

**Osho Lao Tzu Library. By Ma Prem Kavisho. Unpublished manuscript. 1999. 5 pages.**

“Do you like books?”

“Oh yes! I love books!”

“Good. you can take on Lalita's job. When can you start?”

I was leaving the next day for one week, to France. So I would start on my return. I was thrilled! To work and BE in Osho's personal library. I had glimpses of the inner corridor of Lao Tzu house, few years before, as I was on my way to Chuang Tzu auditorium, for evening darshans, as one of Osho's mediums. The inner sanctuary, the long empty corridor filled with bookshelves, and the smells of Indian spices coming from the kitchen, silence melted into the giggles of the women working there. This is how started the adventure of being Osho's personal Librarian, in 1987, back in the ashram in Poona. It has been one of the richest time of my life, as a disciple. A disciple is " one who is ready to learn", I heard Him say, many times.

On my return from France, stepping out from the taxi in front of the ashram, i got greeted by Latifa, who happened to be there that very moment, and who announced my move into her room in Lao Tzu. She took my suitcases into her hands and led me straight into 'the' house. I could not believe what was happening. And the welcome, from Nirvano and other beloved friends... and the jet lag!!!! And the new room to share with Latifa.

All I remember, the next day, as i was taking a shower, getting ready for evening discourse, I heard lots of excitement just outside the bathroom door, in the corridor. Anando was announcing that she will be coming with Osho down the library corridor so we should all stay in our rooms, until further notice. And here I was in the small shower, my head full of shampoo... After a big breath I decided to just freeze as I could not move anyway. I felt so silly, all wet and full of soap. I was so very aware of each breath, as if the whole house could hear it. What a situation!!! My clothes were in the bedroom, the bathroom door gave directly into the corridor. I vaguely heard Osho's very soft voice, talking to Anando... and minutes later which seemed like hours, Osho was gone and we were free to move around again...

Actually what happened that day, was Osho touring his own house, downstairs, where at least a dozen residents lived, and telling Anando how He wishes to expand the existing library, to such an extent, that actually most of the downstairs residents should be given new accommodation somewhere else in the ashram. He wants the library to really take over the whole space. During His stay in America, the books stayed in boxes as Sheela never cared about setting Osho's personal library. Now all is possible and He wants us to expand the library and buy all the latest books, even though He is not reading any more.

When I heard the news I was certain to be one of the many residents who had to move out and I could not help laughing at this great Joke... To be invited to live in His house, an ultimate dream of mine, and this dream lasting 24 hours! But no, I was to stay. I was part of the library. After couple of days I finally made it to enter the inner room of the library, named as Ramakrishna. I was actually quite shy to step into it. Just like meeting a new lover, knowing my life was definitively taking a new turn.

Lalita and David were there welcoming me and Disha.. Lalita was waiting to pass the job to me and this she did with very few words. Basically, she said to be very graceful in handling the books, and that Osho wants the books to be put on the shelves according to sizes and colors. Nothing to do with subjects, only aesthetics. She was the one who organized the library in the old days, by making

hand written files and now as the books were just returning from the United States, it was up to us to do it all over again, this time with a computer.

Even though it was the simplest guidance, it sounded like Chinese to me, as I was discovering the huge impressive amount of books, an ocean of books, and of boxes full of books. She was saying to make waves with them... oh yes yes, I thought, sure! waves, ocean, colors, silence, cataloguing the ocean, being very graceful, becoming more and more aware of how to handle the books, yes waves of books in the ocean... and that's all you have to tell me? just that??? Lalita had been waiting for me since almost two weeks now, to pass on this guidance to me. And in less than 5 minutes: ocean, waves, colors, catalogue... good luck and enjoy!!

And so I joined the team in opening boxes, laying down the books on a big carpet on the floor and sorting them out by size and color. I remember trucks deliveries of enormous amount of boxes of books, just being cleared from the customs in Bombay. It was the beginning of monsoon, it was raining, the boxes entered thru the balcony doors, along with the mosquitoes! Mountains of books would dance thru our hands and disappear on shelves. It was actually a kindergarden play. Making piles of books the same size. Then choosing one book from each pile, of a different color and aligning them in a sort of a waving movement before putting them on one of the hundreds of empty shelves.

