

Rohit Tanna – Padyatra Summary

Logistics: -

Travelled barefoot with a single ticket from Pune to Mathura without any money for 15 days in Mathura, Goverdhan, Gokul – Raman Reti, Vrindavan and then returned back to Pune. The padyatra dates were 13th – 25th June 2016.

Gratitude to:-

First of all, I would like to express deep gratitude to our motherland India, where great saints and souls continue to take birth not only to continue their journey of life, but also to lead the sinners like me into light – “tamso ma Jyoti r gama ya”

As one of the senior sadhak, Shriji mentioned to me, Padyatra is the best training course designed by Rishi Prabhakarji. The structure of the journey is itself so very beautiful and it ensures that the yatri would undergo divine experiences; and get whatever learnings he needs to have in life. From that perspective, a Padyatra is just like (and so much more) a Kalpvruksha. Thank You Guruji for this and everything else that you have done for us.

I was inspired for undertaking this journey by one man – Bhaavin Shah. When he shared his experiences of his 15 days yatra to Himalayas, a similar flame was triggered in me. The Padyatra manual written by him, having experiences of all yatris and other details by Bhaavin, Guruji and others is a great reference point for anyone who wants to take this journey. Bhaavin coached me with everything else that I needed to undergo this journey and will continue to be a great guide, coach and friend for me all through the life. He had given me 3 mantras to live by during the yatra: - Seva, Surrender and Seeing Godliness in everyone I meet. I thoroughly lived by these; and I was taken care off on each and every step. Thanks a lot Bhaavin.

Manojji is a great source of positivity + perseverance and a living example of how a disciple should be, to everyone whose life he touches. He insisted me to take up a Scope Camp for 3 days just before going for the yatra. This camp marked my journey with a lot of positive energy, filled with best wishes and blessings from so many souls. Thank You Manojji not only for your guidance and blessings for this Padyatra, but for everything else that you tirelessly pursue.

Tejal, my wife is an epitome of strength and positivity; I am blessed that she is by my side in everything I do. This journey could not have been possible without her love and support. A lot of times (like when I was starting this padyatra), her confidence in me is much more than what I trust myself. She truly “completes” me. Thank You God, for such a wonderful life partner – it makes life worth living. My lovely little son Joy, has been extremely loving and understanding. His little concerns, about where will I take bath, where will I sleep etc before I was leaving; and his countless hugs and kisses when I was parting, still mists my eyes. Joy has filled our lives with abundant joy on every single day – we love you very much baccha...god bless you, always!!!

Thanks a lot to my parents, family members and extended family to allowing me to take up this journey. I know that some of you had grave concerns with this journey, but you still allowed me to go ahead. These worries and concerns is an expression of the beautiful love that connects us; and the whole world. Little gestures like creating a small whatsapp group where Tejal could post my daily updates means an expression of love and care for me. I am lucky to have been showered with this. Thanks a lot for your faith in me.

My heart filled gratitude to Capgemini and Page Group Management, for being so considerate to allow me time off to do things that I want to do in life, beyond work. Darshan, Toby, Leo, Prashant, Uddhav, Navneet - thanks a lot for accommodating me and allowing me to experience life; this means a lot to me.

Gratitude to all the beautiful souls whom I met during the 2 weeks of my Padyatra. A number of you helped me by offering me food, shelter, money, opportunity to do Seva and taught me lots of unteachable lessons of life. I firmly believe that Radharani put you in the right places and selected you as a medium to shower her love and blessings on me. The ones who rejected me, refused to help me have as well been great teachers who taught me to my true worth in life. You helped me shed my false somebodiness and tame my ego; again this was as per the master plan of divine. Thank you very much.

Chronology of events:

A brief chronology of events during the Padyatra includes -

Day 1 – Left Home

- Left from Pune home in a Taxi, carrying a 500 rupees note. Gave the Change and was free off all money when I reached Pune station.
- Had a single train ticket to Mathura, which was about 24 hours journey. Had carried some chapattis, pickle and some fruits for the train.
- Got a chance to connect with a Osho Yoga teacher, Swami Anil and a Haryanvi family in the train.

Day 2 – Reached Mathura

- Played a lot with the children of Haryana family in the train, with a ball made of a stroll given by Bhaavin. And told the kids lots of stories, which I generally tell my son (the kids loved the story of “The Blue Elephant”, and came back to me again and again with the request for the same story. I would have told them the same story at least 5-7 times in a matter of few hours. It was so much fun).
- Train was about 4 hours delayed and it dropped me on Mathura station at about 8:30 pm.
- It was a feeling of vulnerability for the 1st time, as I got down on the station. I had no plans and did not know where to go, what to do. No money, no food, no place to take shelter.

