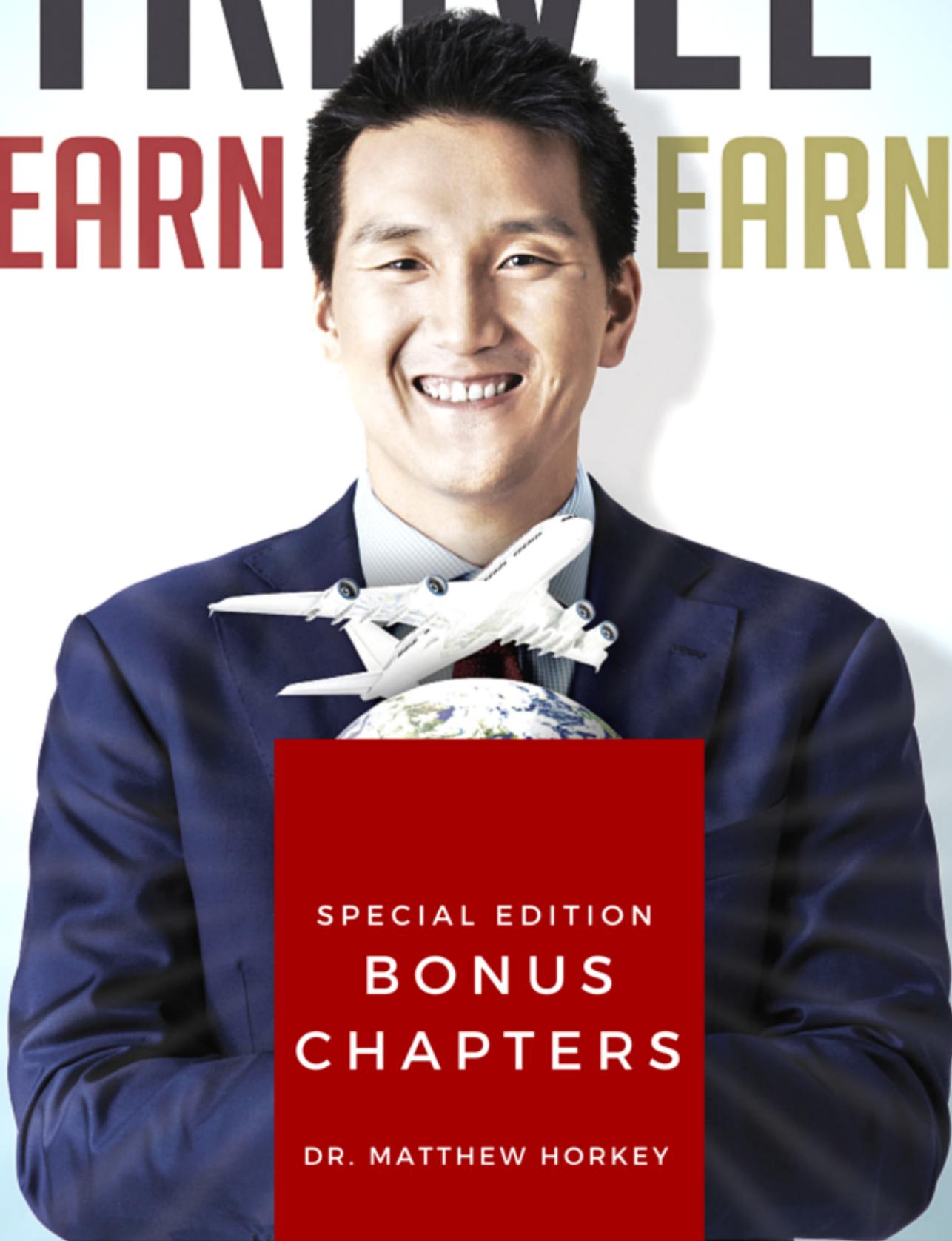


Let the World Be
YOUR GUIDE TO FREEDOM!

TRAVEL

LEARN

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SPECIAL EDITION
BONUS
CHAPTERS

DR. MATTHEW HORKEY



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Introduction

Sunday, May 17 2015

Writing is hard. Writing a book is extremely hard. You see, once a book is published, you can't change anything about it. At least not for the first hundreds to thousands of first-edition copies. That brings me back to a huge dilemma I had when I committed to writing *Travel, Learn, Earn: Let the World Be Your Guide to Freedom*. It was a choice between writing a full-out travel memoir or a semi travel memoir infused with tips that would add value to you, the reader's life.

Ultimately, the latter was chosen and that is why *Travel, Learn, Earn* became the book that you are now holding in your hands. An alternate universe exists where these next 50 plus pages are the physical book instead. Thanks to the digital age that we live in, I get to have my cake and eat it too. Both versions of the book exist, the print copy you are holding in your hand and this electronic book entitled *Travel Learn Earn: Special Edition Bonus Chapters*.

The following pages are a raw, first-person account of the pleasure and benefits of travel and what travel can do for you. Enjoy!

Gratitude

Friday, March 27, 2009

I had a great last day in Atlanta. It started out with an amazing breakfast, sharing my breakthroughs at Chiropractic College with my parents, dinner with my first roommate and my unofficial nephew, and sharing cakes with my good ol' workout buddy.

As I was leaving and saying goodbye to the boy, as I was holding him, it hit me. I was overcome with emotion and I could not hold back the tears. Knowing that this wonderful journey is taking a brand new path is exciting, unnerving, and scary all at once. In those moments, driving home with all my extraneous junk in the car, I really got that it is all about love and the relationships in your life. We have everything we need right here and now. That is what is going to make chiropractic practice special for each and every one of you.



I have done my best to get complete with everyone. However, I urge you to take the time to acknowledge someone in your life who isn't expecting it. I guarantee you will have a transformational moment for yourself and in the relationship. It will be even more powerful if it is someone who has no idea that you appreciate them. You never know if that acknowledgment will steer their life in a brand new direction.

I want to personally thank all of you. You all have enriched my life immensely. I will see you all very soon. I think BJ Palmer said it best, "I love you, because you love the things that I love."

Until Next Time,
Matthew Horkey

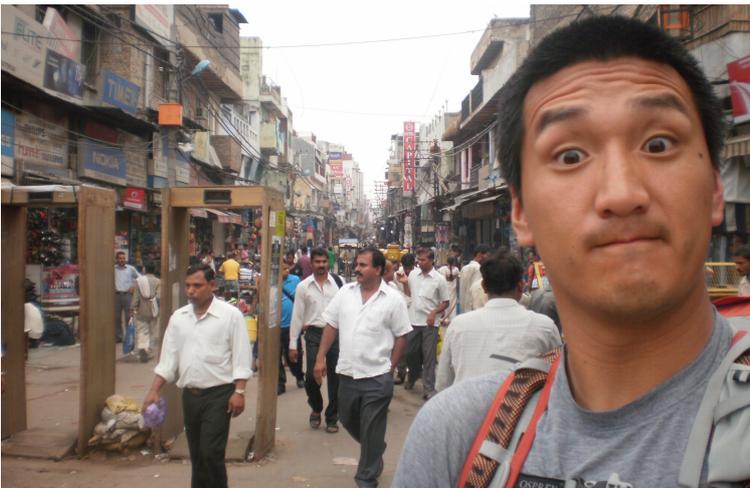
Adventures in India

Part 1

Sunday, July 5 2009

As the first few weeks in India have passed by, I am left with many lessons and experiences that have already helped to shape and develop me into the practitioner and, more importantly, the person I aspire to become.

The first few days taking care of people deep in the desert of Maharashtra were quite daunting yet rewarding. It was a great way to start out my career as a Doctor of Chiropractic. An ashram was hosting our Chiropractic Camp and people from all over the country came to see us. Everyone from the locals to people coming from the far reaches of Delhi. A man traveled 400 km (one way) to receive chiropractic care from me on five different occasions.



The first day was so challenging. I saw every condition under the sun; people were carried in or on wheelchairs; they were malnourished, deformed, and everything else you could possibly think of. It was so heartbreaking to see children in terrible conditions. However, it was inspiring at the same time as I saw how dedicated the parents were, many of them carrying their children on their backs into the clinic. All those people, most of whom had lost hope, saw every other kind of doctor. I was amazed at how many people came into the clinic with reports, x-rays, and MRIs.

In the first two days, my insecurities started to surface. It was so difficult looking into those people's eyes and not be able to tell them what would happen. Could I and, more importantly, chiropractic care help these people? I have seen chiropractic care result in some amazing things – everything from helping people overcome laminectomies to hyperthyroidism. However, those people were in terrible shape. What would happen if I couldn't do anything for them? On top of that, the weather was hot and conditions were harsh. I started to get an upset stomach. Could I even make it through the two weeks?

Victor Frankl, a noted neurologist and psychiatrist, said that when you are pushed to the brink, you have two choices – you can give in, or use your circumstance as fuel to create a new possibility for growth and salvation. One thing I have learned in my short time dedicating my life to universal principles is that every time you are pushed to the brink, if you remain grounded in the principles, the universe will always answer the call.

Answer the call, it did.

BJ Palmer, the developer of chiropractic once said, *"We chiropractors work with the subtle substance of the soul... That power that animates the living world."*

That always sounds great in principle. However, the leap from knowledge to wisdom, or from thinking to doing, is often arduous. Despite the difficulties, everything started to take shape. The universe answered the call. I had a child with cerebral palsy who couldn't walk; after his first adjustment, he took his first step. A four-year-old child with severe brain injuries took her first step with us too. Another child with hydrocephalus had a reduction in the size of his cranium. A man who had been confined to a wheelchair for years walked (without his wheelchair) into the clinic after four visits. Those were among the few great things to happen along with the countless cases of people who were starting to feel well.

One man told me that he is going to pray every night to the gods for me, while another who barely spoke English struggled to tell me, "I will never forget you." The subtle substance of the soul and the gap between knowledge and wisdom had just dissolved away.

