

# 'Don't worry be happy!'

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev has a simple message for the world — discover bliss, love and grace within oneself

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Times News Network

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is a rollicking Santa Claus of a spiritual leader. He wears a thick grey-white moustache and flowing beard; he disperses peace, goodwill and joy; and, his belly shakes every time he goes 'Ho-Ho-Ho' in his Mysore accent. That he does often, as I discovered in a meeting with him recently. The Sadhguru was in Mumbai to release his new book. It is called *Joy 24 x 7*, an appropriate title for a mystic whose powerful and inspiring sermons are delivered with humour and wit. With me, he struck the jovial note rightaway. Accepting my card, the Sadhguru said, "I'm sorry I don't have one to give you. You need a profession to carry a card." Then, in a conspiratorial whisper he hissed, "I'm supposed to be spiritual, you see!" I liked him.

The Sadhguru is unlike any spiritual leader modern India has known. He wears a sports watch and carries a cell. And he dresses in clothes designed by himself. These include a loose flowing *kurta* and *dhoti*, a colourful shawl across his shoulders, the turmeric turban and sandals. In this strange *avatar*, he jets across the world reaching out to all — not just the emotionally bankrupt and spiritually unawakened. And he embraces people with his simplicity and honesty, encouraging everybody to discover peace and harmony within themselves. "Know bliss, love and grace," that's what he scribbled in his book for me while saying, "I don't do any spiritual reading myself. Why should I? I'm spiritual from within. My own vision never fails me. And I don't want to clutter my mind with somebody else's vision." What did he read, then? "Dennis, Asterix," said the Sadhguru with a chuckle.

This is the same Sadhguru who addressed the World Economic Forum, the

United National Millenium Peace Summit and the World Peace Congress. I wondered what international leaders thought of him. "I don't know," he replied, "I don't think they've taken a good look at me!" What was it that he offered them, I asked, was it lessons in joy? "I get them drunk," the Sadhguru joked. "I'm not a bottle, but what I have is overflowing. I speak a simple language that is related to everyone. This is not the Vedas. People say I'm so peaceful. Rubbish! I'm like a volcano. Peace is for the dead. Why rest in peace when you can be exhilaratingly

alive?" I had no answer. He continued, "Everybody is capable of joy. This is not something fluctuating on the stock exchange. It is within you.

Outside, you have little stake in the world, you can decide few things; but inside, you have full stake, take charge of it."

I asked what was the difference between him and, say,

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar or Baba Ramdev. The Sadhguru scratched his beard, "I don't bother to look at what they do," he replied honestly. "because I'm dead on in what I do. I'm either 100 per cent clear or I don't know anything. And what I know, I know. What I don't know doesn't hassle me. The source of creation throbs within me. That is what drives me. If you are driven by anything else, it's an absolute shame. Do you think I'm arrogant? No, this is clarity!" It is true, the Sadhguru is as profound as he is pragmatic; he is as much at home in a joincloth walking barefoot in the

Himalayas as he is wearing jeans and playing golf; and, he is as familiar riding a BMW dirt racing bike in Arizona as he is comfortable driving a 4x4 Volvo on the National Highway. I asked if he had a message for Mumbai. "Yes," said Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev beaming, "don't meltdown. People think the economy is crumbling and we're about to fall. This is not the US. We don't have much to fall. We're still at ground level. It's just a little wobble. What's meltdown? Don't be miserable — be joyful!"

Prathmesh Bhandarkar

HAPPY EVER AFTER:  
Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

