

THE WAY OF THE HEART

Ojas writes about a reunion of Dutch sannyasins which took place in a pancake cafe in Amsterdam on 10th October 2017.

40 years ago one needed a lot of courage to leave your comfort zone, take a new name, walk around dressed in orange clothes and leave for India. In those days there were no smartphones, no ipads, and hardly any phone calls. Goodbye family, friends and colleagues. And hello Osho, hello Poona, hello new friends. Lots of us, between 1977 and 1981, had the time of our lives, living in the Dutch Palace, the ashram or other places in Poona.

And afterwards? After Poona? After Rajneeshpuram? We went away with all the memories and meditations. Lots of us stayed in contact with each other, many went their own ways.

How would it be to be together now? What would happen if we met again? During a small party with Baul, Laksha, Tonke and Ojas this question came up. And immediately the answer came: let's go and try to find our old friends and invite them for a huge, tasteful and juicy reunion. But where? In a pancake restaurant, the De Smickel, where many of us used to meet in the '70s.

In two weeks most of the addresses were gathered. We live in a network society; if you find a good friend, immediately you have a new cluster of addresses. And the enthusiasm was growing. More and more people wanted to join the gathering; there was a limit because of size of the restaurant, but there was space enough for 60 sannyasins from Poona One. And that was just okay.

On 10th October we all met at the De Smickel. Some had opted to wear our old colours so soon a sea of orange and red came into view on the parking lot in front of the restaurant. It was so amazing to see our friends of 40 year ago already on the train, or stepping out of their cars. Hugs, words of love, sweet nothings. Hello, how are you? Still in meditation? Do you remember...?

After a while we went inside the cafe and, inevitably, the pancakes were served. But before that there was a lot of singing. It created the atmosphere of the good old times. We are flowers in your garden... The river is flowing... Let the way of the heart... Ecstasy, when I look into your eyes... And then: silence, witnessing what is happening, being in the heart, the real treasure given to us by Osho.

A few hours to eat, drink and meet. Alive and kicking. Even the waiters were surprised. "We thought you were old people, but look..."

Quick exchange of addresses, lots of selfies, hardly enough time to take real good pictures. Time to say goodbye again. But on the parking lot, and back at home, we knew: we will keep each other **always** in our hearts.

What did happen in Poona One? Even after this reunion we still don't know. We knew that 40 years ago we surprised our families. Now we surprised each other. Osho was right: life is – here now. That is the way of the heart.

Text by Ojas