

a. Personal

A. A life of *Nissaraṇa* ‘Let go’

1. [1956] Letting go of last name [S H S J] Silva, taken by dad under colonial rule (500 years – Portuguese (1505), Dutch (1658), British (1815)).
2. [1956] Letting go of English initials S H J [Sugunasiri], replaced by Su. Hae. Ja, in taking to the media in Sinhala [short fiction, media, radio].
3. [1956] Letting go of Western attire, and taking to wearing the ‘national dress’ [redda/baeniyama], slippers replacing shoes.
4. [1956] Letting go of English signature at the bank, and switching to Sinhala, by writing to the management.
5. [1958] Letting go of my first job as ‘Clerk’ upon earning my Advanced level [towards social mobility].
6. [1960] Letting go of second job as ‘Translator’ upon earning my BA (London) [towards social mobility]
7. [1962] Letting go of first job as ‘Labour Officer’ [towards social mobility].
8. [1962] Letting go of my Peugeot (EN 2411), when no longer required on the job, owning a car a rarity.
9. [1964] Letting go of prestigious job as ‘Asst Assessor’ with high income, just to take to writing.
10. [1971] Letting go of opportunity to live in Canada permanently with family, returning to motherland, ‘never to return to Canada’, simply out of self-responsibility to serve motherland [coming on Fulbright scholarship to the US earlier, but with no financial bond or other legal obligation to return].
11. [1972] Signing up for eye donation while in Lanka.
12. [1973] Letting go of Lanka, become ‘re-entry casualty’.
13. [1973] Donating my library to Sarvodaya, leaving Lanka for Canada.
14. [1980] Letting go of (*informally*) links to the Sri Lankan Canadian as well as the Sinhala Canadian community, beginning to work for the wider Canadian good.

15. **[1980 on]** Letting go (*in mind*) of any Sinhala Buddhist associations, “one of the very first beyond his community to hold lotus to the rock in Canada” (Prof Victor Hori & Janet McLeland, p. 397, *Wild Geese, Buddhism in Canada*, McGill U Press), the Chapter itself titled, ‘S H J Sugunasinghe: Buddhist’.
16. **[1985]** Stepping down from elected position of Founding Coordinator, Buddhist Federation of Toronto.
17. **[1990-2012]** Stepping down from invited / elected position of President, Buddhist Council of Canada (thrice).
18. **[2008]** Stepping down as Chair, Board of Directors / President / Professor, Nalanda College of Buddhist Studies.
19. **[2010]** Signing up to donate body upon death to the Dept. of Anatomy, University of Toronto, for research.
20. **[2013 or thereabouts]** Letting go of TV, Radio, Newspaper, turning myself into what a colleague characterizes as a ‘Turnip’ < TRNAP – ‘TV, Radio, Newspaper Avoidance Policy’, another characterizing me as ‘closet monastic’.
21. **[2015]** Letting go of a home in upscale Forest Hill, for the benefit of children, and moving to a Condo.
22. **[2018]** Letting go of lay life and getting ordained.
23. **[2018]** Upon ordination, letting go of (in mind) any identification with ‘Sinhala Buddhism’ or any of its Nikaya sectarianism.
24. **[2018]** Upon ordination, letting go of any personal relationships with both nuclear as well as extended family, both towards personal detachment as well as towards theirs.
25. **[for sometime now]** Letting go of attachment to Sri Lanka, USA and Canada, the countries significant in my life, though retaining all gratitude (*katannuta*), and all due respect.
26. **[for sometime now]** Seeking to let go of the least of attachments, in a 4-fold samma vayama effort – through avoidance, ditching, cultivating and protecting (*nivāraṇa, pahāna, bhāvanā, anurakkhana*) **seeking Nibbana in this very life!**

B. A life of Flexibility

1. Academic: Degrees & Subject areas:

- 1958: BA. London (*Pali, Sanskrit, Sinhala*).
- 1962-4: MA, Vidyalankara (incomplete, thesis written, one more subject to go, but not completed going overseas on Fulbright), U, Sri Lanka (*Sinhala Buddhist Culture & Civilization / Thesis*).
- 1966: MA, U Penn, USA (*Linguistics/ Thesis*).
- 1972: MEd, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, University of Toronto (Moral Philosophy).
- 1978: PhD, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, University of Toronto (*National Development / Thesis*).
- 1990: MA, Buddhist Studies, University of Toronto, Canada

2. Languages

- Sinhala (mother tongue).
- English (under age 10, Christ Church College, Tangalla).
- Latin (Junior High: Nalanda).
- Sanskrit (age 10 at local temple, Tangalla; Gr 12: Ananda).
- Pali (Gr 12, Ananda),
- French (U of Michign, USA).
- Spanish (self-taught, age 82) (Reading only [giving translated keynote in Cuba].

3. Post-Secondary Teaching subjects

Buddhism; Interfaith Studies; Sociology; Linguistics; English as a Second Language; ESL
Methodology; Psychology.

4. Writing

- Languages: Sinhala, English.
- Academic; Popular; Creative.
- Creative: short fiction, poetry, novel.

5. Psychophysical adaptability

After living 7 yrs in N America, spend 7 days at Sarvodaya camp, Sri Lanka, sleeping on the floor, drinking off coconut shell, eating on banana leaves, walking barefooted, attired in sarong and national.

6. Attire adaptability

- Western: short pants, white shirt, tie (Primary: Christ Church College, Tangalla; Secondary: Nalanda, Ananda) (1943-1953).
- Western to national: in first employment (1954-1956).
- National: rest of 7 years of employment (1956-1964).
- Western: studying in the US, Canada (1964-1971).
- National: returning to Sri Lanka (1971-3).
- Western (Tie & Jacket): returning to Canada.
- Buddhist robes: getting ordained.

7. Lifestyle

- From luxury in household living to simplicity in monastic life.

8. Sports

Athletics; Badminton; Cadetting; Cricket; Cycling, Ping pong; Swimming; Tennis.

9. Driving

On the right in Lanka, prior to emigration; on the left in Canada; on the right in the UK on a visit & next on the left again in Europe on a tour.

C. A life of inflexibility, ha ha ha!

- Living a Buddhist life, womb to tomb [research showing that life in the womb entails active participation and learning].
- Respect for parents, paying Homage even after passing away.
- Transferring Merit, on a regular basis, to those on my 'Merit circle', dead and living : nuclear family, extended family on both sides, teachers, friends & others who has helped me in my endeavours, or have had a critical relationship with me, in Lanka and Canada (then to now), those currently helping me in my life, both ordained Sangha and Lay, etc.
- Lifetime non-smoker; Lifetime teetotaler.
- Smiling ["Sugune will have a smile even on his deathbed" – High school friend]; ending up with the Ordained name Mihita, 'Smiling One', an epithet of the Buddha].