

# Sunita Kohli

Interior Designer

'Happiness is always in retrospect'

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**Sunita Kohli, Interior designer.**

**What does spirituality mean to you?**

I am extremely wary of this word as it is so often so loosely used. Some people mix it with ritualism, while others use it as a posture. I would think it is an inner belief not to be worn on one's sleeve. So if you were to ask if I am spiritual, I'd rather say "no".

**Do you believe you are guided and protected by a superior force?**

I do. I am a great believer in the fact that you are meant to meet the people you encounter, to be in the places you end up in, and that there is a larger pattern to things, which are predestined. Your journey takes you where you are because it is meant to. So many things in my life have happened serendipitously, especially some special friendships, which felt so preordained. It seems there is no plan, yet there must be a great plan, which that "Great Man" out there knows about.

**Do you believe you have a special mission or purpose in this life?**

I would never use such a grand word. I actually became an interior designer absolutely by accident. When I was a child I did not even know there was such a profession. But some things are just meant to be. And once it happened in that unplanned way, I did everything I could to hone those skills and

educate my eye in the most meticulous and researched way, because only then you can produce quality work.

**What is spirituality for you in your day-to-day life?**

I am scared of using this word spirituality, but of course, there are moments of being alone, of resourcing oneself, of finding some quiet and elevation, and hopefully some inner contentment. For me, it happens especially in nature and particularly in the mountains, or in places of exceptional beauty like the Borobudur temple in Indonesia, or while watching a sunset in Angkor Wat or at Konarak.

**Can you tell us about a unique experience that changed or shaped your spiritual beliefs?**

In December 1999, I had a cervical fracture and ended up lying motionless for three months on a hospital bed. I could not make a single movement with my head, I could only watch the ceiling. Until then, my life had been an uninterrupted race of projects, meetings, travel. During those three months, I was actually switched off from the physical realm by being screwed and incarcerated in that room. I was only in a world of the mind and I could only think. I could disconnect from my usual realities and frenetic work schedule. I could think it all with a very different perspective, and among other things I realized how absolutely dispensable we all are.

**What have been your main spiritual inspirations?**

I feel I am the result of a confluence of influences: the atmosphere at home was quite liberal, my father believed in God but was far from any ritualism as he was an arya samaji. Our grand-father would take us to discourses by certain swamis. We grew up in Lucknow, which meant surrounded by a great Muslim influence. And I went to a Roman Catholic convent. So all those things have contributed to a certain secular mindset, and a broadness of acceptance.

**If you were to be reincarnated, what would you like to be reincarnated as?**

I would have to be a woman, in India. I could not fathom myself as anything else, nor anywhere else.

**If there was one question you could ask God, what would it be?**

Life is so full of mysteries, where would I begin?

**What is your idea of happiness?**

It is always something you think of in retrospect. You look back and you realize, "oh, I was happy at that moment..." For instance I would think of the depth of happiness when a child is born. Or what I felt the day our son ran and won a flat race at the age of four, whereas the year before he had been told he would not be able to walk normally ever again. On the overall, I would say happiness is a strange and illusive emotion. Somewhere it is about a deep contentment when all is well, within the world that I know. But of course, that cannot happen too often...