

IN SEARCH OF SILENCE



POORNA BELL

Just before I left, I picked up some freelance work with my old company, and, by serendipity, I found myself chatting to Puja McClymont, a life coach, for a feature about flexible working. We just happened to be talking about different perspectives, and inspiration struck: 'Do you think the whole quitting-your-job-to-go-travelling thing is a myth and that the answers are closer to home?' I asked without going into detail or that I was asking for myself. 'Do people actually learn something from it?'

She paused and said, '[After travelling] . . . you value life more. When you are working in an urban environment, everything is taken for granted and you are working pay cheque to pay cheque. You go into this monetary focus rather than a lifestyle focus. And you lose perception and a grasp of what is real, and what your values are.

'I've been in situations where I've asked clients what they value most in the world and they struggle. And those answers – whether it's family, a hobby, good health – they should come naturally. If people are challenged by that question, it's because they are doing for doing's sake.

'Remove yourself from that environment, and I think you will live a better life when you come back.'

Either way, in a few days, I was going to be in Bangalore, a city I called my second home, and my life in London as I knew it, for a time, was over.

I was going to try to experience everything with an open heart and mind.



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