

## The ocean within... :)

The happiness I feel calls for silence -

but then again.. if I keep it all inside, I can't share and happiness needs to be shared, especially since you all have a part in it. And.. I must admit I am afraid of exploding if I try to keep it all inside. Words are sometimes just not sufficient to express true feelings, but nevertheless I try. Here a glimpse of what I have been blessed with.

The ones who have followed us over the last few years and who have read our sparse, but regular up-dates can almost guess the rest. :)

**In short** (in case someone checking this, feeling the immense pressure of time, which is the curse of our modern world) ? or for those who don't like to read ? as much as others do? (fotostory follows!) Here I have a very short version:

After our arrival in KTM we had 2 days of preparing the trip into the village. The way there consisted of one 10 + 1 hour-jeep-ride-day, 1 half-jeep-and-the-other-half-hiking-day, 1 long 10-hour-hiking-day. After we had arrived in the village we were part of 2 days of smiles and laughter and joy, we were welcomed and the hospitality and joy was overwhelming. Sadness on the day of our departure. Emotions open and raw and beautiful. The trip back ... just the way there in reverse.

This is the summary and for some who know me and Nepal and the once who have a great mind this can be enough Info ? Mission complete! ... Great - thank you for all the support! :) :) :) And please continue supporting us!

**For all others**, who might take some more time, who might have wanted to finally read a little more, who might need to go mind travelling with me and who want to follow us a little closer -here it is - Same story a bit more detailed :) :) :

This year's trip was another extraordinary experience. And it seems as if it is all getting better and better..

The actual trip was planned many months ago, but I needed a medical report to be allowed to travel, I have been on sick leave from school (school sick!!!!) since the end of October. The o.k. for travelling came just in time one week before take off. It was definitely tearing me up inside, the trip had been planned long ago under 'normal circumstances' and for the first time the plan was that I was NOT to travel alone but one of my most trusted friends came along. It was therefore clear, that if I had not been able to make the trip, my friend would have travelled to the village to meet everybody. The sponsorship money would have arrived safely in any case.

Therefore here is my gratitude to (all) the GODS that once again helped us to get this thing going nevertheless.

The next thing I always worry about is our money transfer. But after 6 weeks on the day of departure I got Nima's message that it had come through - just in time for our arrival.

The rest of the preparations were done quickly. Nima with the help of his brothers had everything ready to go.

Our travel route, almost a ritual and despite the (to me creepy?) expansion of the road network, this year the same as last year. The condition of the roads and seeing the 'roads' reaching remoter areas are surprises enough on the trip. In addition the bridges which are being built or have been build along the way are every year something special to see. Anyhow our first part is always by Jeep, the roads were dry, dusty and bumpy and we just sat and took the landscape in. There are never many stops on our Jeep ride, because the (old) jeep moves quite slowly and the day is limited in the number of hours. But I love it, it always gives me time .. such a blessing? to sit and think and enjoy and reflect ? About 45 min prior to our arrival in Paphlu, it was already getting dark, the jeep

needed some 'extra care'. The "drive shaft" (if that is the word for it in English, I had to google it? and I am not a mechanic!...) had given up on us. This was not that surprising, considering the road's conditions and the Jeep's condition. Nevertheless the 'Nepalese AAA' fixed the Jeep in no time. 'Nepalese AAA' meaning: Jeep-friend showed up after 30 minutes, brought a "screwdriver" and someone who was actually able to repair cars. While we were being shuttled to our final destination the mechanic fixed the car! By the time we had reached our lodge and had our dal bhat. The Jeep was ready to go again.

It is always a feast, the reunions, the happiness of seeing each other again after yet another year.. or couple of months? - the lodge owner and his family, the jeep drivers, then on our third day, Nima's dad or sometimes somebody else, who brings us packed lunches from the village (which is still a long way to go) and change for our picnic lunch, then of course the mega happiness to see everyone in the village.

And this year I got to share all this, for the very first time, with one of my closest friends!

### **In the village:**

The welcoming in the village... a wave (Tsunami size) of love, respect, affection, the humanity....every single time it is such a homecoming? (CHRISTMAS IN THE MOST ORIGINAL SENSE)...Katas, Pujas, Chang (Sherpa beer), Beer (German beer for the Germans) and many wonderful vibes. The kids were still in their schools, so not all of them could come but after all we want them to go to school!?????. There is no christmas vacation, only some schools have a short break when it starts being too cold. BUT many of the hard working men had arrived, no season for trekking or expeditions right now. So they could share the happy moments with their wives and us.

