

Shimmy Transcript

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My name is Shimmy. I am 26 years old. I came from... I have been raised as a Hindu... from a Hindu background. Actually before I ever knew what Baha'i was I did believe that all religions did come from God. I met a friend at my work and she invited me to a multi-Faith devotional. I was impressed by the fact that everybody, even though they came from different religious backgrounds they read prayers from different religions with reverence and like you know, a lot of respect for what they were reading.

At the same time, one of my other friends who was actually investigating the Faith, she had read a couple of things. She also came and she also started a study circle to read more of Baha'u'llah's Writings. I thought it would be interesting to kind of learn more about what is this actually. So, these study circles, the one I was invited to was every... I think it was Sunday and I'd kind of slack off because it was like my weekend and I didn't see the importance of it initially.

My friend who was tutoring the study circle gave me a copy of Hidden Words, which are Writings from Baha'u'llah, they are more like meditations and also a prayer book. At the beginning I didn't really... I just kind of put them aside and didn't really give them that much time and...

So we started the book. Basically the first section really talks about the importance of being accountable for your deeds and being truthful in how your deeds actually affect the people around you. So it really started making me actually recognize like things I did in day to day life, I'd actually sit there and think of, you know, about like promises I had made, even the way I was talking to people and stuff... not that I was really bad but I was just more conscious of it, right?

As we were doing the study circles, our friendship grew because we really expressed a lot of open and deep thoughts and ideas and it really opened us up. So as our friendship grew, the tutor of the study circle was also part of a junior youth group and she asked me to come along and of course I would come because I liked being around her. I didn't really understand what a junior youth group was until I went there and ... I saw that it was really a direct way of serving people... before that I would try to.. like try to do things that would serve people but I didn't feel an actual connection and this was like really addressing problems that ... or issues that junior youth... kids who are 11-14 were actually thinking about and also I like the fact that I really could relate to a lot of them

I was also sharing everything I was learning with my mom and also my dad, but more my mom and they knew that it was having a positive impact on me and a lot of the things that

really touched me, or any ideas or quotes that touched me along the way, I would always come and talk about it to my mom and you know... be like: isn't that amazing... you know?

She's also taken an interest. She just started book one. She's in a study circle with a few of my friends' moms actually... and she really likes it, I can tell that it does touch her and we have even deeper discussions now, which is good.

Also we've had a few devotionals at my house. It's such a nice way of gathering together... and you know you are sharing like prayers and also really pure ideas come out after praying together... you know... especially sometimes we have themes during the devotionals about peace or unity and it really brings out the ideas that everybody is holding in.

So after book one I actually went through most of the... up to book 6 and I started book 6 now. So doing book 6 kind of led us to (me and a few of the friends in our neighborhood) to get together and actually start initiating the core activities that we have been learning about, we have been trying to offer it in the neighborhood. I met this one girl who is like 15 and she's also... she kind of reminds me of me... she is really interested in like doing things for the community and serving and stuff and she was really interested in like the concept of children's classes and junior youth classes. I actually gave her a copy of the Hidden Words and she was so taken by it... the fact that like watching her being taken by it, it really like touches me at the same time.