for food and spend the night on a cot. This had been quite a day.

I was making very good time and was getting close to the Anapurna base camp. It was getting colder and I was able to rent a jacket, hat and sleeping bag. As I was getting near the base camp I started to feel very weird, and my head started aching and my fear was that The Dreadful dysentery was back, but, it had similar qualities like feeling you have to go to the bathroom but, can not and also my stomach ached. I shared with some fellow trekkers were a few fellow trekkers at the base camp what I

was going through and they thought for sure I had altitude sickness not to be mistaken with attitude , and that I had not drank enough water during the steep climb during the day. They informed me I was suppose to drink 1 liter of water for every thousand feet I climbed. This made perfect sense to me, but did not help to relieve my altitude sickness. They told me there was not much I could do just drink some water and take aspirin and in the morning when I descended I would feel a lot better. It was a cold night , colder than expected but, we were in the snow and overall an uncomfortable night. When morning came they wished me well, after a light breakfast I was on my way down. It did not take long before I started feeling better drinking quite a bit of water. I also decided that I would take the backside down rather than going down the way I had come up. I was informed that the accommodations and food would not be as good but, the journey would take me through much more primitive villages and fewer trekkers.

I came upon a wonderful lookout point that provided views that were truly amazing , this point was near the top and just before descending . I could look out standing on a flat ledge, that offered spectacular views of far below. The mountains peaks were snow covered and below the lush green of the forest awaited and most striking of all was the incredible beauty of silence. The air quality was so fresh and invigorating. I definitely had the feeling I was on top of the world in all ways. To be in the solitude of this wilderness is one of the most profound experiences of my life. As I began the downward journey I covered many miles quickly and the first stop was at very primitive village. Only one small building that housed up to four guests and food was in minimal supply, as they depend on sherpas to bring the food supply from Katmandu on their backs. I got to meet a woman in her thirties from Japan, she was very unique as she was traveling by herself and she shared how she had been traveling for years by herself and in her country she was considered odd. I enjoyed hearing about her adventurous spirit. She told me her mother encouraged her to follow her dreams of travel and many in her country did not agree with her lifestyle. We only spent an hour or so together but it was great, and a surprise to find her here in the middle of no where. That's the beauty of meeting fellow travelers and sharing some inspiring and quality time together.

I was up early the next morning and on my way. I would stop at one more unique place. This was a guesthouse built on the side of a solid rock face. I though I was the only one there until I went for dinner and met a couple from Australia and we

instantly connected. We were all finishing the last lag of our trekking and we did not speak much at all. We all knew that we had experienced something very profound and amazing and that just being in each others company was a rich and rewarding experience. Our share silence spoke volumes and in this way we honored the journey and each other. and I felt a very deep connection. In the morning I made my way back to Katmandu and as I stepped on to the flat grassy path that led into the village I felt very happy. It only took me three days to get back to Katmandu for a total of 7 days trekking. The normal time is approximately 11 days.

I returned to the place I had stayed before and from my bedroom window I could see the top of the snow peaked mountain, as I reflected upon my journey, and as I looked at the mountain, I thought to myself, you know David, you do not always have to climb the mountain, that sometimes you can leave the mystery as a mystery.

Excerpt from Maui Chapter

I had worked a lot over the past 2 years in a stressful atmosphere as well as my previously described living situation taking care of an elderly man. Maui was the perfect environment for rejuvenation and healing on all levels and along with my meditation the results were phenomenal. "I believe everyone needs periods of solitude where they can be by themselves to nurture their own spirit and to gain clarity and wisdom for the next part of their journey." I was aware that I needed some solitude but, here I fully realized how very much I needed it and my timing was perfect. On the weekends, generally on a Friday or sometimes a Saturday night the locals would come to fish overnight, this was a celebration for them. They brought their music, a few beers and barbequed. Sometimes it would be the 'boys' meaning a group of buddies fishing and sometimes they brought their wives and children, the only downside was after several beers the music would get loud and affected my sleeping hours so I would have to adjust, because the music would go on until the early hours of the next morning. This was not always the case, but, one knows that this is their special place and they have been doing this for generations, but, I would have to say in general everyone gets along and does there best to be congenial, and I have found the locals to be quite friendly if you show respect. The families are always open and friendly. On occasion I would have to move my vehicle to another location, because I do like my

