Walking The World without phone and money

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We wanted to experience what it feels to ask for receive and the feelings you have when you receive help.

Our walking journey is progressing smoothly. We spent a major part of January walking through Tamil Nadu. Come February, we will spend more time walking in Karnataka. When you are going at the snail speed of 3 kmph, there is no escaping the surrounding. While walking, you get to witness everything closely. Watching the farmers in the fields, the animals lolling about in the sun, the men of the village gathering at the tea stall, we find ourselves around the different scene every moment as we walk. Upon passing through a village, curious men and women would ask us ‘Which village are you from?’ and we would speak to them about our walk. Having a hundred different conversations like this and living in the villages gave us a chance to come close to the life of Tamilians.

After 400 kms of walking, we took a 4 day break in Bangalore. It is in this period of rest that I want to remember the adventures of the past 3 weeks.

Here is a glimpse into 24 days of walking -

Day 1 - Ankit, Alma & Me (Nayanika)

Spending time with women - this is when Caroline was also walking with us

Pongal Time - Enjoying the coconuts from Mohan’s (our host) farmland

We have reached Andhra Pradesh

Archana ji, the sugarcane juice seller, voluntarily gave us free juice on a hot sunny day. We will never forget our conversations with her.

Walking Without A Phone

You would be wondering, if we do not have a phone, then how did we take these photographs? When we meet people, we can sometimes use their phone to create a memory. We take photos from their phone and then get them sent to our friend's number. Priyansha, our friend in Mumbai has been supporting and helping our walk greatly. We sometimes say that, she is the technological back end of this no-tech walk.

Walking Without Money

It is extremely interesting to walk without money, mainly because of the new connections it helps you forge. If you have money and you feel hungry, you can easily go to a restaurant to satiate your hunger. If you are tired and night is drawing closer, you could confidently go to a hotel and find a place to rest for the night. But, without any money, you have to speak to the people around you. You have to open yourself up to receive help.

(Some basic rules around the walk)

Before speaking about the experience, let me give you an idea of what we consider okay and not okay to ask.

We can ask for drinking water, we can ask to know the time. We can ask for help in medical emergencies. And if it is late at night, we can ask for a place to sleep, generally not even inside people's houses, we would suggest them to tell us a community space in the village.

We do not ask for food, when we are hungry. And we do not accept any kind of money while walking. If people offer food voluntarily, without us asking, then we accept the offer to eat. Like this, we have managed to walk and thrive for 24 days, having all 3 meals any given day, except for a few days while passing through bigger cities or towns. The walks through the villages are filled with food, fun and conversations.

What do you think happens when you receive help? In normal life, we usually don't find out, because we ask for help only in extremely dire times. Asking for help can be seen as a sign of weakness or incapability. And all capable young people are taught to 'Stand on their own two feet' and be self-sufficient enough to not ask for help. But, by setting a no money, no phone rule, we wanted to step out of these unwritten rules. We wanted to experience what it feels to ask for receive and the feelings you have when you receive help.

We are always surprised to see just how helpful people are. We received more love than we ever imagined we would. People are curious to know why you are walking this way. They want to know where you are from and how your health is fairing in the walk. They feed you the food that they grow themselves in their fields, and tell you the history of the village their family has always stayed in.

There is a lot that I want to share with you guys, because there is so much that India is teaching me on this walk. I will organize my thoughts a little better and keep updating this blog in the future. Feel free to leave any comments or questions if you have any. You can also get raw updates of our walk by joining a whatsapp group for this world walk.


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