- I decided to follow a sadhu, thinking that he would be going to some place where they'd accommodate sadhus and I will sneak in with him, but as he got out of the station, he boarded an auto rickshaw. I smiled to myself.
- There was no efforts required for prayers (and tears) to come. And, I knew that this prayer was coming from so deep within. And, I knew that this will be heard, I knew that I will be taken care off; somehow, but did not know, how.
- The first bhiksha I received was a glass sugarcane juice. I enjoyed it. Thanks to the man who offered it to me. God bless you.
- After lot of denial for shelter, finally a dharamshala named, Shanti Ashram allowed me to sleep on a khatiya (type of bedding) outside his dharamshala on the road (right opposite Krishna Janma-Sthal in Mathura).
- While I managed to get sleep, it was quite a unique experience to sleep on the street. Lots of cows passing by (and some even occasionally, rubbing themselves to my royal bedding to itch themselves). The barking of dogs, only bothered me little bit.
- The area was full of cops working in night shift on the temple duty. It felt quite safe to me.

Day 3 – First full Day in Mathura

- Got up at 5 am by the sounds of shlokas in Krishna Janma sthal. Waited for the cloak room to open until 5:30 am, so that I could park my luggage and take the Darshan. The Cloak room in charge refused to accept my luggage as I did not have the required amount of 2 rupees. And, I was not allowed to take the bags inside as well. (the realization of this incident is written in the later section of this article)
- Went to Vishram Ghat, took bath in holy Yamuna river. Washed previous day's clothes and dried them. Waited for about couple hours for the clothes to dry, dozed off in the middle to find that one of my kurta was missing (may be, the monkeys took it away).
- Went back to Krishna Janmnsthal temple. Borrowed 2 rupees for the cloak room from the cops and did the Darshan.
- Didn't know where else to go, what else to do. So, decided to go to another famous temple Dwarkadhesh temple. The road had started to heat up (with me being bare foot).
- Asked for juice, dates etc on the way to some vendors, was rejected. My ego kept on getting diluted.
- Finally, I met Madhav and his family. Owns a shop in Chatta Bazaar, Mathura. They were doing a Jal-seva (preparing cold sharbat, and serving it to all passersby). I asked them if I could serve. They accepted.
- Made friends with them, and the shop keepers of the next-door shops. They were all contributing together for the jal-seva.
- I was offered sumptuous lunch and time to rest in the afternoon in the room upstairs by Madhav. He understood and appreciated the concept of my padyatra.
- In the evening, he directed me to all the places I should be visiting during my yatra and also offered me Rs. 500.
- I slept at Vishram Ghat in Mathura that night.

Day 4 – Second day of Jal-Seva in Mathura

- Was woken up by priest of Vishram Ghat at about 4:30 in the morning.
- Helped the priests to clean the Vishram Ghat ahead of the Yamunaji Arti @ 5:30
- Took bath in holy Yamuna river. Got an experience that was much better than any Jacuzzi that I had ever taken in my life, in the large shower they had turned on to clean the river.
- After bath, the cleaner asked me to fill up the ghada of shiv mandir with Yamuna water. He said that this water will last for 24 hours.
- Could not find my mobile phone in the bag. Realized that I had lost it. May be the monkeys, again (not sure).
- Visited Krishna Janma Sthal (I just love this temple). A walk of about 5-6 kms to and fro. Offered Prasad. And returned to Madhav's shop.
- Had lovely Bela fruit juice on the way.
- Kapil, the young boy in the next door shop had become friends with me. He insisted that I joined him to eat the famous kachoris of Mathura. Had 5 of them, followed by lovely hot jalebies.
- Did the seva of serving nimbu sharbat the whole day. Amazing experience.
- Parted with the whole group in the evening. Had lots of heart to heart discussions with multiple people including Kapil, Sunny (another boy working in the shop), Madhav etc. I was thrilled to have made some great friends. While these people had very small incomes, their heart was made of gold. I love them all so much.
- Again spelt peacefully with some Sadhus on Vishram Ghat.

Day 5 – Off to Goverdhan

- Again woken up by the priests early morning. Had a nice bath in Yamuna river.
- The cleaning man asked me to clean the whole Shiv Mandir on the Ghat. I was very happy to be given this seva. Great start of the day.
- Walked off to Goverdhan Chauraha (about 5-6 kms) and then took a bus to Goverdhan.
- Washed my clothes and rested for a couple hours for them to dry off. Anyways, I could not walk on the hot path without footwear
- Again, rested in the temple in the afternoon.
- Meet a man, who explained me the logistics of Goverdhan Parikrama. So amazing.
- Even though I was to check-in Raman Reti Ashram (as directed by Madhav and co.), I was so excited to walk, that I commenced the 21 km Parikrama with my bags at early evening.
- Walked and Walked and Walked.
- So many monkeys on the way. Amazed to see how the babies clanged their moms, and the love between them.
- After about 11 Kms, I came across a group of people who had come from Jaipur. They had set up a stage (with nice DJ etc; just like the ones we have in Mumbai during Ganapati visarjan) and were there to prepare lemon water for yattris and serve them - a unique for the yattris doing the parikrama of the sacred Goverdhan mountain.

