

I met Jeya in 1968 October 21st, my first day at college. I was still a teenager then. When I arrived in UK, I suddenly found myself being on my own, away from my family for the first time, my immaturity and top of it all arriving late to college by a whole month was then a huge challenge for me. Jeya had already been in England for an year, who was informed of my arrival to UK & I may be needing some help by a letter (those were the days) by my Brother-in-Law Thiagarajah, who was very instrumental in my coming to UK. And I remember vividly Jeya when he came to meet for the first time, telling me then “**Don’t worry Thamby, you are going to be fine & don’t worry about a thing**”. When I heard this dreadful news of him passing away, my thought raced back to that day, when he assured me – all will be right (56 years ago. Ever since then Jeya has been a huge source steering force and guidance to me. He was like an older brother to me to start with and became a great friend. I can easily say without a lot of exaggeration that as recently as few days ago, hardly a month passed by without us talking to each other.

Jeya was a good selfless man unlike any I have known. He had a huge heart with immense consideration and compassion to others. Something any & all who knew him would say exactly that about him if not better. He was very respectful of others. In his college days he lived in a home of Mrs. Spencer, a fine, loving Czechoslovakian lady with two others Sri Lankans. Everyone called her Mum for simply for the reason she was motherly to all to all those students living in her home. Despite the many years passing Mum continued to receive cards, photos & letters from almost all who attended college from her home. All of such she would keep it by mantelpiece for us to see. I did run through those messages and noted almost all the messages were in the vein of gratitude, appreciative of her motherly caring tendencies.

Even many years after Jeya finished his studies and moved on in his life, Jeya did much more than that & typically his way. Those days communicating with someone without a phone in house was challenge. Despite that Jeya kept in touch with Mum, through writing letters for many years. When Jeya felt Mum was too old to be left alone, he convinced her, that she would be better off in company and help from his family & brought her to London. It was obvious to me that Pravin & Pramila loved Mum as if their grandmother but still called her Mum and Kaushy cared for her as if she was her own mother. All of the warmth towards Mum was obviously profound and palpable. Mum lived there in their home for almost 15years or more until her passing away. Who does this sort of thing? It couldn’t be anyone else but only Jeya. I know cases where there were problems in marriage for sons & daughters trying to do much less than this to their own parents. This is an unbelievable human story. But you better believe as it is factually accurate.