privacy. There are days when I did not interact with anyone and I love this. I would sit under the clear blue skies and watch as the sunset and the light disappeared and darkness was there, I loved the stars as there were no street lights in this area, and on some occasions, The majestic sun would set and seem to melt into the ocean, and believe me the sunset are spectacular and at the same time if I looked back over my shoulder towards the mountains the moon would be arising both were reflected by the Ocean. I often went to sleep right after the sunset and awaken shortly after sunrise, this rhythm was natural and I believe healthy and creates an attunement with all of nature. The other rhythm that had a positive affect was the waves breaking on the shore, they were hard to get use to at first because they were fairly loud, but eventually I grew accustomed to them. For food I would go into Kihei and purchase fruits some veggies, cereal, replenish the water supply and purchase something hot from a deli or restaurant. I also would go the aquatic center to shower and shave and do my laundry at the local Laundromat. I had everything I needed. The longer I camped the happier I became and just having my own space was terrific. The vehicle rental was such a good deal providing transportation and accommodations combined. In the evening one of my favorite activities was to run at dusk along the road to the lava fields, this was a magical strip of road where on both sides were fields of lava from the volcano Haleakala and were preserved, so no one could build in this area, I really enjoyed the many feelings that were stimulated when I was in this area especially at dark, it was truly mysterious, I felt I could be on another planet and I wondered about all the animals that live in this area, it was an area where the mind could truly wonder and all sorts of scenarios would arise. I would feel completely alone here as if no else existed on the Island, sometimes I would feel incredible bliss as I had a clear view of the mountains from here, and sometimes I would feel some fear as if something unknown to me could appear. One day I had run to the fields and once there I just had to stand still and be awed by my surrounding, a vehicle came by and stopped and a gentle voice came from the vehicle are you all right? Are you lost? Can I give you a ride, I assured this Hawaiian Man and His wife and family that everything with me was great. He gave a beautiful smile and I returned the same. He drove off. On the way back just around the bend from my campsite, I saw the same man and his family sitting on a few big rocks by the ocean, I walked up to them to tell him how moved I was by his kindness to ask if I was alright. He smiled and said thank you, and that we should all try and look after one another. We engaged in a heartfelt conversation and we instantly bonded and shared our beliefs and optimism about life and the hope we have for a more peaceful and kinder world. He was so

humble and gentle this large Hawaiiin man and radiated with kindness and wisdom. He shared about his humble life and his how his old vehicle just barely kept running and that along as his family and himself were healthy that he was blessed. “I would like to emphasize at this time that these incredible connections happen when we step off the beaten path, its as if in our willingness to be alone and explore on our own we attract like minded hearts and souls that affirm our growth and nourish us in many ways, they are comforting and make the journey so rich for it is the human heart connections, the people. As the song says “my reason for living”. To touch and be touched; by communicating with each other’s spirit and soul is far greater than having all the material riches in the world. I do declare at this time because of these experiences I feel I am one of the richest persons alive.

Excerpt from India Chapter

India has a way of turning you inside out, it wears you down on all levels, its an intense workshop like I never expected its life in raw form and never stops coming at you, it tears away at anything you might take for granted in life and challenges you to the Marathon of life, how much can you take, how far can you go, and even with all the tools and techniques I had developed over the years and practiced daily meditation, awareness, staying in the moment, India does not allow for any escape, the part of life we are able to pacify in the west is not possible here, self indulgence, self pity and finding ways to feel good, smacks you over the head and will not allow these indulgences. The Idea of personal space and privacy does rarely exist here in the way we know it, tell a person from India that you need space they will know you are crazy and will probably have sympathy for your condition! They are truly survivors and can make much out of little, they share everything and have strength and perseverance. Not matter how early I got up in the morning there were always lots of people already working, and many times I wondered I f they ever sleep. Traveling, sleeping and eating living like the People of India do for months changed me in ways I do not even know.