

Wednesday November 26th

This is our last day in Pokhara. We begin our long journey home tomorrow. We have a flight from Pokhara to Kathmandu at 10 am, about an hour flight. Our flight from there to Kolkata is at 4 pm so we will have some time in the very small Kathmandu airport until departure. Everyone pays a R1500 fee to leave the country. We get into Kolkata around 5:30 pm and it will take us about an hour to get out of there to a hotel. Our flight from Kolkata to London is at 5 am so we will have to be back at the airport by 3 am. We probably will not have time to see our friend Carmel again, getting in/out of the city may be crazier than we need to be at this stage.

I have not heard from Nafeeza and know she is an avid email user. I sent her a very terse note about her continuing to not be responsible in regards to communication. I have no idea whether she has re-arranged flights or not. It is regretful she was not able to use the opportunities afforded her.

The day here is very warm, a slight breeze and for some reason the hustle/bustle of the main street is subdued today, quite nice. Kara and I took a long walk this morning to an area we had not explored. I ran into a motorcycle shop that repairs Royal Enfield motorcycles and got to see four of them of various models. For those not in the know, these are originally manufactured in India, come in both 350 and 500 cc sizes and are quite the unique bike. When I come back to stay for awhile this is the bike that I would get for transportation. Ok...there is some ego going on here, they are really cool and classic bikes.

The journey to India and Nepal has been an incredible pleasure. Both countries are beautiful, magical, and mystical. Both peoples are incredibly open, friendly, and hospitable as I have indicated in the journals. On the flip side they are also struggling with the destruction of their environments, over-population, women's rights, and fair wages for everyone to name a few issues.

Months ago back home I made a decision to abstain from the purchase of bottled water as the plastic containers add to the waste on the planet and are not all recycled. We have struggled with that here because the only clean water for us as westerners is bottled. The upside is that everything is reused here. We have seen some efforts to educate the population about litter but containers are scarce. Kind of sounds like rural West Virginia and why there are dumps in the hollers!

I have not spoken specifically about the spiritual aspects of the journey but it is implied. There is a learning that happens daily from those around us, from the culture, just from being here. There is a frequent reflection of our fortune to find ourselves in such a position to travel and do what little we can in service.

Every time that I have returned from being gone for an extended time, I am never anxious to immediately rejoin the "other" world or have people around. There is some time to resettle that is needed to re-enter the western mind set. Each journey has led to personal

decisions being made that change the course of my life in some way, this time is no different; they just remain personal and will unfold in their own time.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this past week with Kara. She is an incredible woman who has come into her own at her own pace as we all do. There is no doubt that this experience will offer new perspectives and opportunities for her. The time in Pokhara has also given us some wind-down from the hectic pace of the past 3 ½ weeks. I wouldn't change any aspect of the trip; every moment was as it needed to be.

So, this is my last email to you until I get home sometime on Saturday morning. We get into Dulles around 8:30 on Friday evening. By the time we get thru custom and get luggage it will be 10. I am planning on driving home from there so as to have as much time to myself as possible before showing up at work on Monday. I will probably have to sleep some at a rest stop but I'm headed home!

Till then Peace and Love to you each.

chuck