If that great inner power can be unleashed and utilized in the sickly, mutilated and almost dying, think about what it can do for anybody else. What attracts me most to chiropractic is not the physical act, but the vitalistic and sound principles that it is built upon. The fundamental fact is chiropractic teaches people to trust that inner power in their bodies, and it is what we chiropractors refer to as "innate intelligence".

When was the last time that you trusted your inner voice? Today, in society, there are many reasons to not trust the light of your own soul: friends, media, family, and our very own ego. One of my mentors once told me that you become a master when the inner voice becomes louder than all the voices from the outside combined. Listen to that voice. I guarantee it will lead you to the right direction, and in the process, you might be surprised at what you find.

Until the next time - Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in India

Part 2

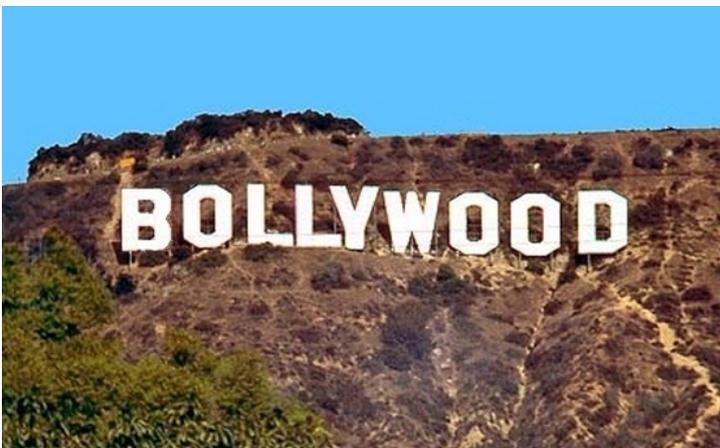
Sunday, July 12, 2009

Things seem to be moving at lightening pace with no hint of slowing down. My journey so far has taken me from an ashram in the desert of Maharashtra, to the monsoon rain drenched beaches of Goa, and the hustle, bustle, and polluted streets of Mumbai.

Some of the highlights were:

- Eating by the Arabian Sea and taking a quick dip afterwards in the lively sea late at night.
- Getting attacked by a monkey on Elephanta Island in Mumbai as it struggled to take possession of my Coke bottle. Seriously, monkey business.
- Being cast as an extra in a Bollywood film.

The state of Goa was an experience. The beaches were set in an enchanting yet extremely polluted backdrop and the monsoon rains drenched us all right down to the bones.



I was extremely impressed with the group that accompanied me. Despite the rains, we all made the best of it –walking through many of the towns soaking wet, haggling with the local shopkeepers without a tinge of understanding of each other’s language, and taking a late night dip in the sea. The food was excellent there, tons of fresh seafood done up in Indian spices, Goan style.

Generally, I love the food here in India although my stomach does not – no solid bowels for three weeks by now.

Mumbai was an interesting place: polluted, loud, smelly, and chaotic. The state of poverty and wealth gap was apparent – with the beggars and the homeless folks sleeping on the streets, and sometimes right next to 5-star hotels. As we traveled around the town, we got to experience a boat ride in the middle of a storm and an intermission during a film in a movie theater (I know I was puzzled too).

The start of my solo trip has just begun as I left all of my traveling companions on Friday as they flew back to the states. Immediately after I left them, I was cast as an extra on the set of a Bollywood film. The shoot was extremely long (5pm to 5am) and extremely hot; no way that any Hollywood actors would have put up with such miserable conditions. That said, it was thoroughly

entertaining – the film was about a terrorist attack on a hotel in Mumbai; I got to run around screaming in panic like a chicken with its head cut off, it came pretty natural to me. The cast was quasi-friendly and I was paid 500 rupees (USD10) for my effort, which was nice since I was clearly doing it for the money.

Heading up to see the Taj Mahal in the next few days. 17-hour train journey here I come!

Until next time

Dr. Matthew Horkey



Adventures in India

Part 3

Thursday, July 16, 2009

The Taj Mahal... one publication which I read described it as, "The best building in the world... period." Those are very assertive words! As I made the short train ride from Delhi to Agra, I found myself wondering if I was going to be disappointed.

Upon arrival, I was picked up by a local Indian I got acquainted with on a flight to Tokyo a few months ago. He and his wife chauffeured me around the town and as we entered the East Gate of the Taj, I began to get butterflies in my stomach. I was really about to see what Taj Mahal is all about.

Despite all the hype, it was just as magnificent as it had been described, if not more.



I approached it as the sun began to set. The light laid a soft, yellow glow on the massive white marble structure. There were intricate colorful flower carvings all over the mausoleum. It's hard to imagine any architects today would have the fortitude or patience to build something so magnificent. However, what really caught my attention was what the Taj stands for. Most of the great monuments in the world are built to honor gods or great deities. The Taj was built as a monument to a wife, a woman, and a mother. On a deeper level, the Taj was built to symbolize the power of love.

I have not had a relationship in my life with a woman that has moved me to that kind of level as of yet. However, to see a monument as fascinating as the Taj was awe-inspiring, considering what the power of love could make possible. As I looked deeper into my life and started seeing the order, I began to realize that I have no shortage of love. However, it is all in different forms: my mother, father, sisters, mentors, friends, colleagues, and even the random people I meet on planes and rides to far away places.

Love is the most unifying field in the universe. Many of my mentors describe love as support and challenge, so when you break everything down and see the intricate order in the universe, all that there is is love. Love is light, just like support and challenge – both balancing each other out to create love, all the colors of the spectrum blend together to form white light. Have you ever noticed when you are really attracted to someone, they seem to have a glow or they emit a higher energy? They are emitting light, they are emitting love.



What dims that bright light bulb? The biggest obstacle in emitting high energy, light and love is resentment. It can come in many forms – you can resent your girlfriend for being messy; resent your mother for being nosy; or even resent your own body for not being as sculpted as you would like it. Resentment is like a polarizing filter – we can still receive some of the light but not in its truest and purest form. When you are upset with a loved one, sometimes it becomes difficult to see all of the light or see the forest through the trees.

I know that, personally, giving up resentment is one of the hardest things to put into practice. It requires putting your ego down and becoming vulnerable. I know that, personally, relationships have not worked out in my life because time and time again, I refuse to give up my resentment and become vulnerable. However, if you see the order, vulnerability takes courage and to be vulnerable is to be powerful.

There are so many reasons for not giving up resentment: you get to be right, you get to dominate, you get to hold a grudge against someone. However, take a deeper look and see the order. Is holding on to that resentment worth losing a relationship, is it worth not shining your brightest? Take a look and may all of your bulbs be bright...

Until next time - Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in India

Part 4

Tuesday, July 21, 2009

Kashmir, a region made famous by Led Zeppelin (despite the fact that the song has nothing to do with the area), beautiful carpets, and the ongoing complications between India and Pakistan. In fact, Bill Clinton once stated during his presidency that Kashmir is "the most dangerous place on Earth".

For some reason, the area seemed to call out to me. After some research and inquiries with the locals, I decided that it was actually quite safe to visit the region. Landing at the airport, I was welcomed by tight security and a long extensive visitor form. Getting into the car and headed to my houseboat, I saw nothing but barbed wire, dusty streets, and a plethora of Indian soldiers. I was quite surprised as the Kashmir Valley is often described as "paradise on earth". The predominantly Muslim region bore more of a resemblance to the Middle East than India.

We have all heard the phrase "Don't judge a book by its cover". However, how often do we heed this advice?

Later, I arrived at a houseboat and was immediately in awe. The houseboat sat on the edge of a tranquil lake with the start of the Great Himalaya range in the backdrop. My hosts were a beautiful Muslim family who exuded warmth and a sense of home. That was a very welcome feeling coming from the oppressive heat and the relentless touts of Delhi.

I chose to dive into Kashmir head first. My six days in Kashmir consisted of shakara (boat taxi) rides to the floating gardens, sensational meals with the family, fly fishing, horseback riding, and the most delicious tea I have ever sampled in my life.

What I found as I dove further into the culture were beautiful, polite, and peaceful people. Quite a different picture than the one painted by the media. I have been to many places in the world, however Kashmir might be one of the most interesting places I have visited.





How often do we get turned off by something or someone based on hearsay, bad press, or a rough exterior? I have been guilty numerous times. Isn't it funny how once you get past everything on the exterior, often you find real beauty? Sometimes the stakes are high and you have to reach deep inside to obtain the courage necessary to take the plunge. However, I am a firm believer that you always get what you give.

Next time you find yourself having the urge to dismiss someone, something, or someplace, take a step back and give him or her or it a chance. You never know and might just find a diamond in the rough right in front of your face...

Until next time - Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in India

Part 5

Tuesday, July 21, 2009

There was so much hype about Kashmiri carpets that I felt there was no way that their quality could merit all the praise. I stepped into a shop simply because I thought it was necessary to at least look at them while I was here.

What I found completely blew me away. I was taken through a demonstration of the handmade process and patterns. Every single carpet was different and different families owned and used their own unique designs. A single person made each carpet and it could take them anywhere from seven months to two and a half years to complete a single carpet. Each carpet was unique in its own way. The designs were so intricate and they had a magnificent shimmer about them. They reflected light in such a unique way and the color changed as you laid the carpets at different angles. I was encouraged by the seller to walk on as many of them as I could, and as much as I wanted, because the walking would increase the value of the carpet. I was told that if you want to hang them on the wall, you should walk on them for several months because the foot traffic would help the colors and the patterns to become more rich and beautiful.



Then there was the kicker: each carpet was guaranteed to last three generations. Right – 300 to 350 years with everyday use! That was absolutely mind boggling to me. The fact that one person could work extremely diligently for seven months to two and a half years and create something that could withstand rigorous everyday use for 300 to 350 years!

