

# Tarun Tahiliani

Fashion Designer

'Happiness is when I can feel stillness'

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**Tarun Tahiliani, Fashion Designer.**

**What does spirituality mean to you?**

Getting through life is like a fantastic tight-rope walking. But some people have it easier because they manage to somehow align whoever they really are and their manifestation in the world. Finding that alignment and the inner joy, the buoyancy that comes with it, is what spirituality is about.

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

My grand-father's cook always said that "someone" is looking after me – indeed, as I took such a non conventional route, he thinks that things should have gone completely wrong for me. So is there such a force? I do not know, but looking at the world around is enough for me to know that there are forces and realities we simply do not comprehend with our mind.

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

Things happened in such random ways and I never thought I would sit in this chair at the age of 45, doing what I do. Yet from my youngest age, I always drew and sketched, it was simply and inexplicably constantly coming out. One day at the age of five, my father took me to a child

psychologist and I drew soldiers marching, with one soldier falling down. I said "this is me": I could never wear a uniform, I could never march to a drumbeat, I had to find my own way. And it all happened with strange coincidences. One day twenty years ago, as I was really broke and miserable in my work (I was selling oilfield equipments), my wife was invited to model for a Pierre Cardin show. I could have never afforded the Rs.450 it cost to attend, but thanks to her, I was invited. And it all clicked. I came back home and could not stop sketching for two days. I knew this is what I had to do. Today, I am trying to make beautiful things for people to live their lives in. Tomorrow, it may be something else. But what matters in the end, and what may be the purpose, is to find that alignment, that joy and light inside so that energy flows smoothly through me and I can transmit it to other people through whatever I do.

### **What has been the role of spirituality in your life as a designer?**

Creating is such a visceral process for me with millions of ideas constantly hovering in my mind, and demanding to manifest in the world in some way. And creativity is inextricably linked to spirituality in that it is a logical extension of whatever space I am in. The more aligned and aware I am, the more harmonious my creations are. Otherwise there is discordance and friction.

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

It was never about some spiritual leader or another, rather about free spirits I have encountered along the way, like my father. They taught me the freedom of being whoever I wish to. And if tomorrow I feel tired of the world of fashion, I will not torture myself in it for the rest of my life, I will just move on to the next thing.

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

I have often watched birds and found their life to be quite simple. So I guess I would like to take a break from this complicated life as a human and come back as a bird, flying around, mating once a year, basking in the sun in some nice valley of Switzerland or Kashmir.

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

No human being can live on its own – give anyone 10 palaces, 50 Rolls Royce and 5,000 necklaces in exchange for living entirely alone on an island and no one will do it. So why is it that humans who depend entirely on each other would constantly destroy each other? Why this mad dichotomy?

### **What is your idea of happiness?**

Once in a while, and for no particular reason, I suddenly feel completely still, fully in the present with neither past nor future, down to being a single point of energy, yet connected to everything else. Happiness is when I can feel and be that stillness.