- They offered me dinner and invited me to be with them and do seva for 3 more days. I agreed.
- I took a break from Seva to complete my Parikrama at about 11 in the night. Left my bag there, which had money given by Madhav.
- The walking seemed endless. But the atmosphere was just electric – lots of music on the ways, thousands of people walking whole night. Some people doing Dandvati parikrama (takea 5-7 days to complete), some doing 108 dandvati (108 times dandvat in each step, takes 5-7 years to complete).
- Walked with a Sadhubaba who encouraged me to walk. Told me some great stories, shared his experiences.
- Took bath in Mansi Ganga, which is 1 km before the completion point. And continued walking.
- Now, I had reached my peak. With blisters in both my legs, I could not even walk 1 step.
- Found 1 dharamshala and saw a room full of men sleeping in there. I created some space and just dozed off.

Day 6 – In Goverdhan

- Got up on the call of the manager of the dharamshala who had come to collect money from everyone who was sleeping. I explained him my situation to him (prayed Radharani to take care of me), and he thankfully asked me to forget about the money and just complete my parikrama.
- The sadhu baba had told me that the parikrama had to be completed by offering milk to Goverdhanji in the Dani-ghati temple. I went to the temple and prayed Goverdhanji; told him that I did not have money to offer him milk. All I could give him was my tears which poured instantly as I prayed.
- As I reached the place where my Jaipur friends were located, they were all taking bath (in open, with tanker water). I did the same.
- After that they asked me to join them to a temple across the road. I did that. Was thrilled to see one of them brought a bucket full of milk and was giving it turn by turn to everyone to do abhishek of Goverdhanji. I realized that divine mother was so kind. She wanted me to complete the ceremony of offering the milk and marking my parikrama complete.
- They got pethas for Prasad. Again, my heart was touched. I had seen some pethas in the train when it passed from Agra. Some people bought them; while I wanted to eat them, but could not as I did not have money. Now, I was being given lots of it to eat. I felt that the divine was taking such a tender care of even my little wishes. How beautiful and heartwarming.
- Made friends with the Jaipur gang. They understood and appreciated my padyatra concept as well.

Day 7 and 8 – In Goverdhan

- Spent the time with the Jaipup gang in Goverdhan doing jal-seva from early evening until mid morning with a few hours of sleep during the night in turns.
- Had great Marwari food (dal-bati, churma laddus, pethas, mangoes and what not).
- Took a bhiksha of another Rs. 200 from the folks who were leaving.

Day 9 – Raman Reti in Gokul

- Took lift from a 3 different bikers and a couple share rickshaws and bit of walk to reach Raman Reti in Gokul
- Got a chance to pay visit to the famous “Jai Gurudev temple” on Mathura highway.
- Had great rest in the Raman Reti ashram. I hadn’t realized how tired my body had got in the past few days. All the tiredness was relieved in this beautiful ashram.
- So amazing to see the batuks (children studying in their Veda school) serving food and calling out each food item as god. E.g. Dalram, Sabziram, Rotiram, Ramras (salt).
- It is so amazing that our rishis in India teach us to see godliness in everyone anyways, be it river, mountain, food or animals.
- Had an amazing bath in the serene Yamuna river in the backdrops of the Ashram. Extremely beautiful place.
- Spotted a peacock wandering as I came out of bath. For me it was “Thakur” himself showing up.
- Had a great rest again in the night in the Ashram

Day 10 - Left for Vrindavan

- As I was leaving the Raman Reti Ashram, I saw an Ashram bus getting ready to leave somewhere. He gave me lift until a place called chatila; and from there a senior police cop gave me lift (I could barely walk with blisters in both my legs) until Vrindavan.
- Had nice Darshan of the famous Bankebihari temple.
- Commenced Vrindavan parikrama (15 kms around Vrindavan) early evening.
- Met Mahesh Krishnadas, a devotee of Iskon who was doing kirtans in his bhajan kutiya. He invited me to join him and we had some great discussions and kirtans for the lord of Vrindavan. So nice to have got connected with a man who had travelled the world and now settled in Vrindavan, as understood and appreciated the magic of the place. Got some good learnings from him and then we parted.
- Was walking until about 10 pm in the night. Radharani answered my prayers and connected me to a Kevat named Sevaram (a man who owned a boat and earned his living by having people cross the Yamuna river).
- Sevaram gave me food, shelter in the night and shared so many great learnings from his own life and the things that his 124 year old Guru had taught him.