What I found to be even more incredible is the fact that each and everyone of us has that ability, not to make Kashmiri carpets, but to create something that can go beyond ourselves and last for generations.

Some of the more successful businessmen today create business plans that extend beyond the traditional five- to ten- year plan. One of the richest and most successful man in China created a 300-year business plan for his company. When asked how he was going to carry out such a monumental task, he simply answered, "With patience..."

I believe we are all here to shine and create something that magnificent – be it a business, a product, or a family. The magnitude of our life is dependent on the magnitude of our cause. Think of some of the great men throughout history and you can see this in action: Edison and the light bulb, Da Vinci and the Mona Lisa, and even your own great grandparents and right down to you.



The vibrant
Kashmir carpets
with designs so
intricate and colors
that seem to jump
out at you.

"Genius is not the secret of few, it is buried in all."

We all have that power, and the beauty of it is that each and every one of us can create something unique. Just like the carpets, they can be similar but never the same.

I urge everyone to dig deep and find that something that you can be world-class at. – whether it is to build a big business or to be the best father. Look inward long and hard and I believe you can find it. BJ Palmer the developer of Chiropractic said it best, "Genius is not the secret of few, it is buried in all."

Until next time - Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in India

Part 6

Thursday, July 30, 2009

My biggest breakthrough of the trip thus far! The magical land of Ladakh has really stirred my soul. Very fitting that it is in the land of exiles. Here I am sitting on the disputed border of India, Pakistan and Tibetan China, and I feel like I am on the edge of civilization.

In the beautiful high desert region of the Himalayas, I have braved the highest motorable road in the world and the three highest motorable mountain passes, ridden a camel, taken a dip in the highest saltwater lake in the world, soaked up views of eminent Buddhist monasteries, and interacted with the Ladakhi and Tibetan people.

The people from this region have an unbelievable glow to them. It is unlike anything I have ever seen in the world thus far. I was so inspired by that elusive glow that I decided to register for a three-day Buddhist meditation retreat up in the mountains.

The retreat center was absolutely gorgeous and the scenery was awe-inspiring. Upon arrival, I was greeted by a few friendly monks. The routine for the retreat was arduous and taxing. It included waking up at 5 every morning, meditating for 11 hours, and taking a vow of silence. Every day, we did an hour of yoga at sunrise and the routine repeats again at sunset with the beautiful backdrop of the high desert and the snow-capped Himalayas in the background. The yoga, however, was the easy part.

Vipassana is the highest form of meditation practice in Buddhism. The meditation consists of walking and sitting. As I began the first day of walking, I found it hard to keep my mind from wandering. I was surprised to observe how much my mind wavered from the present and jumped between the past and the future. I found that I was never really in the present, always somewhere else. I guess you could say I was never here nor there. The sitting was even more challenging. Vipassana requires that once you take the sitting position, you observe any pain that arises and focus on the pain until you can identify every single characteristic and become present to it. Only then you can go beyond the pain and enter a completely new realm of possibility. This concept is not foreign to me; if you have a big bill, it doesn't make sense to put it aside and procrastinate. Ultimately, it will become more painful if you put it off rather than dealing with it immediately.

That said, becoming present to the pain and remaining still was beyond challenging for me. I am not the nimblest person in the world, and I am always restless, so I found it hard to get into the groove. The teacher kept emphasizing that the difference between meditators and non-meditators is the simple fact that when you become present and focused, you see yourself as an observer. Non-meditators see thoughts and emotions scroll through and take ownership of them.

Late on the second day, I was having trouble sitting. I was watching all the thoughts and emotions of my life thus far play on the big screen, flipping by like a picture show. I began to separate myself from them, and I became present to something.

Nothing is really mine.

The thoughts, emotions and feelings are present in everyone, in every form, at one time or another.

They all belong to an organization beyond the realm of our identities. In Buddhism, they identify this universal consciousness as dharma – a state where everything is impermanent. In chiropractic philosophy, we call it universal intelligence. It has also been named a number of other things along the course of human history. Aristotle called it Intellecti, the Christians call it the Holy Spirit, the Hindus call it Brahman, and the Agnostics may call it a fish or a spoon (that is a joke).

Some of the greatest minds in human history have delved into this universal consciousness to obtain infinite wisdom and insight. Einstein said, "All I want to know are the thoughts of God, and nothing more." If we can connect this bridge somehow or some way, we can have whatever we desire: health, wealth, happiness and freedom. It is available to all of us if we can find a way to go beyond ourselves.

I believe one of the most influential and profound women of our time said it best:

"I'm a little pencil, in the writing hand of a loving God, who is sending a love letter to the world."
– Mother Theresa

I urge you all to continue to write bold and bright.

Until next time - Dr. Matthew Horkey



The beautiful high desert region of Ladakh is covered with rock, ice, and Tibetan prayer flags



Adventures in India

Part 7

Monday, August 3, 2009

The last few days in the subcontinent rolled along at a furious pace. I arrived at a hippie town of Manali just moments before my bus bound for Delhi was about to leave the premises.

I patted myself on the back for traveling through and completing the exhausting but spectacular four-day, 700 km highway which ran from Srinagar in Kashmir to Ladakh AKA "Little Tibet" and extend down into the lush, green hill station known as Manali. My time in India was coming to completion.



In just six weeks, I had come across more varied landscapes, climates, and experiences than I could count – from the dry-grass deserts of Maharashtra, to the rain soaked beaches of Goa, the flooded concrete jungle of Mumbai, the skeleton of the Mughal empire in the deserts of Agra/Delhi, "paradise on earth" in Kashmir, and the bliss and serenity of the Buddhist monasteries of Ladakh. If I could say one thing about India, it is a land of extremes.

Lonely Planet states that the power of India lies in her ability to inspire, frustrate, thrill, and confound all at once.

It has been here, in the short month and a half, that I have lived my dream as a healer; watched the days go by in a houseboat; became an actor, a yogi, and a little nuts in the process. It has been here, too, that I was saddened, frustrated, and ripped off. When you put everything in the blender (adding copious amount of pollution, dirtiness, and poverty) and hit high speed... Presto, you have India as she has been to me.

Sitting in my friend's apartment and awaiting my flight out of Delhi, I began to conjure up images of my next adventure and how I was just ready to get out of this big, loud, and dirty country. I was completely zapped of energy. However, at that point, I started to get present to all of the things that

I

haven't done in India: tiger spotting on the backs of elephants, viewing the sacred Ganges and its holy cities of Varanasi and Rishakesh, and navigating the backwaters of the south. Reflecting on what kind of experiences I have had here, realizing how much more there is to do, and what an incredible time it has been. In that moment, it hit me hard and brought tears of joy and thankfulness to my eyes.

Many times in life, when we pushed to the brink by challenges and gigantic levels of emotional extremes, we find ourselves beat up and ready to cave in. What keeps us going? That moment of clarity when we realize that all those challenges really made us stronger in the end. What opens that door? Gratitude. When we can get to the point that we are thankful for everything in our lives, be it good or bad, we can really be free.

Having gratitude in the face of adversity can be a daunting task. We often don't see the order of how things serve us until it's too late. Wallace Wattles said, "To think according to appearances is easy. To think truth regardless of appearances is laborious and requires the expenditure of more power than any other work a person has to perform."

Let us take a look at those moments of frustration and try to see something different. If we can learn to make everything serve us, we become much more powerful. We don't have to come to India to see the order, not even out of the country. In fact, we probably only have to take a few steps to the bathroom mirror...

See you all in Thailand - Dr. Matthew Horkey



Adventures in Thailand

Part 1

Tuesday, August 11, 2009

I arrived in Bangkok and could not believe that a lifetime dream of mine had finally come to fruition. Oh Thailand – a country which I had been fantasizing about way back when I was young, playing against Sagat from Street Fighter II. Thailand always carried this mysticism about her that really intrigued me.

As I was on the bus heading to Bangkok, excitement began to build. I heard tons of tales from travelers about how modern Thailand has become and the traveler scene would be quite different from India. I really enjoyed the challenges that India presented. The descriptions of the Thailand of today led me to believe that it's now a posh and easily navigable country that has lost her original soul and tradition.

The bus sailed down the large, wide-open freeway and I witnessed a plethora of modern, western cars and skyscrapers. Poverty was not confronting at all; in fact from the outside, it seemed non-existent. The streets and the city were nearly spotless, almost sterile looking. As I pulled into the famous backpacker district of Khao San Road, I felt like I was at "Spring Break 2009". This was the exact opposite of my experiences in India.



The energy and atmosphere of what I have come to love about the east, more specifically Southeast Asia, was nowhere to be found in Bangkok. As weird as it sounds, I found myself to be a little disappointed. Was I going to find the adventure that had been ever present in my last six weeks in India?

I began to explore Bangkok and found that there was still a giant beating heart underneath all of the glitz and glamour. Bangkok was really like few cities in the world – I found myself lost in markets where no English was spoken and chickens were freshly fried right in front of you; the ancient Wats (temples) were nestled amongst the modern steel and concrete buildings; the gigantic six-story shopping malls contain club-like cinemas; boats remain as a form of transportation across the canals, alongside high-tech sky trains and the infamous Asian tuk-tuk (auto rickshaws) moving on the roads.



As I boarded a bus and headed away from the hustle and bustle of Bangkok and into the outskirts of central Thailand, I found even more things to be wowed at. I took a dip in the seven-tier waterfall of Erawan National Park while the carps nibbled my toes in the milky blue water. Afterwards I took a bike ride along the lush green rice paddies of the countryside. They were tucked in between giant limestone formations that seemed to be thrust up abruptly and carelessly from the flat plains. The sight was incredibly

beautiful. I started to really feel that sense of adventure that I have come to love about traveling.

