

Dwijen Smarth



The Universal saying goes, that a cat has nine lives. As an individual, I wouldn't know whether it is true or not, but in my case the fact is that I have had three lives.

As my name suggests, it gave me my two natural life's – one when I was born and came into existence on this Mother Earth and second – when I was given Yagyopavit (the thread ceremony) being a real Brahmin, the most sacred conversion term.

The third life, I got from Muktangam De-Addiction Center, where in a real sense I was converted from a Beast to Human, not technically but as a terminology – my behavior of my instincts.

It is was here I was taught to once again to think and act normally. I am back to being a productive member of society.

Although I lost my most valuable 14 years of my life due to my multiple addictions, I was able to gather and put back scattered bits of pieces of my life, with a lot of support.

Today I am a counselor at Muktangam De-Addiction Center, where I am like a wheel in the machinery, extending helping hand wherever required. I also was deputed to the Government of Andaman and Nicobar Islands for a tenure of 8 weeks to help bring about awareness of this disease and help setting up their project of a de-addiction center.

It was during this tenure that I found SARnet. We were searching for sources of funding and I stumbled upon the wesouthasians.org website. We put in a post on the message board of the site and were promptly contacted by Tushar, who put us in contact with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Simultaneously, I have set up a small side business of digital printing, catering and tailoring. Although I do have to put in 14 to 16 hrs, of hard work every day, to recover my lost years, I am a happy man. I have a loving and understanding wife who also extends a helping hand to run the side business. We are blessed with a baby boy, who is almost 3 years old.

Last but not the least, I can never forget the painful moments or rather I should put them as years I have given to my parents and to my near and dear ones. They had to undergo mental, physical, emotional and social trauma because of me.

I thank God and I thank all my friends, well-wishers and colleagues who stood by me in spite of all the misgivings. They showed me the way to recovery, step by step, to become what I am today. I pray to him that each day as it passes should keep me the same and I continue towards betterment, till the last day, when the time comes to say good-bye to all.