Day 11 – Continued the Vrindavan Parikrama

- Took leave from Sevaram in the morning after a good bath in the river, freshening up and a cup of tea.

- He requested me if I could come back for lunch and spend my remaining days in Vrindavan with him. I told him, I was not sure and parted.
- Met with some more nice people during the parikrama who shared their lives so frankly with me and also some more knowledge bites.
- Saw a kirtan bhagwat happening by a Sant from Hariyana. And decided to join them for the next couple days.
- Visited the famous Iskon temple and the kirtan of Hare Krishna maha mantra there was amazing, very high energy.

Day 12– In Vrindavan

- Got up very in the morning and went to the Iskon temple for the Mangla Arti (5:30 am).
- After aarti, they took a session of all the new comers and briefed us about Bhagwat Gita, Japa chanting etc.
- Walked to some other temples until early afternoon (Prem Mandir, Devki Nandanji's temple etc) and returned back for Katha in afternoon.
- The monkeys had torn by kurta that was kept for drying, leaving me with only 1 kurta to wear. Would wear it in the day, wash it in the night and wear the same again next morning. I was quite OK with this and thanked Thakur for giving me this unique experience.
- Nice to experience the Krishna Janma in the Katha in the Kirtan Bhagwat. This was very different than they kathas, I had attended in past.
- Phoned up an acquaintance in Delhi who was to sponsor me a return ticket to Pune. He said that he was unavailable as he was to visit outstation. So, decided to leave for Pune on my own.

Day 13 – Additional day in Vrindavan

- Had decided to complete my Padyatra and leave for Pune.
- As I left the Ashram, an old lady who was attending the Katha as well met me at about 5 in the morning. She requested me if I could accompany her to the Parikrama of Vrindavan. I agreed.
- While I had thought of leaving after few hours of walk, Maa (the old lady had become my Maa as we spoke) insisted that I should stay for 1 more day, take her to Bankebihari temple in the evening and then leave next day. I agreed.
- Met Sevaram again and had a cup of tea with him.
- Met some more wonderful people from Hariyana during this last day- Rajesh, the couple from Hissar etc
- The sant doing the katha called me to her, blessed me by keeping her hand on my head, and gave me some Prasad with her own hands. It was a great token of amen for me as I know what it means when a saint does this on their own. This is just divine grace flowing.
- This was one of my best day in Vrindavan and I thoroughly enjoyed this.

Day 14 – Leaving Brij

- The day I was leaving from Vrindavan, Maa came to me and asked me if I had enough money to return back home. I assured her that I had enough and I didn't want any money from her. Then she insisted me that I take some alu-bhujia and biscuits that she had in her bag for eating in my journey. Moneywise she may be a poor lady, but I could physically feel the love flowing from her for me. What an amazing feeling.
- Walked a few kilometers to Mathura early morning. Took lift from a bullock cart man for a couple kms, it was great. Had some good conversations with him early in the morning.
- I happened to pass through a bird sanctuary, there was a man painting the walls of the garden associated to it. I asked him, if I could do some wall painting. He instantly agreed. I did wall painting for a short while before moving ahead. Small incident, but I was enjoying these little joys of life.
- When I got tired after walking for few more kilometers, I took a share auto for Mathura station.
- I exactly had Rs. 415 with me. I was in dilemma, if that would be sufficient for the return ticket to Pune. Or, what will I do...ask for some bhiksha (not sure why, but I did not want to do that) or may be collect with my wife and ask her to book a flight for me from Delhi. Was praying that I wanted to conclude the padyatra in the right spirit.
- Was thrilled when the ticket counter person asked me for only Rs. 340 for the return ticket to Pune.
- I was never used to travelling in the General compartment of the train. But it turned out to be the best travel that I've ever had. Met so many people in the train, had so many lovely discussions with them (including a group from Haryana, who belonged to bollywood actress, Mallika Sherawat's village; they told me the entire life story of the nutty for a couple hours with great pride)

Day 15 – Reached Home

- I was offered food in my 24 hours journey by fellow passengers, without even me asking them for it. I had snacks given my Maa; so didn't have to spend even a penny in the train journey to Pune.
- Had to change a couple of busses from Pune to reach home.
- Interestingly, even after I bought my final bus ticket which was to take me at a walking distance from my house, I was left with 5 rupees. I told the conductor, to keep the money and adjust it for someone who would be short of the sum. The conductor assumed that I had asked him to keep if someone wanted change; so half way through the journey he came back to me telling me to take back the money as he now had enough change. Then, I again explained him to keep the money and adjust the tickets if some passenger was short of 5 rupees. He took the money and then again came back to me as the bus was nearing my home (last stop of the bus as well) and returned back the 5 rupees to me saying that no one was short of any money and I should take it back. I was grinning at the cute way of divine, when I wanted to go home without a penny, I was being offered back with money again and again.
- I took the clue and accepted the 5 rupees. Bought some Pulze chocolate drops from the store and took it as a Padyatra Prasad for the family @ home.