I found what I was looking for the moment I dropped my expectations of what Thailand should be and accepted her for what she was. Often times in our lives, we live at the mercy of our expectations. This can be difficult because we become emotionally attached to the outcome – if the outcome suits us, we feel elated; if it doesn't, we feel disappointed. The whole time I was expecting Thailand to be something she was not, I was expecting her to be like India. The first few days, I was completely a slave to the disappointment that had existed only due to the expectations I had set.

How often in our lives do we expect someone or something to be something that it is not? A good friend once told me that the first thing she notices when dating someone is if he has expectations or not. I know often in my relationships with people, expectations have been like a loose thread in a yarn ball, unraveling the relationship.

It was a great lesson for me as I sat back and recalled the many people, places, and scenarios that had disappointed me throughout the course of my life. The second I was able to recognize this and gave up the expectations, I became totally free. Let us all take a look at our lives and see what expectations we can drop. The second we become truly present to this, we will gain a transformational experience and a new sense of freedom. Try it out and watch the power of presence in action...

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in Thailand

Part 2

Saturday, August 15, 2009

After a quick stop back in Bangkok, I boarded a train and headed for the mountains in northern Thailand. Unfortunately, I didn't realize how bad my seat was: a third class seat, with no AC, in a car packed to the seams, with an extremely hot and humid weather to boot. The 14-hour overnight train ride turned into a 17-hour no sleep, fun-filled extravaganza.

Upon arrival in Chiang Mai, I met up with three Brits and one Frenchman whom I had just met a few days before in central Thailand. The five of us plus two Italians, a French couple and our Thai guide strapped on our packs and headed into the jungle for a three-day trek.



The first day was a lot more challenging than I thought it was going to be. Sloshing through the mud all day, I struggled to make one of the climbs due to the uneasy footing. I fell no less than a dozen times, including a nice landing straight on my back. Despite all the early challenges and frustration, the trek was absolutely incredible – I rode on an elephant and a bamboo raft, killed and ate a venomous spider, made my own bowl and chopsticks out of a bamboo tree, and interact with the local people. The first place we stayed at was a one-family "village", and the second night we stayed in a seven-families village.

The first night, the locals invited some of us go to go night hunting with them. It was incredible to see how skilled they were. Their guns reminded me of old Civil War muskets. They even let me take a shot (unfortunately, I missed). Our breakfast the next morning consisted of their victims. So, flying squirrels do not taste exceptional.

We were having a great time getting to know each other. We had a special moment on the first night when one of the Frenchmen, the two Italians, our Thai guide and I sat down late at night and struggled to communicate with one another.



One of my fellow trekkers taking in the view during a brief rest. The rolling hills mixed with the green rice paddy fields created a magical environment for a truly magical moment in my life.

If you have a message to share with the world, don't hold back

The biggest breakthrough came for me after dinner on the second night. Often when I travel and people ask about what I do (as a chiropractor), it gets challenging for me. This is because there is often a slight language barrier. At times, such a powerful message of what I do gets lost in translation. This tends to get frustrating and at times puts me in a state of resignation.

As we were all sitting down, I began an in-depth conversation with one of the English girls about chiropractic philosophy, life and human relationships. As we went on talking, I began to go further into details about why I do what I do and the keys and tools available to everyone to be healthier and more self-expressed. I had really gotten on a roll.

I paused for a second and looked around. The whole energy around us had changed. Everyone had their eyes on me. As I continued, everyone started asking me questions. What was more interesting was the fact that the Italians, the three people from France, and the single Thai were just as engrossed and interactive as the English. The French lady told me that she was very thankful for what I shared, and even though she couldn't follow me completely, she knew what I was really all

about and wished me the best of luck.

In that moment, I became extremely present to something: when you have a message coming from a place of purpose, certainty and love, it will transcend many things, including language.

You hear it in a variety of phrases: the magnitude of your life is dependent on the magnitude of your purpose; he with the most certainty wins; and love conquers all. I am here to say that each one of those is absolutely true. When you come from a place of sheer being and share an authentic message that comes from the heart with purpose and certainty, you will become a more effective communicator than you can possibly imagine.

Communication is a lost art. There has never been a time in human history when we had more technology to connect us, but we are less connected than we have ever been today. Many times with loved ones, relationships begin to become rocky because communication breaks down. I urge you all to continue to be clear in your communication. When you speak, speak with purpose, certainty and love in your heart.

And if you have a message that you need to share with the world, don't hold back.

Special thanks to: Mad, Terri, Julian and Chris.

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey



Adventures in Thailand

Part 3

Wednesday, August 26, 2009

The next leg of my journey took me to the crystalline waters of the Gulf of Thailand. The aquamarine waters and stretches of blond sandy beaches were very welcoming after almost two months of traveling in the intense heat and humidity. It almost seems unfair that there are over 200 countries in the world and Thailand snags up a good majority of the best beaches on the planet.

Koh Tao, otherwise known as “diver’s paradise” was the first stop on the trip. The open water certification course was quite an experience. Getting myself familiar with all the equipment was exciting. What was more exciting was what happened once I dipped below the surface of the water. It was amazing to experience a whole other world. The sights, the colors and the marine life created a magical realm. Under the water, I saw everything from moray eels, to triggerfish, and even a little family of "Nemos". The colors and varieties of the corals and fish were intoxicating to the senses.

After surfacing, the world above the sea was just as terrific. The long stretch of sand coupled with a stunning sunset and thumping music created quite a unique atmosphere. After a couple of Thai massages right by the ocean at sunset, I began to surrender myself to the hermit lifestyle of southern Thailand.

The course ended and it was once again time to move on. Boarding a ferry to Koh Pha Ngan, home of the legendary full moon party, I was ready to sit back and soak up the laidback, beach-bumming lifestyle. After a few nights of mischief on an overdeveloped beach, I got onto a water taxi, intended to travel to somewhere a little quieter.

I arrived at a bay opened in front of a crescent shaped beach, with the backdrop of emerald green mountains and peppered bungalows all along the shore. Here on this beach, there was nothing to absorb except the white powder under my toes snuggled up against the crystal clear and mirror-flat sea. I rented a bungalow right on the beach for US8 per night. The next few days consisted of strolling on the white sand, eating green curry, bathing in the sea, and getting fed on by mosquitoes. The nights consisted of eating fresh fish and sharing stories with fellow travelers who were seemingly doing nothing but soaking up the sun and living their castaway fantasies. It was really quite a pleasant experience.

It was finally time to depart, much to my dismay. I hopped onto another ferry to the mainland. Standing and absorbing the beautiful sunset, the sky and the sea looked like an oil canvas. The beautiful reds, blues and yellows were elegantly on display, thanks to the artistry of the rays of the sun. It was in that moment that I reflected on my last few days in Thailand.

The last few months, post graduation, I have kept in contact with a multitude of people who are really out there making a big difference. At times during this trip, especially when I was in Thailand, I almost felt like a bum. I really have been trying to make sense of everything. I feel like I should be out there on the front lines making a difference as well. In those moments on the beach, I became really present to the fact that we really are, in essence, meaning-making machines.

Carl Jung once said, "As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light of meaning in the darkness of mere being."

We are all at the creation of the meaning we put to each and everything. It works as a double-edged sword. At times we create negative connotations to situations with absolutely no merit. While other times, we create meaning to manifest a cause bigger than ourselves. This ends up affecting the lives of thousands or millions. However, where does the base of our stories and "meaning" come from?

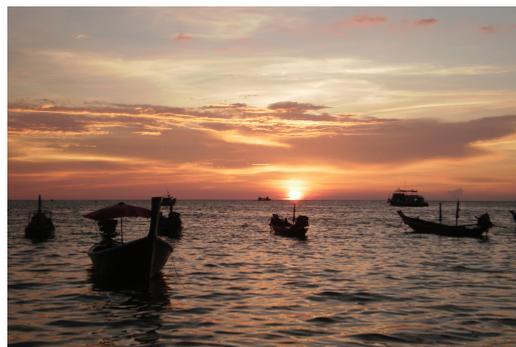
Like Jung said, it is simply "mere being".

On the beach, it was my fellow travelers who helped me reach that spot of consciousness, of "mere being". There was no meaning to being there except the ones we had all created. It was simply fantastic to just "be" everyday, watching our cares roll away like the waves in the ocean.

Getting to that "beach" in our minds can be a long and arduous task. However, once we get to that realization, we become free and our attachments begin to melt away. How different would our lives be if we took a look at every situation and every emotion, and asked ourselves, "What meaning am I creating right now?"

When that distinction becomes clear, a whole new world of possibility opens to us. We reach that "beach" in our minds. The wonderful thing is that we don't have to travel halfway around the world to get there...

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey



Sunset on the beach in Kao Tao. The beautiful sunset mixed with the pumping music from the beachside clubs made for an electric atmosphere.



The beaches are so beautiful that no Photoshop is required.

Adventures in Thailand

Part 4

Tuesday, September 1, 2009

Thailand is often referred to as the "Golden Land". This is not because the land is blessed with precious metals but because of the vast amount of diversity, natural resources and the disposition of the people. I definitely see the reason behind the nickname, and the country is definitely at a cultural crossroad.

I spent my last days in Thailand bathing myself in a little luxury and Western comforts. The day before my flight, I checked into a five-star hotel (at a very reasonable price) and shopped around Siam Square, Thailand's evidence of global westernization. In the afternoon, I strolled around the mall and picked up a pair of dress shoes and bought a ticket to the American movie, GI Joe.



The theatre was something else. For around USD6, I got a ticket for the movie screening, a soda, and a bag of popcorns! Inside the theatre, I sat on a reclining couch with a blanket – quite an interesting and comfortable way to see a film on the silver screen. The cinema was beyond any kind of movie experience I had in America.

On the way home, I took Bangkok's infamous sky train and soaked in the views of the quintessential cosmopolitan Southeast Asian city.

As I stared out at the skyline, I realized that I had travelled through Thailand at exactly the right time in my journey.