... when the joy of all involved results in the "sherpa's dance", it says a lot. "They do this because they are all happy!!!!", Nima explained. Then a wonderful cake baked by Phurinje made me "overflow" with tears of happiness ? Whenever I am there; I try to balance the ocean within me, since crying is not really to be seen very often, ?. BUT the 'Tsunami' (mega big wave of happiness) - this year - just ignored that little fact. Done crying we blew out the candles and cut pieces for all (!!!!!) to try! ...

The third day was already our farewell-day and it is always a sad one. Early in the morning the viallgers all arrive with Katas, Katas, (blessing shawls) ... and for me another day on which I see no way to contain all the liquid within myself ? "overflowing" by emotions ... my tears just a mirror reflecting what they take in in the eyes of the ones that give me the Kata. We all speak the same language, if only we "spoke" a little less.

Everyone so grateful for us being there, for our help (YOUR HELP) and for still remembering and helping after all these years. 2014 I first came to the village and had no idea about anything... since then a lot has happened. I know so much about these people, now. I have gotten to see some things through their eyes, came to share tiny bits of their pain and their pleasure. It made me understand and question my life, my society, my upbringing? It gave me so much I can't put it in words. With every year the friendship grows, my respect for them, my love .... - It remains protected in my heart, if possible I will be there once a year. The fact that I brought Stephan with me this time was not only for me more happiness than I can express but it was also a sign of our commitment to these wonderful people. And I am truly thankful to have all these people in my life.

Well ? back to the story: ?. And then we were on the way back to KTM again. This time we filled up the Jeep (same one!). Pemba and his wife and baby (about 6 months?) came with us. Since the children (Kandi, Kanchi, Change) had started school in KTM their mom had not seen them. Kandi was only home once in 4 years "thanks" to Corona. Pembas wife herself had never been to KTM. I was wondering what her impression would be. Yandi and Chechi's parents also came with us. Yandi's mother suffers from asthma, which certainly doesn't get better in the air of Kathmandu, but she needed to see a specialist. So fortunately accompanied by a few people from Hill, we were slowly coming back... back into another world....

On the ride we were blessed by another terrific mountain view, but then drove through foggy, cloudy valleys and after our Jeep had another short break - because a tire had blown.. we drove even more careful the longest stretch of the trip. I had my doubts that the exchanged tire would actually make it into KTM with us, but needless to say.. Nepal surprises! :). A little longer the trip and then in finally in KTM the lesson: 'it could be worse??' - since the disastrous traffic in Kathmandu got us stuck for another half hour in

vehicle fumes - it delayed our arrival even more but we were happy and happy to escape the awfully polluted KTM again the next morning.

While we were in Kathmandu we were twice able to meet up with my dear friend Karma, who is the principal of the Kailash Bodi School. The hostel and school have now been beautifully renovated. Karma gave us a tour of the new hostel grounds and the school. I saw Kandi quickly, just enough time for a ?German? hug and then we were off again?. The renovated hostel, as well as the school have become really nice. The solar modules for hot showers donated by Seeds e. V. Tübingen work and bring warm water to the children on colder days. I am very happy that our three children Change, Kandi, Kanchi are accommodated in this hostel and get to study at KBS. According to Karma, all three of them are doing great! Karma is an incredibly wonderful woman who will hopefully one day write a book with her own story.

Did I forget something??? ? ?. Ah? most probably - since this can not really be put into words. I only tried to share my Tsunami of LUCK and HAPPINESS which has inhabited my little body. And I am still trying to learn surfing these big waves.. but luckily I know we are all one ocean :)

So from one waterdrop to the others? NAMASTE AND

Happy NewYear 2023 may it bring peace and joy and happiness, may we be able to live peacefully and happy and with the highest respect of nature (us humans included) und THANK YOU for every little bit of help .. and the big bits, too, of course :)

If you have any questions or want to know more, **please get in touch.**

The wave of happiness. . . . Learn to surf. . - That's the target! Forever in the heart

LOVE, PEACE, GRATITUDE  
Andi