- And, thus concluded my amazing journey.

Reasons / Benefits of Padyatrs:-

1. Experience freedom
2. Experience God first hand
3. Increased energy level, prana
4. Harness our willpower
5. Improve health by eating less and walking a lot
6. Shed extra weight
7. Witness lives of so many different kinds of people, learn from it
8. Learn innumerable lessons from different people (gurus) that we encounter during the journey
9. Experience the miracles of our prayers getting answered
10. Experience how beautifully the divine takes care of us, when we surrender completely.
11. Experience so many beautiful places
12. Connect with so many wonderful people, beautiful souls
13. Settle our karma-bandhans with some places, people (or may be build new connections)
14. Do Tapa
15. Enjoy lots of local food
16. Reinforce the belief of “narayan” being in everyone’s heart
17. Spread the knowledge of this beautiful sadhana
18. Kindle bhakti in our heard
19. Experience the vulnerabilities of life and learn to remain composed through them
20. Appreciate the value of god, money, food, shelter, family, friends
21. Earn and give lots of blessings
22. Enjoy days and days with lots of time for self, doing nothing.
23. Overcome fear of being alone, unknown, change etc
24. Learn to live with minimum resources
25. Learn surrender-fullness, acceptance
26. Being able to see both sides of the coin of life (e.g. people consuming alcohol on Vishram ghat)
27. Experience hardships – gold shines with burning
28. Learning to take care of our belongings; and also accepting when we lose it (e.g. my 2 kurtas, phone)
29. Experience diving firsthand
30. Understand the power of prayers
31. Cleanse and detoxify ourselves with tears of prayers
32. To practice death (in a way)
33. To develop vairagya / non attachment
34. To increase our OKness
35. To tame our ego
36. Learn to let go

37. Experience what being nobody (shedding our identity) means.
38. Do Seva
39. Experience the magic of intuition, using right brain most of the time.
40. Encounter so many saints. (Ramayan says:-Pratham bhakti santan kar sanga)
41. Develop a love for walking

My realizations and lessons learnt:-

1. Friends and Family:- When people were calling me to wish on the Padyatra day (some checking if I was in my senses), I realized the worth of having family and friends. Even with all the constraints of modern, material life, I could still feel the warmth of love, care and concern in everyone I spoke to that day. It felt really special.
2. Family Love:- When I was saying “bye” to Tejal and Joy while leaving for the Padyatra, and all the 6 eyes were moist, I realized how magical love and bonding with family is. In deed you realize the worth of the loved ones more, while parting with them; I am blessed that I was to get a chance to unite with them again in 2 weeks.
3. Padyatra and Death:- As I left the taxi at Pune station and walked to the train to commence my journey, I realized how similar this would be to “death”. The similarities of both journeys that came to my mind includes:-
 - a. Leaving behind the loved ones, worldly riches and walking ahead empty handed to a journey into unknown.
 - b. Shedding our identity / somebodiness to become a nobody
 - c. Having a trust that, I will be taken care off in each step of the journey (I think the work required for cultivating this trust at the time of death is “sadhana”).
4. Divine, the master planner:- Meeting a yoga teacher from the Osho community, who teaches pranayams and meditation in Gorakhgadh, near Nepal in the train; and learning great wisdom of Osho (which resonated quite well with my understanding of spirituality), made me realize that I am going to encounter exactly with the people who are best suited to contribute to my journey. This reminded me of the divine, who plants milk in the breast of the mother “just in time” when a baby takes birth. I saluted the “master planner”; and thanked him for taking care of me and everyone around.
5. Children:- When I struck a chord with the children of the Haryanvi family in the train, I realized how important it is to have multiple life skills which includes, connecting with little ones – playing with them, telling them interesting stories and just having fun with them. Children make life so light and fun filled.
6. Prayers, tears and Vulnerability:- I realized what vulnerability means, when I walked out of Mathura station at about 9 pm without any money, hungry but no food to eat and without knowing as to where was I supposed to go. I have heard that god hears the prayers that are filled with tears; and no effort is required for tears to flow in situations like these. I can still recall a feeling of faith that, there will be some tests, but I will be taken care off.