Thailand is fascinating to me because it seems to me that it doesn't know what it really wants to be. Half the country is caught up in the Western lifestyle, modern conveniences, and an influx of tourism that has brought a new degree of wealth along with it that is not common among some of its fellow Southeast Asian countries. However, there is another part of Thailand that remains hidden from the millions of tourists flooding the land. Here, you can still find villages tucked in the mountains on the borders of Laos and Myanmar (Burma) where life slows down to a crawl and people still live off the land. There are still parts of Bangkok where people don't speak a lick of English and are happy to slaughter and fry up a chicken right in front of your face. Thai people are

the best I have seen in my travels over the last five years in terms of balancing their cultural identity and sunny disposition, with a wave of influence from the Western world. However, there is still a sense of uncertainty, and I feel that I could return to Thailand within my lifetime and discern no difference between America and the "Golden Land" (besides the fascinating Thai landscape).



Through my adventures in Thailand, I have heavily observed the two sides to myself as well. One part is

a little sad knowing that I am over halfway through my travels, and the nomad lifestyle I have adopted will be put to rest for at least a little bit. The other half is very anxious and excited to get my life of service started as a chiropractor in Singapore. Living life out of a backpack in new places all the time has been invigorating, mysterious and exciting. At some point in my life, I would like to do it for two years. However, transforming people's lives each and every day and seeing long-term changes in the way people function while in practice also provide a feeling that I have found unparalleled.

To me, the Chinese Dao is one of the most powerful symbols in the universe. The yin and the yang represent the dichotomy in the universe, both sides of the coin, the balance between lightness and darkness. All this is wrapped into a circle, representing the complete cycle of life and being separated by a wave. For me, it was a symbol that spoke loudly to me on this leg of my journey.

I was in the right country at the right time. During this part of my adventure, I had struggled with the major question in my life at the time: whether to squeeze a couple more months of travel in versus committing to a definite date of arrival in Singapore – much like the dilemma I faced in Thailand. Sure, I loved the convenience of travel and the comfort of the Western world. However, this minimized the adventure of traveling in a developing country. In the end, right before I left, I saw everything come full circle.

How many times in our lives do we see things only from one side? Just like the wave that separates the yin and the yang, we waver between both sides. This teetering of emotions can get out of balance at times and keeps our attachment to only one of the two sides. Seeing only one side of the coin limits our creative mind, and it keeps us from seeing things full circle. However, when we integrate, we see the order, and we see full circle. The world of possibility opens up. For me, it was helpful to understand the dichotomy in my life: travelling versus committing to buckling down and Thailand's Western versus adventuresome side. I was able to see that both sides are what make the people, places and things what they are, not what they should be.

Do you see the full Dao of the people, places and things in your life?

See you all in New Zealand... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in New Zealand

Part 1

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

My desire to head down to the bottom of the southern hemisphere precedes Frodo and Sam heading to Mordor (*Lord of the Rings*) and Murray failing to book gigs for Brett and Jermaine (*Flight of the Conchords*). Since I was already on this side of the planet, I thought why not go to the "kiwi" land. I was mistaken; it was still a good nine-hour flight from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Auckland, New Zealand.



Upon arrival, I was greeted by a fellow chiropractor. I cleaned myself up before attending the New Zealand College of Chiropractic Lyceum. Everything about the conference was entertaining and encouraging: the lineup of speakers; the students; the faculty; and most importantly, the direction of the profession in New Zealand.

I took a tour of the school and had a meeting with the president, Dr. Brian Kelly, and was

beyond impressed with how much had been accomplished with such a small (albeit beautiful) facility and student body. The spirit and perseverance of the faculty, administration and students were very inspirational. The school is analogous to the land. For such a small country, New Zealand gets a lot of things right –their policies on government, the environment, the sustainable foods, the direction of my profession, and not to mention some of the most eye-popping scenery on earth. This is the nation of four and a half million people that is not afraid to speak out for what she believes in – the country made waves around the world years ago with its anti-nuclear stance, earning the label of "the mouse that roared".

Spending time with my "kiwi" friends reiterated that thought. The people are very similar to the land they reside in, quiet and laidback, yet proud and confident.

This is the land of The Lord of the Rings, Flight of the Conchords, Wellywood, and the Milford Track. A country that is jam-packed and bursting at the seams with great things, people, and places in a very small area. It is a country that despite its small stature, she is dying to be heard.

But isn't that what we all want for ourselves?

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in New Zealand

Part 2

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

The first leg of my adventure has been a challenging one. I really had to apply everything I have been writing about the last three months and put it into practice.



After attending an amazing conference over my first weekend, I found out that my credit card had been locked and my debit card numbers had been stolen. I sat in my friend's house for three days with no money, just itching to get out and explore. It was really frustrating to travel this far only to be confined to a small suburb outside of Auckland while I waited for a new debit card to be mailed to me. Not only that, my bank was not helpful throughout the process. My card arrived three days later than promised.

Once I finally got on the road, I tried to rush to the first destination – Lake Taupo, the skydiving capital of the world. As I was awaiting my first skydive, I was given a no go due to the high winds. It was especially frustrating looking outside and seeing the crystal clear weather with not a cloud in the sky.

I chose to move along and make my way to Tongariro National Park, home of “Mt Doom” from the Lord of the Rings trilogy. It is where, reputedly, the “best daywalk” in New Zealand resides. Upon arrival, I was informed at the office that the daywalk, an alpine crossing, would probably not be navigable for the next few days due to fierce winds.

I searched from guesthouse to guesthouse for a bed to no avail. It seemed as if the whole tiny town had been booked up. Thoughts began to creep into my head, “Should I have just stayed in Southeast Asia instead of heading this way?” New Zealand was much more expensive than I had expected, and the early spring months made for short days, with the sun usually setting at 6 p.m. I began to feel quite upset with everything. Feelings of resentment came into play and I kept asking myself if I had made the right choice. In that moment, I settled down and made myself see the order: while we had the card saga going on, my friend managed to negotiate a deal and got me a very inexpensive rental car. On top of that, I am beyond lucky to even be able to travel and take in all the experiences I have had thus far.



It is amazing what happens once your mindset and state of being changes.

The next day, the crossing at Tongariro National Park opened up. Not only that, there was not a cloud in the sky and the weather was beautiful, albeit a bit cold. The national park was absolutely stunning. Upon a flat plateau sat three volcanoes that just shoot up out of the earth. The three volcanoes were aligned in a straight line, and each was progressively taller, with the perfect symmetrical cone of Mt Ngauruhoe (Mt Doom) straddling the middle.

The climb up the crossing in the winter conditions was amazing. We went from brush to volcanic fields to a high alpine environment. As we strapped on the crampons, we headed up the 60-degree slope, braving wind gusts that reached 40 mph at times. We were rewarded with a beautiful summit on the red crater. The summit was not snow covered due to the slumbering volcano, which exploded several times in the last decade. We were also rewarded with incredible views of the other two volcanoes and the surrounding snow-capped ridges. The adventure had really begun; that was what I came for.

Often we have a breakthrough and feel as if we have arrived. The truth is that we never arrive. Breakthrough and transformation are not a one-time thing. To live a powerful life, we have to continuously look at whom we are “being” and know how to get back on the track when the train occasionally derails – and derail it will.

Keep looking and keep living.

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey



Adventures in New Zealand

Part 3

Friday, September 18, 2009

The last few weeks have taken me through the sophisticated streets of Wellington, the artsy bars and cafes of Nelson, and the cool rolling vineyards of Marlborough.



After a wild night with the locals at their holiday ski home at Tongariro National Park, I spent an entire day sampling the best of New Zealand white wines, including the famous Sauvignon Blanc from the Marlborough region. I decided it was time for a slower pace and made my way to the beautiful Abel Tasman National Park.

The spring weather in the South Island was quite fickle. Periods of clouds and rain were often followed

by intermittent periods of sunshine with no regularity whatsoever. The cloud cover was high, but I decided to embark on one of the nine "great walks" of New Zealand, the 41-kilometer (24-mile) Abel Tasman Coastal Track.

The walk was a great contrast to the sprint I had earlier during my time in New Zealand. I had felt at times that I needed to rush to get to certain places. However, here on the track, everything slowed down to a crawl as I tramped along the trail that hung to the side of the mountains above the empty beaches and beautiful aqua marine water. The rocky outcroppings shielded all of the beaches, creating a sense of calmness to the sea.

As the first day came to an end, the scenery was minimally impressive at best. The cloudy and dull sky created an almost depressing effect. As I approached the mountain hut, the trail dipped down from the tree line and the forest parted like the Red Sea. A beautiful and totally desolate cove appeared in front of me, and a beautiful stretch of blond sand awaited my achy feet. As I sat there and ate dinner on the beach while listening to the waves roll in, the clouds seemed to melt into the mountains, it left a misty effect as the clouds started to sink down in between the valleys around the peaks. Just as the clouds began to separate, the sun set and laid a perfect palette of reds, pinks and blues on the mountains and the sea. Like a blooming flower, the beauty continued to flourish with certainty and serenity – the sun began to sink even deeper and the stars slowly filled in the spaces between the clouds. The high cloud above the sea began to retreat and the stars flooded the skies. I sat there in awe for three hours as the sky completely lit up with celestial lights



**The beautiful cove
at the end of the
Abel Tasman Track.
The amazing sunset
gave way to a sky
full of stars.**

accompanied by the soft glow from the Milky Way. I felt an incredible sense of calmness and belonging, which was absent during the first few weeks in the "kiwi" islands, in those moments.

The next few days on the track were just as amazing: beautiful clear skies, empty beaches, and a water taxi ride accompanied by a school of dolphins playing around the boat. The slow pace was very welcomed and it was amazing what I could see and feel as I took the time to open my eyes and just be.