It was already a total wonder to come in contact with all those books that Osho read, but then, the biggest joy was when we discovered inside the books, one of Osho's painting. It was always such a surprise, such a thrill... The explosion of colors as we opened a book was breathtaking and every so often a scream would announce a new painting being discovered.

Osho has made incredibly colorful paintings inside the books, in the first page, which is generally an empty page. Never anyone had such an original idea. Osho loves books, one can feel it when spending time surrounded by the thousands books he gathered since his childhood. All books are signed and dated by Him, as he was reading them. It was like Ali Baba's treasure cave. Soon we had to reorganize the whole library just around those treasures.

So we decided to keep all the paintings separate, and the colored signatures, while still keeping Osho's guidance for size and color. And even later we discovered the marks that Osho made inside the books: small red and blue dots, next to sentences particularly relevant. So again we rechecked the books already put on shelves, as we decided to keep those books too, all together. And the whole shelves had to be reshuffled or rather rewaved!

From the beginning it was endless shuffling, endless organizing, endless wonder. Entering slowly slowly a timeless space of wonder, getting more and more sensitive, more graceful in handling those books. A title catching the eyes and heart, hands opening the book, starting to read, entering a mind, an intelligence, or falling into a joke book... worlds upon worlds opening. And letting it go... so many books! one felt that a life time would not be enough to read even briefly each one of those beautiful books.

At that time Osho was speaking to us twice a day. It was just such a treat after the meeting with him, the communion with the Master, to enter the library and be surrounded by those books. As you know, Osho loves jokes and so we had a joke department within the library. Three juicy swamis were deeply involved in finding and rewriting the jokes that our Master will then read to us in his own unique way. We had to create a special section for the joke books, and then too, bursts of laughter would crack up the atmosphere and we all wanted to hear the full story.

The library is very near Osho's bedroom, and I am sure He could hear all this excitement... at times we were reminded to not be so loud. And as we kept quiet for a while, we would then hear the girls upstairs working in the sewing room, their giggles and screams filling up the silence. It was just life singing its daily songs, along with the far away echo of the Buddha hall meditations and their music.

It was also at times very very silent, everyone being totally absorbed into his work, such a rich air to breathe. And watch. Shunyo was just round the corner, in the small laundry room, always absorbed, absolutely alone, just outside his door. Once in a while, quite rarely, I would go and say hello to her. Her whole being would lit up in a big smiling bright eyes face that could hardly contain her heart, so deeply rooted. And in her poised voice she would be right there, responding, just like now, each time I meet her. What a full presence, what a beauty.

When I needed to be more on my own, I was enjoying to take care of the books on the shelves near the laundry room and Osho's bedroom. There we keep one sample of each of Osho's books, in all languages. All his words published and translated in so many languages. Such an impressive and beautiful collection. By a single unique author, who actually is drowned and drunk in silence, in bliss, way beyond words. Our Master, a living contradiction, having absorbed all the knowledge of the world, harmonizing it with his own knowing, using it as a teaching device to catch His people.

Actually Osho stopped reading around 1980. Often I heard Him say, that He is a lazy man, and he could read more than 200 books a week in His reading days. But the moment it stopped, it stopped completely. He left it to his secretary to inform him of the latest world news, and in the library, when we started to buy new books, we could make a synopsis of the most interesting ones, and give it to His secretary. This is something that left such an imprint on me. The totality of His presence, reflected in each of his actions: speaking... dancing... walking... When a decision is taken it is always immediate, there is only NOW.

Osho has read nearly 100 000 books, he had to absorb the world's intellect in psychology, philosophy, religion, sociology, mysticism, only in order to catch us via his discourses. He had to do this huge work just to keep us busy with words to listen to, while he was actually giving us an initiation into silence and stillness. This library is so much the Heart of the Master, he did not need to read any of this for himself, it was only for us. The library is an invaluable gift of the Master to us, his giving his life for us to wake up to our true being. Slowly slowly I came to understand and feel what this library means, how much of Osho is in it.