7. Value of Shelter:- Sleeping on the roadside outside Krishna Janmasthal, in Mathura for the 1st night of my padyatra, I realized the importance of having a shelter. It is so easy to take the comforts of having a roof on our heads for granted; and I have always done that. Thank You god that I have a beautiful house; and I can now relate with the people who don't have it.
8. Value of Money:- Realized the value of 2 rupees, when the person of the cloak room refused to keep my luggage without the sum (and it was not allowed to enter the temple with the bag pack). Money is indeed a great friend in the material world; though not the only one. Important to value money, even little money, as it can make a lot of difference. Make good use of it; do not waste it.
9. Connecting with People:- While returning back from Vishram Ghat on day 2 of my yatra, I realized that it is so important for me to connect with people. Only when we are able to connect with people, build relationships with them, and establish trust with them that there can be any possible give and take rapport with them. This is so much essential to survive anywhere in the world.
10. Deservedness:- I am convinced that we get only what we deserve to get. When the cops helped me with the required 2 rupees to enter in the temple, I realized that my deservedness had scaled up in the past 3 hours – prayers, loosing kurta to monkeys, taking bath in Yamuna. So, it is utmost sensible to keep working on ourselves to increase our “patrata”; rest is taken care of by divine anyways.
11. Tests by Divine:- If the world does not accept anyone without any tests, how would god do. The master player he is, he sets the tests, he places the hurdles, gives the clues, encourages us to find the solution, and then walks with us all the way to the end. I think he enjoys this whole game and is doing this to nurture us; and make us grow, evolve. If only we are aligned to him all the way through (and not get entangled in the game itself), even we can enjoy the game as a game and play it fully. And, the way to align with him is sadhana – japa, tapa, vrata, etc whatever be the means directed by the great masters.
12. Power of Prayers:- I think we are so stupid to underutilize the power of prayers while leading the day to day life. When I visited the Krishna Janmasthal temple for the 1st time during this visit, the tears started flowing automatically, the heart and mind started to pray the almighty – Vrindavan's swamini Radharani (she is incarnation of Krishna's love). The divine mother made sure that every step of my yatra was taken care off. The loving mother that she is, she ensured that at any stage, the difficulties I faced were a little less than what I could tolerate. At any stage of the journey, when I was even little bit disheartened, she sent the right people to help, guide and encourage me; be it Madhav, Kapil, Mahesh Krishnadas, Sevaram, Maa, Rajesh, Gajendra, Deepak, Bikers, bus drivers and cops to give me lift in their vehicles. I cannot thank you enough O loving mother. I hope that I remain in the shade of thou divine blessings all through this life and beyond...
13. Seva:- When I got an opportunity to do Jal-seva in the holy land of Brij, I realized that this is a beautiful vehicle to connect with people (and almighty) and cleanse myself. My Guru always says that God prefers the hands that does nishkam Seva (service) more than the lips that sings his prayers; for the 1st time I life I experienced this; and I so much enjoyed this experience.

14. People drinking alcohol on Vishram Ghat:- I was amazed to see a bunch of localities and visitors together finding a spot and consuming alcohol on the holy Vishram Ghat. I think having me witness this was divine mother's way of teaching me that I will find all sorts of people everywhere, it is up to me to choose with whom I would like to associate myself with.
15. Ahankar / Ego / Pride:- It was great of Manojji to tell me the beautiful story of the donkey having the Ganapati statue on his head roaming across the village, and the villagers bowing down to Ganesh. When the donkey got proud thinking that he is being worshipped and threw the statue away, he was kicked and shown his place. This is exactly the story with a lot of us. As long as we realize and remember that the divine consciousness is shining within us, through us and we are mere trustees of his shine, we are OK. The moment we shun the divine and let the pride (false) enter our head, that is the beginning of miseries of life. Thank You Manojji for teaching this to me; and Sevaram, Mahesh Krishnadas for reminding this to me.
16. Losing my mobile phone and 2 Kurtas:- How cute are his ways of testing us. He took away my phone to shield my padyatra from any possible distractions from home front, and also to teach me the power of saying truth (I refused the cloak room guy that I didn't have the phone in the bag, when I had it). He took away 2 of my 3 kurtas to have me experience as to what it is like to wear the same kurta during the day, wash it in the night and wear it again next day. Thank You for making me realize the value of lots and lots of clothes in my wardrobe.
17. Dirt in Kurta:- My white kurta had almost become brown in a matter of just 2 weeks. Even when I would wash it, the dirt in it would still remain as is (almost). I realized as to if it is so difficult to wash clean a piece of cloth worn for a day, then what amount of work (sadhana) it would take to cleanse the mind that is forming so many impressions of karmas for years and ages and lifetimes.
18. Association / Intentions:- It cannot be a coincidence that I came across people and situations that were exactly in symmetry with the bhavas I carried in my mind. And these bhavas were in turn getting directly influenced with the people and places I associated myself with. Even the food I ate had an influence on my bhavas; and thus the situations I would encounter. Amazed with the beautiful chain of connections.
19. Happy with minimum:- I realized during the yatra that we need so less to remain happy. We can conveniently remain happy with the bare minimum when we shed our "somebodiness" (I am Rohit Tanna).
20. Free Fund:- I realized how difficult it is to eat / accept something from someone without having earned it (and when it was not offered to me out of sheer love by someone). When during the katha in Vrindavan, I ate food in langar and stayed in Ashram, I realized how unworthy it is to live on free-fund; i.e. without having done Seva / earned it.
21. Seva Out of Comfort Zone:- I remembered Bhaavin mentioning this in his briefing to me; as well as a comment in Guruji's article that - "do smallest and lowest task (in worldly terms) as a Seva and be useful to the place & people where you go for padyatra". It was difficult for me to clean a pile of potty from the pathway in Vrindavan; but once I did that it was such a good feeling. And the sight of a peacock crossing the road in front of my eyes was an instant reward of my act by the Thakur of Vrindavan.