So often in our lives we get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Western life – be it running around, getting things done at work, getting the kids from place to place, or even zooming around somewhere special and trying to take in all of the new sights. What would happen if we took the time to stop and smell the roses? What would we see? What would we feel?

That's something that will be different for each and every one of us. So slow down and see what you find...

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in New Zealand

Part 4

Monday, September 21, 2009

John Lennon once told Rolling Stone magazine, "Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans." On one hand, I disagree with John. I love taking the time to plan my life. Do you have a destination? If you do, how are you going to get there without a map? In other words, having a plan and an idea of directions are important. On the other hand, I believe also that those moments that happen sporadically enrich our lives each and every day; I think those are the moments that John was talking about.



The next portion of my adventure through the South Island took me to the west coast. The rugged and wet (it receives 18 feet of rain per year) west coast has often been referred to as one of the top ten scenic drives in the world.



After a much-needed night of rest in my car, high up in a small mountain town, I made the choice to make the drive and take things slow and without a plan. The coast was uncannily similar to Big Sur and the Oregon coast in many ways. The drive was absolutely incredible – a small two-lane highway hugging the wild Tasman sea on the right with the towering Southern Alps on the left. Along the coast were massive grazing lands interwoven between sandy beaches and rugged hanging cliffs. All of this was highlighted by day after day of sunny weather and blue skies.

I had the southern fjord lands with the legendary Milford Sound in my sights. That was my plan, my destination. After taking a stop in a small mining town, I began to just relax and let things happen. The next few days were gratifying and were kicked off by the most amazing brewery tour I have ever taken. At the end of the tour, we were instructed to sample as much beer as we wanted within the allotted time frame and to serve ourselves behind the bar.

I met some travelers on the brewery tour and spent the next few days with them occupying ourselves with activities, which included glacier hikes, blowhole formations on the sea, Aussie fights, and a random bonfire by a mountain lake on the side of the highway (complete with S'mores and hot dogs of course). All of this was capped off by a skydive high above the over 12,000-ft high Mt. Cook, with views of the rest of the snow covered alps and nine glaciers. The one-day drive turned into several highly entertaining and action-packed days. Not a bad detour from my plans.

We always seem to be on the move. It always seems as if we have tunnel vision and we need to get there right here and now. What would happen if we took the blinders down and allowed life to happen to us? This is what keeps us from really experiencing some of the great sporadic moments that make us feel alive. I feel like the other side of the coin can be just as debilitating. Sometimes, we find ourselves floating through our lives with no destination, reacting instead of dictating our lives. This keeps us from experiencing and expressing the amazing power that each and every one of us possesses.

I strongly believe that the quality of our lives is determined by the quality of questions we ask ourselves. So... What is your destination? Have you constructed a map? Last of all, like John paraphrased, are you alright with taking a detour?

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in New Zealand

Part 5

Monday, September 21, 2009

If you are a backpacker, tramper or traveler, you would have heard or will hear about the Milford Track at some point in your life. In 1908, a London newspaper published an article on the track with the headline “The Finest Walk in the World”.

Over one hundred years later, the title still stands, and at some points during the high season, you have to reserve a spot, up to a year in advance, to walk on the track. The four-day trek starts with a boat taxi across Lake Te Anau and traverses through mountain passes, glacial valleys, wetlands and rainforests before the majestic Milford Sound unveils itself. This legendary walk is one of the main reasons that I have travelled to New Zealand.

I had my hopes incredibly high as I arrived in Fjordland at the end of the winter season. Much to my dismay, I learned that no one has completed the track this winter, and it is currently impassable due to high avalanche risk. The lady at the Department of Conservation obviously saw the disappointment in my face, as she tried to suggest a multitude of other things to do instead.

The Milford Sound was something that I had fiercely wanted to see for the last five years. I would have preferred to arrive there on foot, watching the view open up from the rainforest after a long, arduous four-day tramp. Nonetheless, I approached The Sound by car, albeit feeling a bit disappointed. The 100-mile journey started in the grasslands and approached glacial valleys, mirror lakes and towering mountains moving forward. I finally reached the Homer Tunnel, an



amazing engineering feat that took more than 20 years to build. The tunnel, only 55 years old, burrowed through the base of the mountain and opened up in a giant fiord on the way down to The Sound. The view was nothing short of spectacular. Following a winding road heading to the water, there were towering cliffs on each side filled in with green, lush Jurassic forest. Then, the view opened up. Milford Sound was unbelievably beautiful. Iconic Mitre peak sat in the center of the mountains that rose vertically out of the water, as if they were shot out of a cannon. Truly, it was a mind-blowing sight.



Kayaking the majestic Milford Sound has to rank as a personal Top 3 All Time travel experience for me.

That night, we ventured down to see The Sound under the stars. It was an uncharacteristically clear night (Milford receives 27 feet of rain per year). Milford was heartbreakingly beautiful at night. The shadows of the monstrous peaks were filled in with the bright twinkling of the heavens, mixed with the soft glow of the Milky Way. The stars shed so much light that I could see the snow on top of the black shadows of the mountains. The melody of the calm water as it hit the beach beautifully synchronized with the roar of a large waterfall off in the distance. I sat there in complete awe. The sight was so beautiful that it brought tears to my eyes. I reached into my pocket for my camera, and as I turned it on, the screen remained black. Some things are just not meant to be photographed.



Walking along the Kepler Track

The next morning, I explored The Sound via sea kayak. The clouds returned that morning and brought rain. The clouds and mist dipped in and out of the mountains and valleys and created a mysterious effect. The rainwater fell and beaded on the mysteriously black, yet crisp water of The Sound. We seemed dwarfed as we kayaked along the mountains. Everything about it was spectacular. The rocky cliffs shot out of the water and met with the rain, creating a cascade of waterfalls at literally every corner. The Sound was arguably the most beautiful thing I have ever seen; experiencing it at water level from the kayak made everything more magnificent. The day trip was completely awe-inspiring and one of the favorite things that I have ever done.

A few days before that, I was utterly disappointed because of a minor setback. So many times in life, we experience disappointment and find ourselves stopped dead in our tracks. In actuality, that setback does nothing but opens a world of possibility if we are willing to look deeper. If door number one is locked, what is behind door number two? Why don't you open it and tell me?

As for the Milford Track, is it really "The Finest Walk in the World"? I don't know, but if it is anything similar to The Sound, I'll be on a plane back to New Zealand very, very soon.

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in New Zealand

Part 6

Monday, October 12, 2009

Cold and rainy pretty much summed up the last few days. As I sat in my car trying to stay warm, the rain remained relentless, obstructing my views through the windshield. I managed to keep my eye on the prize – a small outcropping just off the shore.



I sat and watched, as the wind remained strong and constant, creating three-foot swells that kept violently crashing into the windswept white sands. The beach was beautiful, snuggled in between a couple of giant green cliffs. However, the sky remained bleak and grey; those were not ideal swimming conditions. I watched patiently for about an hour, waiting for the sinking tide to fall to the rocks. The water level was falling, closer, closer now, it was about that time. Now!!!

I got out of my car and took off, the target in my sights, joined by about 30 other people who had been waiting anxiously in the car park too. All their eyes were on the same thing – the stretch of sand that sat in front of the rocks. Everybody was braving the cold weather in their swimsuits, with shovels in hands. The scene resembled a mixture of a department store on Black Friday and a low-grade horror flick. The sprint was soon followed by a symphony of shovels hitting the sand; dirt was thrown in every direction possible. Holes and small dirt walls were sprouting up all over the place, only to be filled in and toppled over by the waves that kept crashing into them, negating all our hard work. I was beginning to feel my toes go a little numb. It was freezing!

At last, I defeated Mother Nature temporarily; I took a seat in my little hole. Hot spring water seeped up through the sand, mixing with the seawater to create an intimate, natural and relaxing hot tub. I instantly began to feel a sense of relaxation. The stress that had built up in my body from the sprint and digging melted away. I sat there and kicked my feet back, watching the waves come in. The rain continued to fall and the people were laughing. What a unique place – the “hot water beach” on the North Island.

The last couple of weeks have been wonderful. My journey has taken me from the large deep fjords of the south to the snow-capped peaks of Mt Cook, the art deco architecture and rolling vineyards of Napier, and the “burbs” and golden islands of Auckland. New Zealand is a unique place. It is as if Mother Nature took every possible landscape possible, threw them into a blender, took the mixture, baked it and then cut it into two pieces. Voila! Welcome to New Zealand.

Yes, the landscape is incredible and the views are impeccable. However, I really needed the experience at hot water beach. I was beginning to feel a little bored until that cold, rainy day at the beach reminded me of something: the contributions of people in my life.

I am always fascinated by nearly everyone I meet. Travelers have a special place in my heart. Mark Twain said, "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness." I have always been impressed with people I meet when I travel because they seem to embody this statement. Travelers always seem to be open to new ideas, people and places. They are always interested in not only exploring the world but also exploring themselves. That is something that really resonates with me.

Something special happens when you travel. I personally believe that when you travel, it's not about what you see, but who you become. As I start to come down the home stretch of my big adventure, I find myself appreciating this idea more and more. However, this principle is not exclusive to travelers. You don't have to go to the ends of the earth to appreciate it; all of us are having a big adventure called LIFE. And afterall, isn't life all about who we become?

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey



Adventures in New Zealand

Part 7

Thursday, October 15, 2009

After 46 days and 5300 kilometers (3,180 miles), my road trip through the land of Mordor has come to a close. Everything you have ever heard about the country is true.

New Zealand is the land of boiling mud pots; elegant beaches; volcanoes; rolling green hills; and towering, formidable mountains. It comes as no surprise that Peter Jackson chose to film the Lord of the Rings in his home country. The country has left such an impression on me. There was only one thing missing: although I had a great time, I did not have a vast sense of adventure – the feeling of being lost – in my seven weeks on the two islands.



