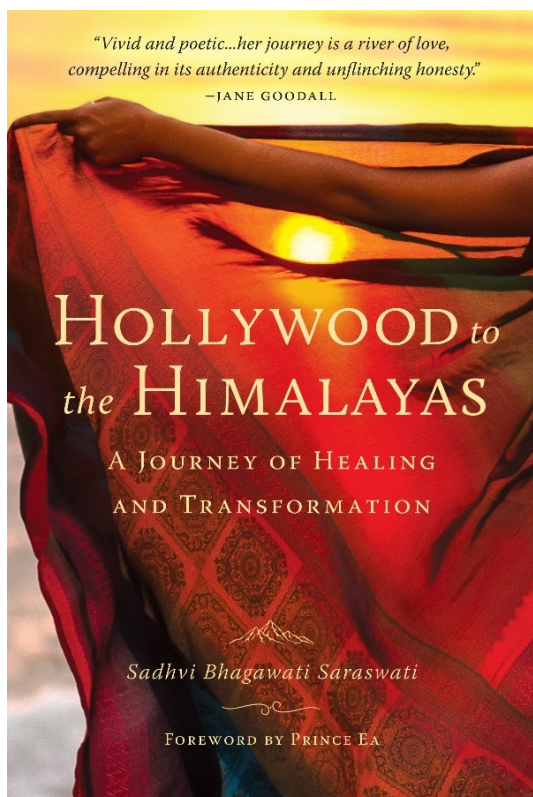


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“Vivid and poetic...her journey is a river of love, compelling in its authenticity and unflinching honesty. ...a must for anyone who is interested in exploring different paths to fulfilment and to the Creator.”

—Jane Goodall

“Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati is a great teacher of spirituality and consciousness. Her inspiring wisdom illuminates the path to healing, happiness, and inner peace.”

—Deepak Chopra

“For so many of us, the road to the Divine sometimes begins with deep trauma. And, then Grace is bestowed upon us and we blossom in the holiness of love. *Hollywood to the Himalayas* is filled with wisdom and truth about the powerful revelations that unfold on the path to a deeper relationship to the divine. This is a beautiful book.”

—Rev. Iyanla Vanzant,  
executive producer, *Iyanla, Fix My Life*

# **HOLLYWOOD TO THE HIMALAYAS:**

## **A Journey of Healing and Transformation**

by Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati

*“Sadhviji models for us, at the deepest level, that in the true teaching of the spiritual traditions, healing and grace are always possible.”*

—Prince Ea, in the foreword to *Hollywood to the Himalayas*

The journey from a dark and traumatic girlhood beneath the shadows of the Hollywood sign, to an enlightened spiritual leader, is recounted in the honest and compelling memoir, **HOLLYWOOD TO THE HIMALAYAS: A Journey of Healing and Transformation** by Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati (Mandala Press; August 3, 2021).

Today, Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati (Sadhviji) is one of the preeminent female spiritual leaders of our time and a renowned writer, speaker, and social activist. But few know how Sadviji reached her spiritual awakening and found inner peace.

Born to an upper middle-class Jewish family and raised among the glitterati of Hollywood, the veneer of Sadviji's glamorous upbringing hid dark secrets about sexual abuse, depression, anxiety and bulimia. As expected of her, she excelled in her undergraduate studies at Stanford University and had worked most of her way through a Ph.D. program in psychology when, in the summer of 1996, her life unexpectedly changed forever.

Her husband insisted they travel to India to so he could continue his spiritual studies and find his guru. Sadviji, who was a non-seeker, reluctantly agreed as she loved Indian food. In Rishikesh, India, the first city they visited, she had an unexpected, powerful, spiritually transformative experience standing on the banks of the sacred Ganga river, an experience of the Divine which brought her to her knees in tears.

Knowing she was meant to stay on the banks of this sacred river, she was drawn to the ashram of Parmarth Niketan in Rishikesh and asked permission to stay there. She was told no—she was a woman and a foreigner. The only way she could only stay was with permission from the ashram's president, a holy man whose arrival date was uncertain. Sadviji knew she would stop at nothing and let nothing stand in the way of her staying there.

After a week of twice-daily inquiries, Sadviji finally met the president, H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji (Pujya Swamiji), a world-renowned guru to whom she was deeply, unexpectedly, and instinctively drawn. He granted her permission to stay at the ashram. Soon, Sadviji admitted to Pujya Swamiji that she was filled with fear and anxiety due to her traumatic past. He asked her if she wanted to carry her pain to her grave—or choose to let it go. He told her to enter the Ganga and give all her anger, pain, fear, and grudges to the river and let them be swept away. As skeptical as Sadviji was, she agreed to follow his instructions.

As Sadhviji stood in the waters, offering her pain and anger to the rushing waters of the sacred river and finding deep forgiveness within herself, she was transformed, imbued with the unshakable belief she was destined to walk a new path in life, one of connection to God. She was willing to give up everything she knew and commit herself to understanding the nature of the divine and the path to true happiness and fullness. This soon led to being ordained into the monastic tradition of sanyas by Pujya Swamiji.

Although she thought she had come to India to please her husband and because she liked Indian food, it was Sadhviji's destiny to find and walk this path to enlightenment.

**HOLLYWOOD TO THE HIMALAYAS** is her fascinating story, detailing her time of learning, sacrifice, unbridled joy, deep challenges, ecstatic experiences, and peaceful contentment in India as well as her meaningful international work as a faith leader in the development sector, planting and nourishing seeds for peace, focusing on world health, water, sanitation and hygiene, and the rights and empowerment of women and girls.

Unique and powerful, and colored by a range of emotions including laughter, sorrow, anger, faith, longing, delight, and love in its purest form, it is an inspiring, unforgettable, uplifting read.

*All proceeds from the book will be donated to the Divine Shakti Foundation  
a charitable organization dedicated women, girls, and education.*

**SADHVI BHAGAWATI SARASWATI** serves on the United Nations Advisory Council on Religion and on the steering committees of the International Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) and the Moral Imperative to End Extreme Poverty, a campaign by the United Nations and World Bank. She is also the Secretary-General of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, an international interfaith organization dedicated to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene; president of Divine Shakti Foundation, a foundation that runs free schools, vocational training programs, and empowerment programs; and director of the world-famous International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh—which has been covered in Time, CNN, the New York Times and other prestigious publications and has been addressed by both the Prime Minister and Vice President of India. Sadhvi has lived for the past 25 years at the Parmarth Niketan ashram in Rishikesh, India, where she oversees a variety of humanitarian projects, teaches meditation, lectures, writes, counsels individuals and families and serves as a unique female voice of spiritual leadership throughout India and the world.

## **HOLLYWOOD TO THE HIMALAYAS**

By Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati  
Mandala Publishing; August 3, 2021

\$29.99; 368 pages  
ISBN-10: 1647223652; ISBN-13: 978-1647223656