22. Be Giving, at least a sincere listening ear:- When I gave people what they wanted, I almost always got what I wanted. And, it was a great way to do social bonding with people as well. One of the simplest things I could give to people is a good listening year – be it to Maa and other man during Vrindavan parikrama or Sevaram or Mahesh Krishnadas.
23. Being “aware” while asking – More often than not we ask for something to people (or universe / god) and we get it. And then after having received it, we realize that I could have asked more or different. E.g. feeling when I asked for 200-300 rupees to friends from Jaipur, 200 rupees is what I got. But, if I had asked for more or given them a choice to give they would have given me what my patrata or deservedness was. Learning is that be gracious when asking (or writing visions) nature has abundance; or may be ask to be given whatever the giver wants to give; or may be don’t ask at all, and I’ll still receive what I deserve anyways.
24. My tendency:- I realized that I can very naturally connect with people by way of Seva. That is my default tendency – being seva-bhavi. And, I loved this.
25. Profound realizations:- On 2 occasions specifically, I had phrases coming in my mind which humbled by heart tremendously with feeling of love for the almighty / universe.
- Once it was during an early morning aarti at Vishram Ghat when it occurred to me in Gujarati – “mari chinta kare maro nath”; meaning, my lord is worried for my well being”. I could almost physically feel that the god / universe was genuine concerned for my well being and I couldn’t stop the tears from flowing.
 - Second was when I was doing Jal-Seva during early morning in Goverdhan, again a phrase in Hindi came in my mind very strongly – “pani pinewala bhi wohi aur pilanewala bhi wohi”. This statement was so strongly embossed in my mind, that again I could not stop the eyes watering while I was serving water to all the passing by Narayans. I could actually see the love and warmth in their eyes and smiles.
26. Recipe for Success:- It occurred to me that the recipe for achieving success in anything in life was –
- Clarity – Having a fairly good amount of clarity about what I want.
 - Actions – Working with 100% efforts & perseverance towards the goal.
 - Alignment with “Giver” – Doing step b. is my karma done well. The results still lies in the hands of Giver (god / universe/nature). So, alignment with the giver is very important to receive what the giver is giving (“teri rehmat ki kami nahin; meri ehtiyat main dhil hai!!!”). Different people do this using different techniques:- sadhana, prathana, daan, dhyana, satsang etc.
 - Wait (have patience) - Have patience for the universal magic to happen.
 - In the above process, he is the giver of result and we are the medium. Hence, witness attitude is very important. This will safeguard us against
 - the Ahankar or ego of doership
 - attachment with results
 - disappointment in case of failure
27. Hunger:- Most often in the day to day life we never (almost) experience what hunger is. Because we eat small meals on the prescribed times of the day (and many smaller ones in the interim), we miss this beautiful experience of “hunger”. I am so glad that Radharani graced me to have

this beautiful experience of hunger by not giving me food during a meal 2-3 times during the yatra. The advantages of hunger are –

- a. Body uses the stored fats – good for health
- b. Keeps us alert, as opposed to sluggishness after a meal
- c. Allows digestive organs to rest
- d. Gandhiji once quoted that – “hunger is the best physician” (written in Urli Kanchan).
- e. Reminds us to be in gratitude with the food we get
- f. Reminds us to do the prayers and remember the holy name of god.
- g. It is a tapa in its own right (Vrata)