Soon we were getting a computer, and David and I designed a special program, considering the best possible way to catalogue the library, and also to facilitate any kind of research that could be required. Osho gave a name to each room and corridor, we had a beautiful plan of this huge space dedicated to the library. With great excitement we started entering the books into the computer, having to look thru each book to find out in which category it fits and describe the best we could, the different subjects contained in it.

After just a week, Osho was asking if the whole library was entered in the computer! Well, what a shock!! We got the kick and started to organize on-going shifts on the computer, so we could enter as many books as possible. Meanwhile boxes kept coming in, and we kept filling up shelves and discovering great treasures, the many amazing paintings and colored signatures of the Master being definitively the highlight of the library.

Osho asks us to keep the library shelves locked at all times. In the beginning there were hundreds of keys, a different one for each cabinet. I remember once, passing thru the corridor and seeing a gap in one shelf. The books had to be standing really straight on the shelves. The best way was to make

the shelf tight. Definitely a book was missing, a gap was there. After enquiring with the friends working in the library, we could not explain this gap. And that shelf, in the corridor, was not yet catalogued into the computer. Then we heard strange stories, that in the old days it also happened, that a book could be missing. I kept asking everyone around about that book missing and it went into Osho who sent a specific message to really lock all the shelves all the time.

By then I had finally understood that I was actually 'in charge' of the library and this meant taking responsibility. As we were still unpacking books and filling up shelves, many shelves had to be opened while we worked and when came tea time and lunch, we needed to lock the shelves. I must admit that sometimes we were avoiding it, by asking one or the other friend working there, to take over the responsibility of closing up. The last one to leave would be the one. Sure enough it was quite a flaky system and I would get upset at the idea to have to be at all times the last one to go, and felt from my friends that I needed to relax more and trust more. Basically I had a hard time with taking responsibility.

And it happened again, another book was missing from a shelf... I felt so bad and so guilty that I started to inquire as discreetly as possible hoping that this book would show up and no one would tell Osho. How childish of me! Anando found out and went straight into Osho with the story and I got a good zen stick out of it, which actually really clarified this issue around responsibility and turned out to be a beautiful blessing.

Osho was saying " TO WITHDRAW IS NOT TO CARE ". It went IN. So simply put, so clear. And yes I do care. And yes out of love it is easier to take responsibility and pass on directives even to your friends. This was actually a major issue for me. How to be a boss and a friend at the same time. How to relax in responsibility. How to relate in responsibility. Osho gives me the key. It is such a gift to be exposed to the Master and to receive the fire of His zen stick.

Few days later Nirvano came into the library asking me if I had a sound system, a tape recorder, or a walkman, and I did not. So I immediately started to inquire who could give her one. I thought she needed one for herself. But she took me into her room and gave me hers, saying that Osho told her to do so. Osho just received a present of a new sound system and was giving his old one to her. And so it was that another gift followed the Zen stick. So much love and care and attention, from the Master. His love kept breaking my heart, opening it up, more and more deeply. Never ever I have received so much love, and let it come in all the way. Only the Master could reach there and heal this protected heart.

It took us almost a year to enter the books that belonged to the Ramakrishna room into the computer. All the 'special' books are kept there, the paintings and colored signatures, the books marked, the books that turned into 'sutras' for the discourses... It is also this room that has an AC. and dehumidifiers, so that the books are the best taken care of. During that year the remodeling of the room happened, closing the old balcony, putting a marble floor,. Construction site was all we knew at all times, around Osho. An on-going transformation of the physical place, mirroring maybe the inner work happening around the Master.

New shelves were being built out of aluminum and glass for the 'new library'. The residential spaces were all gone, as Osho saw it on that famous day and a huge space created with a marble floor and lots of windows, overlooking the garden, or rather the jungle garden. Nivedano was building a new waterfall, lifting mountains of marble rocks and going wild, in that jungle surrounding the new library.

