Am I different? Well, perhaps more open to surprise, more open to bewilderment. And more aware of the heart as an address – a dangerous address, perhaps, but an authentic one. And there is a deepening trust in the world, a greater buoyancy.

At the same time, it’s not about renouncing the mind and embracing the heart. If anything, there’s been a growing understanding that faith and reason aren’t incompatible. Faith can show up as the vested interests and hidden agendas of reason; and reason can bring rigour to the self-delusional excesses of an unexamined faith.

**Briefly, can you share how you entered the path of spirituality?**

I was always an avid reader of philosophy, and I think I gravitated towards poetry early in life because it seemed to be an ideal vehicle for the expression of wonder. But in 1997, on a train journey to Mumbai, after a particularly relaxed vacation in Nepal, I underwent an inexplicable near-death experience – one for which I had no ready physical or psychological explanation. It lasted a week. And when I emerged from it, it was clear to me that I needed guidance.

The only people who seemed to talk about death in a way that resonated with me were the mystics. So, my reading now shifted from metaphysics to mysticism. I read widely, dipping into various traditions, from Buddhism to Sufism, from Ramana Maharishi to St John of the Cross. I also did a slew of workshops and meditation programmes, many of which helped. But it’s one thing to intellectually ‘know’ the right answers and another thing to live them. I wanted a path that could help me make that shift from the cerebral to the experiential.

Just when I’d begun to give up hope of ever meeting a live master, I met Sadhguru (Jaggi Vasudev). That happened 10 years ago. It was a momentous advent in my life. There were several personal indicators that I had met my guru, but I took my time over trusting those. In time, that trust grew. I relaxed, grew to recognise his integrity as a human being, and was filled with awe, as I still am, at his capability as a guru. Above all, I saw that the path he was offering was a real one. What took my breath away was that it was a path that started from exactly where I stood – a personal path, as it were. I understood then what he meant when he said that a live guru mixes the spiritual cocktail in a way that suits the temperament of each individual seeker. He did just that. And I began to experience myself and my interiority differently.

Since then, there’s been a shift: a shift from seeker at large to committed seeker, which is qualitatively different.

**What spiritual practice do you follow?**

I’m a practitioner of Iskcon, which entails a combination of kriya and meditation on a daily basis. But, as we all know, it’s possible to turn anything into a spiritual practice if you do it with a level of awareness and intensity. In that regard, writing is also a spiritual practice for me, at times. Relationships can be, as well.

lead. I’ve also edited a book of Bhakti poems, entitled *I Eat God*, which should be out this September, which has been licence to spend the past couple of years among the medieval mystic poets – that bunch of ecstatic crazies – and I cannot think of better company. The dance and Bhakti poetry festival I curated at the NCFA last year, *Stark Raving Mad*, was also a wonderful chance to hang around with this lunatic and lovable gaggle of literary outlaws.