28. Maya / Attachment:- Even during the sadhana of padyatra, I could feel the attachment with a place where I stayed for days; and a feeling discomfort in moving on to the next unknown way. How strong will this feeling be during the time of death, when it would be the time to leave this body and the surroundings (comfort zone, sansar) and move on to the unknown world ahead. Probably, this is what maya’s hold it all about.
29. Book in Iskon:- Read and remembered a beautiful thing in a Iskon that I glanced through in Vrindavan. It said that the cycle of any positive or negative action, has below steps:-
- a. Thought:- First a thought comes. E.g. let me put someone down; or let me eat that street food (which I actually may not want to eat)
 - b. Feeling:- Next comes a feeling or an emotion about that thought (e.g. mouth started watering, something starts happening in heart)
 - c. Willing:- Next we develop a willingness to do the action (although it may be something that we don’t want to do to the core)
 - d. Action:- Finally, we do the action.
 - e. The author said (even Manojji has mentioned of a similar cycle), when the step 1 or 2 happens, and we start to chant the name of the lord or maha-mantra we can break the cycle and not allow it to go to step 3 and 4. This way we can get rid of any habits that we may not want or gain a better control on ourselves.
30. Children:- Amongst many beautiful things that the kevat in Vrindavan, Sevaram shared with me, one of the thing he said was about children. He said that we have connections of karmas with them. They are borne of us to take things off us or give things of us. We don’t have a choice but to reconcile these karmas, by virtue of these relationships.
31. Sadhus:- I can now appreciate the rationale of the sadhus roaming about from one place to another and relate with them. Will help them, offer food etc to them, should I get an opportunity to help them going forward.
32. General Compartment of a long distance train:- Oh it is such a blast to travel in general compartment of a long distance train (this is something that I had never done in past, and would always avoid). Although there is some amount of physical discomfort in doing this, but if I am travelling alone with limited luggage, this is an ideal opportunity to connect with people and learn something from them. Also, it is a complete freak show – full to entertainment. (E.g. I met a hen named “Pramod” in the train and we had such a freaking entertainment around it).
33. Bhakti:- One of the very interesting and profound thing that the Sevaram, the Kevat in Vrindavan mentioned to me was that most of the time we all generally only pretend to do

Bhakti. Real bhakti happens only in the night when the world is sleeping. The kriyas that we do in the name of bhakti during the day is nothing more than pretence or hypocrisy. While this was just his opinion (or may be his Guru's), but I see his point.

34. Mom Tatva – On one of the evening that I was a bit disheartened, dejected, I remembered “mom”. Somehow, internally I pleaded and prayed (actually saying these words – “mom, I am not able to take this, please help me”. There was no logic, left brain involved; I had simply remembered by mom, in the need for soothing. And quite amazingly, the next morning 5 am when I was ready to leave from Vrindavan, I encountered the old lady who was going on the wrong way to Bankebihari temple and then I did Vrindavan parikrama when her on her insistence. The learning from this is profound –
- The “Maa” tatva is same / common. Be it Radharani; or my physical mother. Or, even the Maa that met me in Vrindavan.
 - The divinity is not about the individual person, but about that role. I think the management structure of nature makes this possibly in a very sahjaj manner.
 - I realize what bhairji says in his katha – “Maa ki apni ek ajag jati hoti hai”. And they are simply incomparable to anyone else.
35. IT Methodologies:- IT methodologies are so much a replica of other areas of life –
- On my 1st day of Jal-seva in Vrindavan, I could see a fully functioning Agile process at work. Some of the key characteristics I saw included –
 - Self Driven team, working towards a common objective.
 - Very high throughput, i.e. within a minute almost 40-45 glasses of nimbu pani was being served. (such a high demand being met). And, mind you this large quantity was being prepared just in time back the team sitting backdoors.
 - People working as “T” shaped professionals. Most people were swapping duties and taking over the tasks that were high load from time to time. Perfect example of all round functioning.
 - One guy acting as the SME of the process and very swiftly changing the process (the way in which the nimbu pani was served) at run time. This resulted in further productivity improvement.
 - The quality of communication was simply stunning. This is because there was no communication at all; without speaking people were understanding the need of the hour, what was required and working together. Had never this before, that unspoken communication had such a great power.
 - There was a very high level energy in the team. And, everyone was enjoying themselves.
 - Something happened next day morning between the main guy and some other folks. And this resulted into what appeared to me like a failed ITIL process –
 - Poor communication between people.
 - There seemed to be a need of a leader, some people trying as well, but proved ineffective.
 - Unmet demand.
 - 2 different processes flowing on the ground. Both not functioning as expected.

- v. Some ladies were doing their own thing in a corner; “trying” to help, but actually generating more waste (per Lean methodology)
- c. Day 3 was quite interesting. It was a day when the whole show was being run by the “B” team, as most of the front guys had left for Jaipur –
 - i. New people taking charge
 - ii. There were few challenges, but on job learning happened
 - iii. Inexperience showed up, but the energy level eventually picked up as one or two senior folks contributed.