In my last few days, I took a ferry out of Auckland to Wahike Island. The tiny golden island was jammed packed with vineyards sitting atop hills, encased by long stretches of white and blond sand beaches. Another beautiful part of New Zealand; surprise, surprise.

I got lost on the bus system and chose to get off just see where my feet would take me.

As I strolled through the beautiful countryside with not a cloud appeared in the sky, I had absolutely no idea where I was going. I walked slowly, one foot in front of the other with a huge smile on my face. I very much welcomed the feeling of being lost. New Zealand, being a western country has great roads and tourist facilities, even the trails are all very clearly marked, it takes effort to get lost in the country.

I walked for about an hour before stumbling upon a beautiful winery. After pleasing my palate with some excellent Cabernet and Syrah, I took a walk through the vineyard. I looked up. In front of me was a large green hill surrounded by a fence. The grass on the hill was vibrantly glowing and the cloudless blue sky made for an unbelievable contrast. There was nothing on the hill except for a lone tree. The tree was large and impressively vibrant.



After the steep climb up the hill, I found the tree had a little platform built on it, complete with an old wooden ladder. The view from the tree was magical; the rolling vineyards surrounded by the emerald waters of the bay, which was peppered with white sail boats. All of this was complimented by the backdrop of the blue, sunny sky. It was the perfect place to sit and do absolutely nothing. I sat down and my mind wrestled between the last four incredible months and mentally preparing myself for the next three years in Singapore. After awhile, the noise in my head started to clear. I found myself just sitting there, in the space of absolutely nothing, letting myself get lost once more.

A phrase that we have often heard is, "You need to lose yourself to find yourself." However, as I keep living, gaining more and more experience in this adventure we call "life", I continuously find the complicated beauty in both. I have met so many people who said that the reason they are traveling is to find themselves; we become scared of being lost. I would like to suggest however that we appreciate the feeling, the anxiety, and the uneasiness. I have found it to be an utterly exciting feeling. It's one of those feelings that make you feel really alive.

Or maybe I'm just a weirdo...

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in Singapore

Monday, October 26, 2009

I thought that by this time I would be writing a final entry encompassing all my great adventures and what I have learned over the last four months now that I am all settled down. Isn't it funny that life always seems to be making its own plans, without informing you?

A few weeks ago, I arrived in Singapore the "Lion City"— the land of spotless streets, glistening skyscrapers, and decadent cuisine. Singapore's diversity is pretty astounding, especially since it often gets the reputation of being sterile or gets labeled with my favorite nickname, "SingaBORE". Here, the culture is largely centered on food. From Chinatown to Little India, you will find the most exotic and affordable cuisine.



The affordable part was the most convenient for me, since I had exhausted most of my funds during the last few months of travels. I ended up at a backpacker's hostel and walked around with my first pay check, which I couldn't cash because my local account hadn't been set up.

I thought that traveling up to this point would have already brought all the crazy surprises that I needed, and that I'd be ready to start practicing here. I walked into my future clinic, which was on the eighth floor of a mall and situated in one of the fancier areas of the city, and felt utterly inspired by the view from the windows. The mall had everything, including: coffee houses, a gym, and a wine shop tucked away in the basement. It seemed almost too good to be true. I started daydreaming: this is the place where I am going to help thousands, if not millions, of people to reach and realize their full potential.

Then I got a call.

"So what do you think about Jakarta?"

The next day, I was on a plane to Jakarta, Indonesia.

"The Big Durian" is her nickname, in reference to a large, spiky fruit which grows only in Southeast Asia; the westerners are quick to mention that it smells like a rotten sewer. Jakarta is the antithesis of Singapore. Once referred to as a poverty-stricken hell hole, the city has come a long way in the last 10 years. It is a city full of energy and foreign investment to boot. Still, Jakarta is an urban

planner's worst nightmare. Big towers shoot up everywhere. Streets snake along the skyscrapers. While cars come to a standstill due to heavy traffic, the motorbikes dart through minute gaps of opportunity to move forward. Despite these, the energy of an up-and-coming city is undeniably seductive. Here, in a city that has 25 million "registered" inhabitants in the metropolitan area, chiropractors are virtually unknown.

I flew back to Singapore, as my boss asked me to "think about it" and said that "the choice is totally up to you (me)". With choice comes dilemma, big dilemma. I sat by the Singapore River that night, thinking, with a glass of wine no less. The young and affluent were all around, surrounded by glimmering towers. I found myself absolutely confused. The decision would play a big part in the next few years of my life. I thought: Singapore is a great, clean, and safe country; however, Jakarta is wild and untamed. What excites me the most is the possibility of starting something new there, to learn the Indonesian language and to be, in some sense, a trailblazer.

As I talked to one of my mentors that night, he challenged the heck out of me. This grandiose idea of going to Jakarta suddenly didn't look so hot. He ended with what I believe is the best advice for just about anyone. Just listen to "innate"; it will tell you.

"INNATE is God in human beings. INNATE is good in human beings. INNATE cannot be cheated, violated, or tricked. INNATE is always waiting, and ready to communicate with you, and when INNATE is in contact you are in tune with the infinite." – BJ Palmer, DC

Of course, the advice sounded great. However, I was on a timeline to make one of the biggest decisions in my life thus far; a decision that would define who I am and how I grow. How the heck was I going to get this answer in such a short time? I was starting to get scared, breaking into a sweat and wondering: maybe Jakarta isn't the right choice. I have already taken a chance by coming here, do I really need to go overboard?

I sat in my room and meditated on it for about an hour. I stopped perspiring. The anxiety settled down into a sense of calmness. "Whatever decision I come to will be great," I kept telling myself. I went down the hall and walked to the bathroom. Now, after staying in this place for nearly two weeks, I had used the same bathroom the whole time. I stepped in, closed the door and looked down. Suddenly, a chill ran up my spine. In one of the tiles next to the toilet seat, there was a word engraved there, big and bold. I had never noticed it before – "Indonesia".

So here I am again, packing up once more, ready for yet again an adventure of a lifetime, something special. Did I make the right choice? All I know is that I am diving in head first. Like many times on this wild ride in the last four months, I feel like I did come in contact with innate, the infinite, just to reiterate BJ. I believe Ralph Waldo Emerson said the same thing, perhaps more eloquently: "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

Adventures in Indonesia

Thursday, January 28, 2010

I have been very fortunate and blessed to live my dream of spreading natural health and healing around the world. I am thoroughly enjoying my experience in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The thing that I love the most is opening people's minds and exposing them to a whole new world of what's possible for themselves and others around them.

This morning was exciting as I was about to give my first health awareness seminar – teaching people the secret to attaining true health and full self-expression.



My marketing manager and I worked meticulously, in preparation for the workshop. She ordered chairs to be brought in for people to sit on, as well as food and snacks for everyone. I was very inspired to see her work so hard and helping my brainchild come to fruition. About an hour before the seminar was about to begin, we had twelve confirmed attendees. Everything was falling into place, I was ecstatic. Could everything really be this easy?

Then everything hit. I had trouble getting my presentation to display on the monitor. We got several calls for cancellations and it was reaching 7p.m. and still no one had arrived. Three people trickled in and I waited for 20 more minutes to see if anyone else was coming. I could not put it off any longer, I had to begin.

My biggest passion is to transform the way people look at the world through the power of spoken words. Words have the ability to change us. Gifted speakers dip their brush into linguistic paint and make a beautiful canvas that begins as something abstract, and then becomes a piece of art. They know how to use language in a way that can touch people, like a performing artist. Just like the musician, words can move people in the same way a beautiful piece of music can dance through the soul effortlessly with ebb and flow. My dream is to become that masterful in the art of speaking.

I began the talk with that beautiful vision. However, the problem was I had to speak, pause, and my assistant had to translate every sentence. It was the first time that I had the experience of a translator when speaking. It totally threw off my game...

When you speak, you begin to get into a rhythm and the goal is to get to a point where words are just flowing out of you. Almost like playing a sport and getting into the "zone". Where everything flows and it feels like whatever you say can get through to people.

However, speaking with a translator was like being stuck in a series of traffic lights with a driver who is brake- and gas- pedal happy. On top of that, people were gradually filing in as the talk transpired; opening the door to my small reception room and throwing off the rhythm of the talk. During the talk, my translator's cell phone went off three times, throwing her off as well. I felt like I was about to experience a multiple car pileup.

It was difficult to hold it together and I could feel the heat start to build under the collar of my shirt and black suit. In the end, I put it together and closed with a story of how Chiropractic has touched my life by helping my sister overcome her bout with hyperthyroidism. That triggered something in the crowd.

When you speak, you can feel it when you hit certain points that move the crowd and call them to action.

In that moment, one of my patients stood up. She had arrived at the tail end of the presentation and asked if she could give a testimonial. I had only seen her for four visits and really had no idea of the progress she was making; especially since she did not speak perfect English by any stretch of the imagination.

She began to tell her story about the weakness in her legs and back ever since she started having children. She described how she has been to neurologists, medical doctors, and acupuncturists before with no notable result. She was beginning to give up. Her husband brought one of our brochures to her and she decided to give it a try. With only four visits, she not only began to feel better but she began to start working out with her husband again. If you have ever been in the room when somebody spoke with great passion about something they care about, you know that the energy in the room transforms. It is a feeling that few can rival. Her story was so powerful and she spoke with so much passion that it brought some of the audience to tears.

I was incredibly shocked that she stood up in front of everyone and shared a story that I knew nothing about. All of the complications and obstacles that I had faced in giving that presentation melted away as I witnessed how that woman's life has been touched, as well as seeing her touch the lives of everyone else in the room.

BJ Palmer, the developer of Chiropractic once said "When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece."

Are you willing to do what it takes to have the two come together? The challenges are many, however when you are willing to do what it takes, you can add immeasurable value to the lives of those around you. I promise you it is a feeling that you will never forget...

Until next time... Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in Where The Hell Am I?