We were for a while shuffled from one side of the library to the other, with our computer and waves of books and stash of boxes. In reality a lot of the work in the library was physical... carrying piles of books on top of a ladder, to reach the higher shelves... lifting boxes full of heavy books. I remember this ocean of books, endlessly moving, and taking me right inside myself, sitting on top of a ladder, handling and shuffling the most amazing books. To let myself be taken, entering a book... and letting it go... so many books, so many worlds... and just watching... inside the book: the specific mind of the author, the outside look of the book: the size, color and design... and watching the whole wave of books sitting on the shelf, its colors and movement. So many different visual dimensions...

And yes it worked! Aesthetics, colors, create a lightness unique for a library. I have been since then in many public libraries and not one comes close to the beauty and lightness of Osho's library. Aesthetics, cleanliness are the keys. It is an integral part of the Master's teaching. Such a multidimensional teaching, in which every situation is used as a mirror of awareness, inside/outside, so below/so above.

A kind of synchronicity started to happen, something beyond the logical mind, beyond the visible world. A synchronicity with the 'presence' of the books. The hands would 'know' by themselves where to find such and such a book. Maybe it was glimpsed few days or few hours before. Just moving with the energy, and here it was. It was amazing!

The library was absorbing me, i was becoming part of it. Intuition was taking over in a world where organization, computer, logical mind was a must. I started to fly more and more and enjoy the ocean, and its ongoing movement and rhythm of colors, its depth and mystery, and allowing it to take me over.

Never before with Osho I had experienced such totality in my being absorbed inside. Anywhere else, working outside in the gardens, or in the kitchen, or in some offices or other, I managed to stay on the waves of the ocean, to enjoy the ride with so many beautiful friends and having glimpses of the depth here and there, while working.

The library takes you in your own inner world, in a bottomless intimacy with the mystery. The richness and the mystery, the mind and no-mind melted into one space. Such an experience of knowing and not-knowing in perfect balance. The Library is such a device for the achieving mind. It is just endless. No completion possible. "The journey itself is the goal" Osho says. These few words, handwritten by Osho stand in one of the library window. Yes, this is also the Master's teaching. As far as I am concerned a big piece of the teaching!

When Osho started to speak in the Buddha hall, which was also just remarbled, we started using the space of Chuang Tzu auditorium as our working space. A temporary situation, actually like any situation!

We were piling boxes full of books as close to the wall as possible, so we would not intrude on Osho's privacy, when he was having his lunch on the balcony, just next to the hall. It was at that time an open space into the jungle garden, with mosquito net all around. A sacred space in which Osho gave his early discourses and evening darshans. A space where so many friends took sanniyas. A space of intimacy with the Master, a space of meditation. No one ever imagined I think, that it would become, just so soon, Osho's samadhi. Everything was going at such a pace, so much so fast...

For a while, the library staff, which in high season could rise to 15 people, and Anando's working space, with her two secretaries, were all squeezed in the smaller space possible, in a comer of the

new library, while the floors were being done all around. At that time Anando was crazy for a beautiful parrot bird, and she let it be free around. That was driving me nuts, as the beast was just jumping on books and dropping shit all over our desks. It was for a while a good device for my nerves and a crude mirror of the uptightness I was carrying inside. Here we were dustfreaks for Osho's books, and no choice but to let the bird be free for the happiness of Osho's secretary.

Around the Master, challenging situations manifest continuously. It is mostly through conscious frictions that the thousand years old conditionings we carry have a chance to melt. Any situation becomes a device, and it was so needed to be able to sit in meditation few hours a day. Connecting again and again, deeper and higher than all the emotional waves carrying me thru the day.

Meanwhile Osho's health was deteriorating, and the loud construction work had to stop at certain times so that He could sleep and rest. But he asked for his new bedroom to be built, and that was a major project. There was always urgency in the air... excitement... ready for the unexpected and the impossible... ready for miracles. After all...