Friday, August 6, 2010

The last two and a half months have been nothing short of a tornado of experiences flying through my life, leaving me completely discombobulated.

After the initial struggle of building a practice in a different culture, I was deported from the country I started to call home (a story all in itself). This was only supposed to last a week. The next thing I knew I was living out of a small hotel in Singapore, constantly getting teased about being able to return to Indonesia only to be told the exact opposite a few days later. After this game of cat and mouse began to get boring, I started to think about the possibility of making Singapore my new home. At least I could start over new again (with almost all my belongings left behind in Indonesia). The next thing I heard, my company is committed to getting me back to Indonesia (yeah, but when?). I found myself covering a practice for a few weeks; however, with the return of the primary doctor to his clinic, I had to step aside. Once again, I was more confused than when I first arrived in the Lion City two and half months ago.



With not much to do, I decided to hop on a cheap flight to the land where the sea is deep blue, the beaches are powder white, and the food is packed with more heat than the tropical weather – Thailand.

Having travelled in the country before, I decided to go island hopping at a place where it is nothing short of paradise – the Andaman side of the country. Where else can you swim in crystalline waters, follow it up with uniquely mouth-watering food, and then finish it off with an extremely painful yet relaxing massage without burning a hole in your wallet? Enough reasons for a short holiday? I think so.



Before long, I was in the air and then on a boat to the province of Krabi, where limestone cliffs were seemingly jettisoned in the impossibly blue Andaman sea. Even though it was the monsoon season, I was blessed with incredible clear skies. On the boat ride to Krabi, jellyfish peppered the deep clear water as the limestone karsts came into view.

In the next few days, I often found myself vertical on the limestone. It had been about a year and half since I last rock climbed, “I struggled” was an absurd understatement. Add that to the relentless sun and sweltering 40 degree heat (104 degrees F for my fellow Americans), and you could say I was nothing short of exhausted. The last run was a 35-meter (100 ft) climb up a craggy terrain, sometime during close to sunset, which I struggled to complete but was rewarded by incredible panoramic views that stuffed the frame of my new camera. Too bad, my forearms were burning so bad that hitting the shutter button was almost as difficult as the actual climb itself.

When I reached the ground, I was hurting everywhere. My face and arms were sundried and burned, and my legs were cramping. Let’s not even start to talk about my forearms. I was battered, beaten, and bruised. I thought that I came to Thailand to escape all these.

Afterwards, it took every last ounce of energy for me to take a five-minute stroll to Phra Nang beach, reputedly the best in Thailand. Phra Nang was astonishing – white sand encapsulated by giant overhanging cliffs and limestone teeth shooting skyward offshore. I walked to the corner, where I had the beach to myself and fell into the cerulean waters.

I bobbed back and forth in the water, letting the waves take me as they wish while the sun set, laying soft light on the limestone cliffs. It was an incredibly tranquil experience. I tipped my head

back and smiled. This was all too much like my experiences of the last few months. Who knows where I am going to end up at this point? Am I going to get back to Indonesia? Am I going to make Singapore my new home? Is this all too much work and frustration? Is more travelling in the cards?

Who knows? I guess I will just have to sit back, smile and ride the waves.

Until next time

Dr. Matthew Horkey



Adventures in 2010

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

As I lie here in bed with my computer back from the dead (after a lengthy repair process), I just have to laugh as I bask in gratitude. It is quite fitting as I say goodbye to 2010 and welcome 2011 with open arms.

I had quite a year in 2009. It included graduating from chiropractic college, moving back home for three months and saying goodbye to friends and family, followed by a six-month globe trot. It closed with the opening of my first chiropractic clinic. If anything, I was looking forward to having stability in 2010. Well, I was hit with a stark reality – my life revolves around chaos.

The beginning of 2010 placed me in Indonesia, with no knowledge of the language, no friends or family, and not a dime to my name. I scratched and clawed to grow a clinic from the ground up, only to be uprooted and deported from the country. I landed in Singapore with a backpack on my shoulders and most of my possessions still back in Indonesia. I bounced around from hotel to hotel – and the floors of my boss' two empty homes – only to find out I could not return, for one whole year, to Indonesia, a country I was starting to call home. After



swinging between clinics as a covering doctor in Singapore for awhile, I decided to take two weeks and head to Thailand to clear my head clear.

I vividly remember sitting in my boss' car after getting back from Thailand, with tears flowing uncontrollably from my eyes. Why was everything in shambles for me? I had prepared so hard for this moment to have the chance to practice as a chiropractor and to make a difference in people's lives. I was completely discombobulated and totally confused. What should I do? I thought seriously about giving up my dream of becoming a great chiropractor; perhaps the universe was trying to point me in a different direction.

It's funny when you look at the curve balls that life throws at us. I truly believe we are tested to see what we are made of, and yes the strong survive.

Calvin Coolidge said it best:

Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan “press on” has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

With the help from some of you and some good old words from cool Cal, I made the choice to put my head down and move forward. So here it is. In 2010, I began my chiropractic career; I started two clinics from scratch in two different countries, and I was on television twice. I learned what it felt like to become deported. I was published in two chiropractic journals, I went out with a Miss Indonesia finalist, and I lost everything financially. I travelled with a great healer through the Golden Land (Thailand), and I lived in a guesthouse, a high-rise apartment, two hotels and on the floors of two different houses. I shed more tears and had more self-doubt than in any time of my life, and while building the third clinic, I increased my monthly income tenfold in two months.

In 2010, I can truly say I laid it all on the line. It was painful, crazy and exhilarating all at the same time. I now sit in gratitude as the third clinic I've built from scratch is flourishing, and I'm having a blast once again turning on life in the clinic each and every day. In 2010, I not only hit the bottom of the barrel, I got trapped in it while it was rolled down a steep hill. I wouldn't change anything about the tumultuous year because it was in 2010 that I faced the biggest challenges in my young career.

Is chaos a good thing? On the other side of chaos lies growth. Chaos is necessary for adaptation and for survival. We all have a dream. However, are we going to shrivel up and turn our backs when challenges come our way? Or do we choose to be steadfast and exhibit perseverance as President Coolidge suggested? What are we willing to do to make our dreams into reality? One of my favourite chiropractors, John Demartini, said it best: “You must do whatever it takes, travel whatever distance, and pay whatever price.”

May your journey be fruitful and full of chaos.

Until next time...

Dr. Matthew Horkey

Adventures in Brand New Territory

Thursday, March 3, 2011

“Cross the border, into the big bad world.”

- Paolo Nutini

The sun had already set on the crystalline Andaman Sea, and darkness had fallen. A handful of us strapped on our tanks, checked our air supply and tightened our masks. The cruise had been remarkable thus far, consisting of eating and diving, in no particular order. We had already logged five dives over the first two grueling days. However, this was a whole new ball game: the night dive. I could feel a bit of nitrogen narcosis setting in. In other words, I was exhausted. There was no other way to slice it.



All geared up, I took the plunge into the dark open sea. The evening times on the Andaman Sea were incredibly cool, and the ocean breeze was refreshing since the days were usually scorching. The water on this night was very comfortable, as warm as bath water. Once everybody was in, we did a quick check and then started our descent.

After two days of diving, I was beginning to feel very comfortable with descending and being in the water with all the gear strapped on. However, this dive was completely different; it was pitch black, so I had no way of orienting myself. My breathing increased rapidly and my heart rate shot up. Due to the quick descent, I had problems with the equalization of my ears for the first time. My eardrums were unbearably painful. My torch was pointed down, so I couldn't see much, and my sympathetic nerve system was off the charts. I remember vividly that I considered giving the sign for “I have a problem” to the dive instructor and ascend quicker than I came down.

Then something amazing happened; my body adapted. My ears equalized, and the pressure disappeared. My heart rate returned to normal and I lifted my torch to illuminate this new

strange and mysterious world. It was amazing. As I turned my head and saw all the beams from my fellow divers cut through the darkness, it looked like a scene from *The Abyss*. The wildlife was completely different. A huge crab scurried around the bottom (I wish I could grab it for dinner), while the coral expressed many different colors at night. I was surprised how much my eyes adapted. Soon I could see a lot around me without my light in the dark water. We all turned off our torches and were amazed to see bioluminescent creatures shining like tiny soft lights. They looked much like fireflies, as they danced all around our bodies. It was magical.

I liken the whole night dive to my life at this moment in time. I have just stepped into another world, not your proverbial border crossing, but one of consciousness. Gone are the days of the “student” mindset, when I was constantly scrapping together enough change to just eat and get by. Now is the time to welcome stability and abundance. Yet, I still find it hard to feel comfortable. The practice is picking up, and yet, as I learn more and more, there is more yet that I don’t know. Life is new, frustrating and fascinating at the same time. However, the most uncomfortable moments and experiences in the last few months have brought with them the most incredible highs.

Many times in life, we dare not take the plunge into the unknown. The unknown is exactly that, the unknown. The sense of newness unlocks incredible power, adaptability and joy that we may never know exists in us. That newfound power brings incredible experiences and lessons that open up a whole new world to us if we are simply willing to take that first step and cross the border.

And sorry Paolo – I contend that the world isn’t so big and bad after all.

Until next time, Dr. Matthew Horkey



Conclusion

Most people say they like surprises, when they really only like the surprises that they want. The unknown is just that, it is undefined, there is no certainty that it is what you think that you want.

Travel has always conjured images of far-off lands and exotic places in man's mind. While the world has gotten smaller with air travel and the internet, travel continues to bring the unknown to adventurers who dare to challenge their comfort zones. It is incredibly exciting to venture into something or someplace new. That is what makes travel, but more importantly – life, so exciting.

Pushing your comfort zone will make you grow as a person. Being on the road will teach you about life and yourself. Gaining unique experiences will enrich your life in far-reaching ways you may not even understand. That is what makes the journey so beautiful.

Now go out there and *Travel, Learn, Earn!*

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